



Intro to John 12:37-43; Isaiah 6

Sunday, December 22, 2019

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“Believing is seeing,” the quote by Elf Judy in the movie *The Santa Clause*, is an interesting tagline for understanding how believers can be “witnesses” to God’s glory in Christ. Certainly, Scripture is filled with denouncements of “seeing.” In the Garden of Eden, when Eve “saw” the forbidden fruit, it led to temptation and sin (Gen. 3:6). That pattern is repeated throughout the book of Genesis and on through the rest of Scripture. A climactic moment in the book of Deuteronomy involves Moses admonishing the people, “Hear, O Israel...”, because their sight has betrayed them. In fact, “seeing” is such a negative trait in human beings that Paul admonishes the Corinthian church that Christians “walk by faith and not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7).

And yet, “seeing” has multiple senses to it. It is our physical sight, the eyes of our flesh, that betray us. But, as Paul prayed, to have the “eyes of our hearts enlightened” is actually good and necessary. Jesus’s own healing ministry, during which He healed many blind people points to the fact that He wants us to “see” Him clearly in the right context. May God give us eyes to see this Christmas season!

Context

“Seeing” is a big theme in the Gospel of John. The Gospel opens with talk of “light shining in darkness.” It talks about how in Jesus we have “seen His glory,” glory that can only come from God the Father. The entire story of John chapter 9 revolves around this theme. Jesus heals a man who was blind from birth. As the controversy surrounding this healing unfolds, it becomes clear that Jesus’s purposes in healing the man were not simply that he might lead a better life, but that the glory of God might be displayed in Him. Jesus then pronounces a judgment on those who claim to see (John 9:39), that strikingly resembles the judgment of Isaiah 6.

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

Read John 12:37-43 and Isaiah 6:1-10

“Do You See Him?”

I. Visualize He actually saw Him!

- With his eyes
- See Isaiah 6.1
- Also Isaiah 7.14, 9.6, 55.11

Those who have seen Him

- Numbers 24.17 Balaam
- Luke 2.17 Shepherds
- Luke 2.30 Simeon
- Matt. 2.11 Magi

How do I see Him? He actually saw Him!

- Pages of Scripture
- Meditation on what you read
- Prayer for Holy Spirit illumination
- Prayer for comprehension, understanding
- See Him with the eyes of faith

II. Verbalize Speak of Him constantly!

- With his mouth
- See Luke 2.19
- Witnessing See Him/tell others what you saw

People react to Jesus

- John 1.10-11 Depressing
- John 12.42 Exciting

Discuss

- 1) When you think of the word “glory,” what comes to mind?
- 2) How is it that we “see Jesus’s glory” when we read Scripture? How often is that the case in your own Bible reading?
- 3) Read Ephesians 1:15-19 (note especially verse 18). How closely does Paul’s prayer resemble your own prayer life (for yourself and others)?
- 4) Given that John, the divinely-inspired author of this Gospel, makes the connection between Isaiah’s vision (Is. 6) and Jesus coming to earth (John 1:14, 12:41), what should a proper response to Jesus entail?
- 5) Pastor Don said, “One of the reasons we don’t witness is because we haven’t seen anything worth talking about.” Do you find that to be true in your own life? If so, what steps do you think you can take to remedy that?