

Delusional Discontentment
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John 14:7-11
October 12, 2014

Sobering, sobering times. How quickly things change. I ask you to turn with me in your Bibles now to John 14. What we need at times like this, more than anything, is the presence of Jesus Christ. And to grow in our love for Him, and our understanding of Him, and where we do that is in the word of God. So we're so thankful that He's given us His word. We're going to be looking at John 14:7-11 today. We're moving to a new section of this 14th chapter. So John 14:7-11.

We realize that the context of these verses is the immediate aftermath of Jesus' declaration which He makes with such force, and such clarity, that He is the only way to Heaven. Jesus was not in doubt, He was not uncertain, though He lived in times much like ours when people preferred uncertainty, like people do today, and think that certainty is arrogance like they do today. I mean, there was Pontius Pilate, when he saw Jesus, and Jesus said, "I came to testify of the truth." Pilate, the educated man of his day said, "What is truth?" It sounds like something you'd hear somebody saying on a talk show, talking to some Christian, doesn't it? "What is truth?" Because the same delusion is abounding today in our culture as it was then, and in the midst of that, what Jesus did was make an emphatic and clear declaration that He is the only way to God. He said, "***I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.***"

In the aftermath of that, He goes on to explain some of why that is true. I mean, we talked about this in previous weeks. In one sense the Verse 6 itself explains it. "I am the only way to God," He says, "because I am the only truth. I am the only one who truly reveals God. I am the only life. I am the only one who possesses the life of God, so if you want the life of God, you have to come to the one who possesses the life of God, and the Son of God, who left the glory of Heaven, and came down to the world, is the only one who possesses the life of God." We know He is the only one who possesses the life of God because He is the only one that rose from the dead. So Jesus makes this claim emphatic, and clear, and unapologetically, but then He moves into explaining to His disciples even more, to bring together, remember this is the last night before His crucifixion. This is the '*Upper Room Discourse*', '*The Farewell Discourse*'. These are His last opportunities, His last hours before the cross to prepare His disciples for what is to come, and for their future. He is going to spend some time with them post-resurrection. Sometimes He will be sharing with them, but this is before the cross, the last moments, and He

wants them to have some things that are anchored in their souls. He wants them to know that the reality of who He truly is, and so He is expanding on this thing of, “Why am I the only truth?” He is going to explain in this passage that He is the only truth about God because He is God Himself, and He makes that abundantly clear.

The title of the message though is ‘Delusional Discontentment’, and I’ve taken that title really from one word in the sentence. Jesus is the one who is speaking, almost exclusively, but in Verse 8, Philip speaks, and he says, “**Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.**” and the word translated ‘*it is enough*’ means ‘*and we are content*’. “Show us the Father and we’ll be content. All we need is just a vision of the Father,” is what he is saying. “That is all we want. We just want a little bit. Just give us a little glimpse of the Father, and that will satisfy us.” So he’s saying, “We’re not satisfied.” And I posit to you today that their dissatisfaction, their discontentment was rooted in that they were delusional. We are too.

These are Christians, now, these are people we know from the previous dialogue, though the Holy Spirit has not been given, we understand that they have been born again. Remember what He said in John 13, when He was washing the disciples’ feet? Peter said to Him, “Lord, You can’t wash my feet. I mean, this is what the lowest servant does. You can’t wash my feet. I should be washing Your feet.” He didn’t say, “I should be washing Your feet,” but he said, “You can’t wash my feet.” And Jesus says, “If I don’t wash you have no part in Me,” so Peter then jumps to the other end. The pendulum swings all the way and he says, “Hey, not just my feet, but my head and my hands.” And Jesus says, “If you bathed, you are only to wash your feet.”

Culturally, if you’ve taken a bath in that day, and you’ve walked around, all you’ve got to do is wash your feet before you sit down to eat. We don’t have to wash our feet, that’s one nice thing, you just wash your hands before you eat now, but in the old days you had to wash your feet too. But He says, “If you are clean, you only have to wash your feet. You don’t have to bathe again, and you are all clean, but not all of you.” And He says, “You are clean, but not all of you.” For He knew the one who would betray Him. He is saying that the eleven of the twelve are clean, that they have been washed, that they have been regenerated in the same way that all the Old Testament believers were regenerated. They have come to hope in the Messiah, and their hope, even before the cross and the resurrection, has saved them. They are clean.

