

An Encounter with God

Small Group Discussion Guide

"An Encounter with God" -- Ev. Rodrick Leach

1. SERMON RECAP

Ev. Rodrick Leach drew on years of firsthand missionary experience in Tanzania, Egypt, and beyond to make the case that every believer needs more than secondhand knowledge of Jesus -- they need a genuine, personal encounter with Him. He traced a foundation of scriptures through Revelation 1, 1 Corinthians 15, and 1 John 1 to show that figures like John, Paul, and the early apostles were each transformed not merely by information about Jesus, but by coming face to face with the risen King. He challenged the congregation to move beyond a single encounter into a lifestyle of continuous, Spirit-fueled encounters that produce the fire, power, and full surrender that Jesus is calling every believer into.

2. KEY SCRIPTURE

Galatians 2:20 (NKJV)

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

3. ICE BREAKER

Think back to the moment you first truly believed Jesus was real -- not just a name you had heard, but someone personal to you. Where were you, and what was one thing that felt different afterward?

4. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Question 1 -- Hearing versus Encountering

Ev. Rodrick Leach drew a clear line between simply hearing about Jesus and personally encountering Him. He noted that nearly everyone in the room had heard about Jesus at least once, but that hearing alone does not change a life. Where do you see that distinction showing up in your own spiritual journey, and what first moved you from hearing to encountering?

Question 2 -- Continuous Encounters

He pointed out that John had already walked with Jesus for three and a half years before the vision in Revelation 1 -- and yet that later encounter with the risen, glorified Christ brought John to his face as though dead. Ev. Rodrick Leach pressed the point that one encounter is not enough; believers need continuous encounters with God. What does a lifestyle of ongoing encounter look like practically for someone with a busy work schedule, family responsibilities, and limited quiet time?

Question 3 -- The Word as Living Encounter

Ev. Rodrick Leach made a striking claim when he said he was present at Jesus' ministry in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John -- because the Word is alive and the Holy Spirit dwells in the believer. He challenged the group to see Bible reading not as information gathering but as a genuine encounter with the living God. How does that reframe the way your group currently approaches Scripture, and what would need to change for Bible reading to feel more like an encounter than a routine?

Question 4 -- Power, Not Words Alone

Drawing from his night evangelism among Muslims in Zanzibar, Ev. Rodrick Leach described moments where sharing words alone was not enough -- it was prayer and the demonstration of God's power that caused blind eyes to open and deaf ears to hear. He argued that every believer, not only pastors or evangelists, is called to walk in this kind of power. Does that feel realistic or out of reach for you personally, and what do you think holds most believers back from expecting God to move through them?

Question 5 -- Full Surrender

He described the turning point of his own encounter -- sitting alone in his car in Orlando, Florida, when he heard God say, "Roderick, give me one hundred percent." He reflected that it was not until he laid his life fully down that he began to see the blessing, direction, and wisdom of God clearly. What area of life is hardest for most people to fully surrender to Jesus, and what does Galatians 2:20 say about why that surrender is both possible and necessary?

Question 6 -- Fire That Keeps You from Quitting

Ev. Rodrick Leach shared honestly that he survived a riot, a demonic car accident, personal loss, and deep seasons of wanting to quit -- and that what kept him from giving up was not willpower but the fire of God burning within him, much like Jeremiah's experience in Jeremiah 20:9. He challenged the group that the same fire is available to every believer. Has there been a season when you genuinely wanted to quit on your faith or calling, and what did -- or what could -- a fresh encounter with God have done differently in that moment?

5. APPLICATION CHALLENGE

This week, each group member is encouraged to set aside one dedicated block of twenty to thirty minutes -- away from phones and other distractions -- to read one of the Gospel passages Ev. Rodrick Leach referenced (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John), treating it not as a reading assignment but as a personal encounter with Jesus. Before reading, each person should write down one honest question or honest need to bring into that time, and after reading, write down one specific thing they sensed God saying to them. Group

members are encouraged to briefly share what they experienced when the group meets again next week.

6. PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that each group member would move from merely knowing about Jesus to encountering Him personally and continuously, and that any barrier -- busyness, doubt, or spiritual dryness -- would be removed by the Holy Spirit this week.
 - Pray for the ongoing gospel work among unreached Muslim communities in Zanzibar, Tanzania, and the surrounding islands, that the radio broadcasts and church planting efforts Ev. Rodrick Leach helped pioneer would continue to bear fruit and that local believers would walk in boldness and power.
 - Pray that every person in the group who is quietly carrying a desire to quit -- whether in their faith, their calling, their marriage, or their ministry -- would receive a fresh encounter with God this week that restores their fire, their joy, and their peace, just as He did for Ev. Rodrick Leach on a rooftop overlooking the Indian Ocean.
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7. MEMORY VERSE

Galatians 2:20 (NKJV)

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

This guide was prepared for small group use following the message "An Encounter with God" by Ev. Rodrick Leach. Volunteer leaders are encouraged to read through all questions in advance and select the three or four that feel most relevant to their specific group.