

2/27/11

Series Title: “John’s Gospel of Jesus: God in Flesh”

Today’s Title:

“Observe the Works of Jesus and Welcome Him”

Scripture Reading: I John 1:1-4

Text: John 4:43-45

“After the two days he departed for Galilee. (For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own hometown.) So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast. For they too had gone to the feast.”

Introduction:

Premise: *In Jesus our faith has found its final resting place*

Outline:

I. Barriers to Faith

II. Bounty of Faith

III. Beauty of Faith

I. BARRIERS TO FAITH

A. External appearance vs. internal character

i.e He looked like every other Jewish boy and man looked. He spoke with the same local accent as all his friends and acquaintances. He played the same games, and later worked alongside other tradesmen of his community.

c/w Luke 2:41-52

B. Envy

- Arthur W. Pink

“But we know that He did all things well. His manner of life, His ways, His deportment, His every act, must have stood out

in vivid contrast from all around Him. Had His fellow-townsmen possessed any spiritual discernment at all they must have seen at once that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Holy One of God. But they were blind to His glory. The perfect life He had lived quietly among them was not appreciated. As the Son of God incarnate He was unknown and unrecognized.”

Note: The following distinctions between Jesus and His Peers:

1. His manner of life
2. His ways
3. His deportment
4. His every act

- G. Campbell Morgan, *The Crises of the Christ*, pp.134-136

“It follows that every piece of work that Jesus did in physical strength under the control of spiritual intelligence, was perfect work, and this because He perfectly understood His work, was perfectly able to do it, and rendered it in the perfect love of His heart to God. How delightful it is to meditate upon Him as He bent over His bench and made yokes and ploughs for the cultivation of the fields He so dearly loved, which stretched around the hamlet where He lived. It is worthy of remembrance that He used both plough and yoke as illustrations in His preaching. Think for a moment of the wonderful skill with which He would carry out His work. His knowledge of nature was such that He knew exactly the best wood to use for any given piece of work; and in the tree lying before Him, He read all the story of its growth, and knew the precision of its method, and so understood just how to cut it so as not to spoil it in the process. He knew, moreover, how to join it, so that in the joint of strength of each part should minister to the new strength of union. He was a perfect Workman, doing the perfect work.

Perhaps apart from the Master, one of the most wonderful illustrations the world has ever had of perfection of spirit producing perfection of work was that of Stradivarius, the great, and may it not be said, the only, maker of the violin. Certain it is that his instruments have never been improved upon. When he was at work upon them, he would pass into the woods, and placing his hands upon the trees would know by the very touch, which wood was best for each part of the musical mechanism. He discovered the tones of music in the fibre

of the wood, with the result that he made a perfect instrument. In him there was the development of spirit on the side of music.

Now lift the thought, and remember that Jesus of Nazareth was not developed upon one side only, but was perfect in His understanding of all the methods of God in creation. See then how His work would be most perfect. Every piece of carpentry passing from His shop, if men had but been able to appreciate it, thrilled with the energy of perfect manhood.

In Him there was an utter absence of disease. He had strength enough for the accomplishment of the Divinely ordained work of the day. No more than that, for He was Man. Tired was He when the day was over, because His strength had been used for the day for which it was given. Tiredness is God's call to sleep which is Nature's sweet restorer. O perfect Man, perfect is spirit, having learning, loving always, obeying ever....and form of finest mold, expressing in common daily tasks the thoughts of God and the perfections of eternity!

Then finally, and in a word, let it be remembered that He passed from those thirty years of privacy, perfect in spite of temptation. His had not been a life free from temptation. The old question asked in Eden was surely asked of Jesus, "Has God imposed limitations?" and the suggestions, listening to which the first of the race was ruined, were made to Him also, "This limitation of the carpenter's bench is cruel bondage." And yet there He remained while days multiplied into weeks, and weeks grew into months, and months passed on, until years had multiplied themselves to thirty. And even when perhaps the subtlest temptation of all came, the temptation to hurry on His own greatest work, the temptation which coming to Moses and mastering him postponed deliverance for so long, He still remained, there also learning obedience by the things which He suffered, and growing in favour with God and men; until, responsive to the inward call, He left the seclusion and the privacy, and standing on the threshold of public work, with the waters of a death of baptism, which He had shared in the grace of His heart with man, still clinging about Him, the silent heavens broke into the language of a great music, as the Almighty Father declared, "This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased."

