

Challenging Chapters of the Bible

CLA Winter 2014

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My Mission – to Reveal God

- First, some context for the rest of what I want to say – Matt 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.
- God is always glorified when He is revealed.

2 Cor 3:16 But whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

- What happens to a person who is confronted by Christ and believes?
- I mean what is it deep down in his soul that sets him apart from so many who are confronted in the same way and walk away wanting none of Him?
- This verse tells us that when one turns to the Lord the veil that kept him from seeing Jesus is taken away so that he can now see and enjoy Jesus.

2 Cor 3:18 So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.

- I am personally convinced that my purpose is to glorify (reveal) God – and I also believe it is your purpose for being as well.
- It is simple, it is relatively easy, and it is powerful. How that can work out in your life may be different from me, but nevertheless it is our purpose

We know the 'what' is the same for all of us, but the 'how' is always different.

- We are all born with different natural talents, we all have different circumstances.
- Then spiritual gifts are added at salvation.
- Our unique circumstances and opportunities are different, but our mission to glorify God by revealing Him is the same.

John 4:9 The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman.

- At this point the woman senses he is a different
- Could it be that what she saw in Jesus, can also be seen in us?
- We have been given a unique opportunity in our day to be different from the world around us.
- Said another way, our culture is such that it ought to be relatively easy for us to stand out.

John 4:19-20 Sir," the woman said, "you must be a prophet.

- After some conversation with Jesus, the woman upgrades her impression of him – he is now a prophet.
- In this sequence I believe we are coming upon a truism that holds all of the time – the closer you look at Jesus, the better he looks.
- He invites all to come and examine his claims and his person – those who do will never find him to be less than they first thought, but far more than they ever imagined.

John 4:29 Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?"

- Later on, the woman elevates her opinion again – first he was an unusual Jewish man, then he was elevated to a prophet, now she believes him to be God.
- The veil over the woman's eyes is being removed – remember the scripture I read that when anyone turns to the Lord the veil over their understanding is taken away?
- Here is a woman of no great reputation who dared to engage with Jesus and as he was seen she was drawn to Him.

So here is my claim – that when Jesus is seen for who he is people are attracted to him.

- In John chapter #9, we have a similar sequence of events – Jesus will engage a man who was born blind and as He is revealed he is glorified, or made known.
- In the story we have a couple of odd things that surface – the first one is seen in the attitude of the people towards sickness and disability.
- It was really quite simple – if you have some circumstance or malady that we cannot explain it was caused by sin. You have to admit, it was not complicated – it was wrong, but it was uncomplicated.

Jesus' Explanation of the Man's Blindness is Even Harder

- And I have to admit, when the cause of the man's blindness becomes known, Jesus' explanation is messy for us at times – again His explanation wasn't complicated, but it is not one that is easily embraced.
- The people of the day, even Jesus' disciples, assumed the man was born blind because of some sin his parents committed or perhaps even because of some sin the man was destined to commit in his life. So there would be some cultural sense of “you got what was coming to you”.

Jesus' Explanation of the Man's Blindness is Even Harder.

- That explanation itself is hard to digest and have peace with, but I do believe that Jesus' explanation can be even more difficult to wrestle through – because Jesus is going to tell them plainly that this man was assigned a life of darkness and drudgery all so that God could be glorified after he had suffered for 38 years.
- And when he tells his disciples the reason for the man's blindness he says it in a rather casual way that could sound like God is so 'stuck' on Himself that what others suffer in order to reveal Him does not matter.

John 9:11 He told them, "The man they call Jesus made mud and spread it over my eyes and told me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash yourself.' So I went and washed, and now I can see!"

- Jesus encounters the blind man and heals him – when his neighbors see him they ask how this happened and he identifies his healer as a man called Jesus.
- At this point he knows little of Jesus beyond that he is a man who healed him.

John 9:17 Then the Pharisees again questioned the man who had been blind and demanded, "What's your opinion about this man who healed you?" The man replied, "I think he must be a prophet."

- When the Pharisees get wind of the healing they demand to know what the man thinks of this 'Jesus' character and he says "I think he must be a prophet".
- So what do we see? The pattern continues – the more closely you look at Jesus and examine his works the better and more elevated he looks.
- This sets off a big flap amongst the local Pharisees and their constituents to the point that either the man or his parents were going to be disciplined for daring to speak well of Jesus.

John 9:35 When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man and asked, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" 36 The man answered, "Who is he, sir? I want to believe in him." 37 "You have seen him," Jesus said, "and he is speaking to you!" 38 "Yes, Lord, I believe!" the man said. And he worshiped Jesus.

- Now Jesus goes to see the man because of all the grief he's been given by the local religious types and in this meeting it is disclosed to the man that Jesus is the Messiah.
- So I say again – the closer you look, the better he looks.

Let me return for a moment to Jesus comments that sounded way too casual when he said “oh yeah, this man was blind for 38 years so that God could be revealed”. On the surface we might say “wait just a minute, that is not fair” – but I ask you, has God ever promised fairness to us?

Let me ask it this way – would you want God to be fair to you?

To ‘get’ this one you have to believe there is more to life than the here and now – that there is more to life than what we can see, taste, touch, and smell – to get Jesus’ point of view means that we must believe that nothing is more important than the revelation of God, and whatever it takes to accomplish that objective is always ‘good’.

The meaning of Jesus in John 9:3 is not as obscure as you might think. He is saying to the disciples - turn away from your obsession to explain everything, especially suffering. And do not think that some things just are and there is no explanation. Instead, think in these terms – God is working out His eternal plan and if I am called to suffer, then I can also rest in the grace He provides to endure.

Our Mission is to Glorify God in all Circumstances.

- 1. When God allows suffering, He never does it outside of His purposes.
- 2. The closer we get to and look at Jesus – the better He looks.
- 3. God is glorified when He is revealed – find your way to show Him to your world.