

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

As humans interacting with one another, we are often affected by our first impressions of someone. We may be impacted in a negative way or in a positive way. We may have a preconceived impression of someone if we have received information ahead of time regarding this person we are about to meet. When we meet this person we will need to decide if the information we received is accurate or not. We will have to “check it out” for ourselves. On that first meeting, are we intrigued enough to want to meet that person again or get to know them better? Are we curious enough that we would seek this person out? Or are we so “put off” by this person that we would rather cross over to the other side of the street than to encounter them again? How has the information we received about this person affected our attitude and reception toward that person? Have we made a fair judgment? When we encounter others like this person, do we “paint them with the same brush?” or do we get to know the next person personally before we make that judgment?

There was a first time meeting that occurred in the days when Jesus walked the earth. In John chapter 4, a woman from the region of Samaria met Jesus for the first time. She was so impressed with Him in that first encounter that she told numerous others about Him. These people in turn believed what she said about Jesus and already began trusting Him before they even met Him!

John 4:39-42 describes for us how the relationship progressed based on the woman’s words and actions. The NKJ says “And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, ‘He told me all that I ever did’. So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word. Then they said to the woman, ‘Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world’.”

For those of you who have not yet met Jesus but have encountered those who have, have you developed a preconceived impression of Him based on the words and actions of others? Has that impression impacted or affected you in a negative way or in a positive way?

If it has been in a positive way, that is great and I trust you’ll proceed to develop the relationship with Him to an even greater degree. Continue to seek Him out and get to know Him better. He knows you and loves you beyond measure.

If it has been in a negative way, then we would like to say that we are so sorry you feel that way. On behalf of every believer you may have encountered, we would like to apologize for any misunderstandings, woundings, words or actions that may have influenced your impression of who Jesus really is and how He has been represented through the lives of believers. We would encourage you to put aside the things you have heard or seen **about** Him and come to Him yourself. Check Him out. Invite Him to stay with you so that you get a chance to know Him for yourself. Isaiah 55:6 says, “Seek the Lord while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near.”

He really wants to develop that personal relationship with you if you'll just give Him a fair chance. Hebrews 9:27 says, "And it is appointed for man (a human) to die once, but after this the judgment." Romans 14:12, 13 says, "So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. Therefore let us not judge one another any more, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way."

Jesus is nearby, even in our region so to speak. Now is the time to let go of the past and past judgments. He loves you. He accepts you. Will you accept Him?

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