

# EASTER

*A New Day*

## WEEK 1. REMEMBERING OUR FIRST ENCOUNTER

This week we begin looking at the way Jesus encountered some of his early disciples and reflecting on our own early encounters with Jesus. We hope this will be a refreshing and encouraging time as we hear each others stories and begin to dream for how Jesus might encounter those around us today.

**Introduction Question:** What was an encounter you had with someone that changed/affected your life? (If you've got a large group you might consider breaking people off into groups of 2-3 to share)

**Break into groups of 3-4:** Everything we do tonight will be in these small groups. Folks can simply open up this lesson on our website or app and guide themselves.

### **Encountering Jesus (John 1:43-51):**

**43** The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me." **44** Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. **45** Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." **46** "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see," said Philip. **47** When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit." **48** "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you." **49** Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel." **50** Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that." **51** He then added, "Very truly I tell you, you will see 'heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on' the Son of Man."

**Discovery Bible Study (30 min):**

- What strikes you from this story?
- What do we learn about Jesus?
- What do we learn about ourselves?
- What do we see in Philip's invitation to Nathanael?

**Remembering our own encounters with Jesus (15 min):** As we begin looking to help others encounter Jesus, let's remember and share with each other one of our own early key encounters with Jesus.

**Inviting others to encounter Jesus (15 min):** There are many reasons why our friends and family have not accepted or believed in Jesus yet. Regardless of what their reasons are, we know Jesus desires to invite all of us to be in relationship with him, as we saw in tonight's passage. As we begin moving towards Easter, let's start praying for those around us who aren't in relationship with Jesus yet.

- On a piece of paper, write down all the different communities you are a part of on a weekly basis (e.g., work, neighborhood, gym, hobbies). Then write down everyone you can think of in those communities who does not know Jesus yet. Do not worry about whether you would actually invite them to Easter Sunday or if they would come even if you do. Just write down all of their names for now.
- Share with each other the names of the people on your list. Then put all your papers in the middle of the group and lay your hands on the paper and pray for God to draw each one of them into relationship with Jesus.
- You can base your prayers on 1 John 4:18: "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear." Let's pray that God's perfect love will come into each of their lives and remove any fears or obstacles that may be preventing them from seeing and receiving God's perfect love.
- Throughout this next week, pray for the people on your list daily, asking God to drive out all fear with his perfect love. As you pray through your list each day, pay attention to any names that may seem to stand out to you. Highlight these names and bring them with you to next week's lifegroup.