C. Miracle-seeking

i.e. the Word of God is not enough for those who have

to see instead of “*So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*”

c/w When Jesus dealt with the Samaritan woman at the well, he did not perform any miracle. Instead, he spoke God’s truth and the woman and her townsfolk believed

- Hymn by Bowring #585

*O let my trembling soul be still,
While darkness veils this mortal eye,
And wait thy wise, the holy will:
Wrapped yet in fears and mystery,
I cannot, Lord, thy purpose see;
Yet all is well, since ruled by thee.*

*When, mounted on thy clouded ear,
Thou sendest thy darker spirits down,
I can discern thy light afar –
Thy light, sweet beaming through thy frown:
And, should I faint a moment, then
I think of thee, and smile again.*

*So, trusting in thy love, I tread
The narrow path of duty on:
What though some cherished joys are fled;
What though some flattering dreams are gone,
Yet purer, brighter joys remain:
Why should my spirit, then, complain?*

II. BOUNTY OF FAITH

“...having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast. For they too had gone to the feast.”

A. The dynamic reality of faith is its object

Note: The dynamic reality of faith is Jesus Himself.

c/w Hebrews 2:10-18, 11:39 – 12:3

B. The lavish reward of faith is its subject

- Charles Haddon Spurgeon, #67

“When you contemplate the Savior, you find all the virtues enshrined in him; other men are stars, but he is a constellation, nay, he is the whole universe of stars gathered into one galaxy of splendor; other men are gems and jewels, but he is the crown imperial, where every jewel glitters; other men finish but a part of the picture, and the background is left, or else there is something in the foreground that is but roughly touch-ed, but he finishes the whole; not the minutest portion is neglected; the character is perfect and matchless. If I look at Peter, I admire his courage; if I look at Paul, I wonder at his industry and devotedness to the cause of God; if I look at John, I see the loveliness and gentleness of his bearing; but when I look to the Savior, I am not so much attracted by any one particular virtue as by the singular combination of the whole. There are all the spices – the stacte, and the onycha, and the galbanum, and the pure frankincense; the varied perfumes combine to make up one perfect confection.”

- Martin Luther

“Faith unites the soul with Christ as a bride is united with her bridegroom. Everything that they have is held in common, whether good or evil. So the believer can boast of and glory in whatever Christ possesses, as though it were his or her own; and whatever the believer has, Christ claims as His own. Christ is full of grace, life and salvation. The human soul is full of sins, death and damnation. Now let faith come between them. Sins, death and damnation will be Christ’s. And grace, life and salvation will be the believer’s.” _

III. BEAUTY OF FAITH

“...the Galileans welcomed him....”

[Using some of the terminology of John Piper]___

A. When grace comes down, the heart goes open

- Poem by Elizabeth Studenroth, *Love, Jesus*

***There were tears on your face once
And No One to wipe them away
So you could be here for me when I cry.***

*I miss you. I need you.
I see your hand,
Let me touch your face!*

*I need you. Maybe my mouth
Will grow into the shape of those words
From saying them so many times.
It's a good shape.
But I need you –*

*Take all the loves my heart can't hold at once and hold them
In Your world-encompassing heart, and let me feel in each
moment
Your will, what you want me to think of in that moment.*

*Dance with me. Swing me around and catch me again.
Embrace me tightly and don't let me go. Press me to You
Till I hear your heartbeat, and whisper your promise in my
ear.*

*I don't deserve it
- but isn't that the point?*

*And I can offer you utterly nothing but need
- but can't you be glorified with that?*

B. When the heart goes open, grace flows out

(Illustration from Nelson, p.454)

The ministry of Francis and Edith Schaeffer drew swarms of students to their Swiss home in the mid-1950s, and thus their L'Abri Fellowship was born. But in the early days, Edith worried about things like funding and strength and privacy. She later wrote:

I was sitting at my typewriter, feeling the heaviness that went with the uncertainties ahead. I propped up my Bible on the typewriter, and asked God to give me help and comfort. My

reading took me to the Book of Isaiah. Now I believe the Bible is, to the spiritual life of a Christian, what warm fresh wheat is to the physical life – both nourishing and appetizing! There are also times when God speaks to some of His children in the very words of the Bible, written hundreds of years ago, yet seemingly written as a message for the situation of the moment.

Let me tell you what happened that day. (As I read Isaiah 2:2-3) I reached for my pencil and wrote in the margin: “Jan ’55 promise... Yes, L’Abri.” For I had the tremendous surge of assurance that although this had another meaning, it was being used by God to tell me something. I did not feel that “all nations” were literally going to come to our home for help, but I did feel that it spoke of people from many different nations coming to a house that God would establish for the purpose of making His ways known to them. It seemed to me that God was putting his hand on my shoulder in a very real way and saying that there would be a work which would be His work, not ours. I felt that this work was going to be L’Abri [the shelter].

C. When grace flows out, cold hearts beat afresh

[tell of grandma Bosket and her memorization of Psa.91]

c/w Psalm 91

Conclusion:

Premise: *In Jesus our faith has found its final resting place*