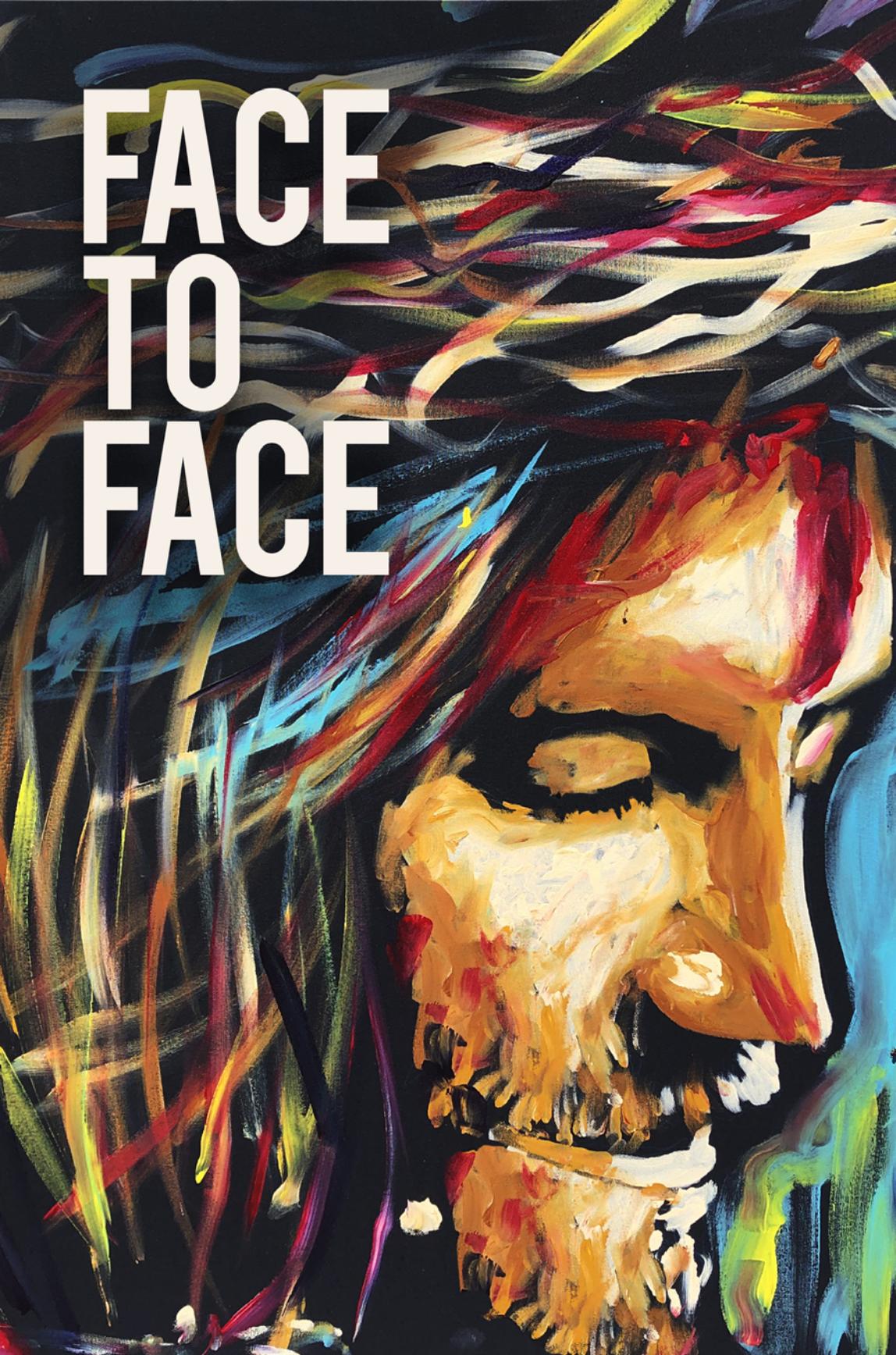


FACE TO FACE



3

**THE WEARY
PRODIGY**

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 Three: The Weary Prodigy" video.

What stood out to you in the video?

Read Mark 5:21-43

1. Share a memory from your life when you had to reach out for help to solve a problem. Was it difficult to admit you couldn't handle the issue by yourself? Why or why not? What happened when you reached out for help?

2. The woman who had been subject to bleeding could not find a cure for her ailment until she reached out to God for help. How does this story give us a picture of how to have faith in God? Why does faith involve reaching out to God? How have you personally reached out to God in faith?

Read Psalm 146:1-10

3. Why do we tend to put our trust in people who cannot help us or save us instead of reaching out to God? Why do we try to solve the problems of life on our own? Why do we value self-reliance over trust in God? Why do we trust human solutions over God's solutions?

4. What are some problems in our world that only God can solve? What are some troubles in our lives that require trust and dependence on God in order to overcome them? How can we develop a daily practice of reaching out to God for His healing and help?

Read Hebrews 3:12-14 & 2 Timothy 3:10-17

5. Have you ever seen a fellow believer walk away from the faith? If so, why did they walk away? Why do people come to believe that having faith in God is useless to them? Why might they think that faith in God would lead to trouble for them?

6. We may be tempted to walk away from God during difficult seasons of life or due to hurt we have experienced. How have you maintained your faith in God during the struggles of your life? How has your faith actually transformed a difficult season of your life into strength and power for you? How have the trials of your life increased your faith in God?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTION

Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-18

7. Why does faith require us to trust in the existence of something that is unseen? What happens to us if we place our faith in temporary things rather than the eternal truths of God? How do the words we say and the actions we take reveal where we have placed our faith? How does the spirit of faith move us to speak and act in this world?