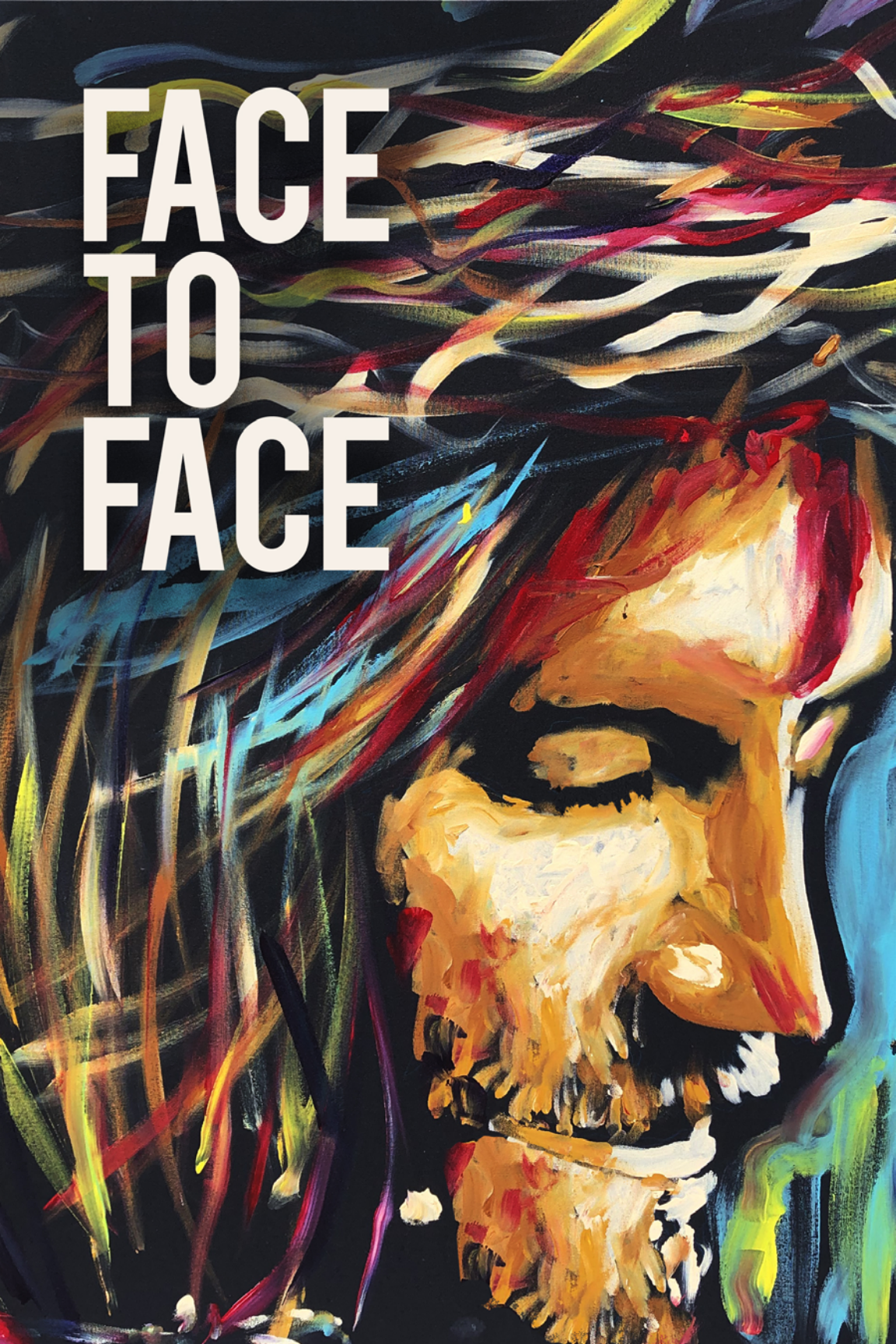


FACE TO FACE



4

**THE BAD
SAMARITAN**

If there is one thing history has taught us, it is this: One person's story can change the world. Throughout time, the simple stories of human beings have overthrown tyrants and inspired generals, they have established justice and struck down prejudice, they have encouraged compassion and restored hope. The stories we read in the Gospels are no different. Over two thousand years, they have reshaped lives and redirected eternities. When we read the Gospels, we are provided with a rare window into the lives of people who encountered Jesus face to face and were changed as a result.

That is why we want to try something a little unusual for this series. We want to take six stories from the Gospels—six stories of people who met Jesus and were transformed after meeting Him—and give each of them a completely fictional backstory. Our goal is simple: We want to see their humanity, up close, so that we can discover how we might encounter Jesus just as they did. We invite you to use your imagination along with us, to consider what their lives may have been like before they met Jesus and how their encounter with Him impacted their futures.

Through this study and discussion, we will turn our attention inward and examine the motivations of the human heart. We will identify the forces that can turn us away from the true life to which God calls us. We will share our lives with one another and pinpoint the values that lead us to become more like Christ. In so doing, we pray you will encounter Jesus face to face and uncover how He can change your life forever.

Play the *"Session Four: The Bad Samaritan"* video.

What stood out to you in the video?

Read Luke 17:11-19

1. If you could go back in time and say “thank you” to one person from your past, who would it be and why? Why are you thankful for them? How did that person impact your life?

2. Why do you think the Samaritan leper returned to thank Jesus while the others did not? What blessing did the Samaritan receive that the other lepers did not receive? How can showing gratitude to others serve as a gift for us as well? How are we blessed when we get to bless others?

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 & Colossians 3:12-17

3. What happens to us when we are no longer thankful for what God has given us? What happens when we focus on the things we do not have rather than the things we do have? How can the good things we receive from God become harmful to us if we do not use them to bless others?

4. How does thankfulness lead us to a rich life? How does gratefulness guide us into a life of goodness and joy? How does gratitude inspire us to become generous? How can it turn us from selfishness to selflessness?

Read Philippians 4:4-13

5. Why should we present our requests to God with thanksgiving? Why is it essential for us to be thankful for what we already have while asking for what we do not have? How can gratitude transform your prayer life and your relationship with God?

6. How can gratitude change the way we think? How does thankfulness guide our thoughts toward true and noble and praiseworthy things? How can gratefulness help us manage our anger or treat others with kindness and respect? How does gratitude empower us to think more like Christ?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTION

Read Psalm 107:1-43

7. How does gratitude help us endure through difficult seasons? How can our gratitude to God in the present give us hope for a better future? How can a daily discipline of thankfulness to God keep us secure when life becomes confusing or challenging?