Now they don't possess the fullness of the Spirit, but I would make the analogy, they are very much like us in that we now possess the Spirit, right? If you belong to Jesus Christ, you have the Holy Spirit. You have an advantage on the apostles, but listen, they were sitting in the room with God! They had spent three and a half years with God! And so, I say that, for Philip to say what he says is absolutely crazy, but it is the kind of craziness that we can relate to. I think you will see that as we go through this. To give an analogy of what the magnitude of this was, let's read the passage and then I'll give the analogy. Let me start with John 14:5.

*John 14:5-11 ~ Thomas *said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?" 6 Jesus *said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. 7 If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him."*

*8 Philip *said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." 9 Jesus *said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. 11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves."*

Let's pray together.

Father, we ask that You might speak to us this morning through Your word. That You might help us to see the wonder of what we have available to us in Jesus Christ, and that we might be more than satisfied. In Him, we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

Imagine you are sitting down at your favorite meal. It is your birthday and your wife, or your mother, or someone you love has made this perfect meal for you. You are going to your favorite restaurant maybe, and you have been anticipating it all week. Work with me a little bit, let's go back to Thanksgiving. I realize I am talking about food, and it is not always a good idea to do that, but you have had a muffin if you came for our fellowship time, so I'm going to go ahead and proceed on. You are sitting down to Thanksgiving dinner, and you know, you sit down at the table. The turkey is on the table, the dressing is there, the sweet potatoes, and whatever else that you love. You know, all the fixings that are there, and how

wonderful that meal is. All the different things that come with that, the pies that are coming afterwards. You sit down at that meal, you sit at the table, and everybody else starts eating, but you just sit there with your plate empty, and you look at the person who prepared the food and say, “Listen, I’m getting a little hungry. Could I have a rice cake? I’m really feeling it here, could I eat one of the things that are like Styrofoam?” It is like eating one of those old coolers, you know? Eating a rice cake when you could be eating turkey and dressing, and all the other things, and saying, “I just need a rice cake and I’ll be content. Can you just give me at least a rice cake,” and the person that has prepared the meal says, “Look at what is here!” That does not even approximate the ridiculousness of what Philip says. He says, “Show us the Father and it is enough for us,” and Jesus is basically, His response and reply, “Have I been so long with you and you’ve not come to know Me, Philip? Don’t you understand that you have seen the Father with your own eyes for three and a half years? You’ve seen Him in every work that I’ve done. You’ve heard Him in every word that I’ve said. You have been feasting, it’s like you ate the Thanksgiving meal and didn’t know it, and you’re asking for rice cakes.” Complaining. This is an astonishing thing and it means that there is a measure of blindness that comes with fallenness.

Since Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, and were cut off from fellowship with God, the Bible teaches that a number of things happened, that sin affected us in a number of ways. It made us love things that we ought not love and hate things that we ought not hate. It makes our minds darkened, our affections disordered, our wills alienated. So we really become dumb, like sheep. We don’t know what our problems are. We don’t know what we need to do. We wander aimlessly around and you see this in the disciples. Though they have been born again, there they are with Jesus and they don’t even know He is right in front of them. God is right there and they say, “We’d like to see God.” I think in this you see this tendency, one of the things that is going on here is we see that there is something about our fallenness that we want something more sensational. I think this was one of the problems they had. God’s plan to reveal His glory, the glory of the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the way that God was going to make Himself known ultimately, was to send the second person of the Trinity, the Son of God, the eternal Son of God would become a man. He would come into the world, born of a virgin, and live a perfect life, sinless life, and then when he was 30 years old about, would begin a ministry, and would go about teaching, and preaching, and He would go about healing. In this, He would reveal, He would make God known. He was coming down in a way that we could really understand.

It’s like, you know if you are going to talk to someone, have you had the experience where you go to one doctor, and you feel like you leave and you don’t

understand a thing he said, or very little, because he using jargon, and terminology, and maybe you can tell he is a brilliant man, but he is inaccessible. But you have another doctor that seems just as brilliant, but he is able to communicate in layman's terms. Isn't that a blessing? "I understand what you are saying. I haven't studied in medical school like you have, for all the years that you've studied. I haven't done residency. I don't know anything about what you are talking about except what you just told me, but it makes sense." Well God came down and communicated like that. He is the Lord of glory and yet He knows how to stoop down and communicate, and the way He did it was to become a man, and to make Himself completely knowable. But the idea is that we are so foolish that we'd rather have it a different way. We wish that He would have come down and would have been doing miracles like throwing planets around. "Watch this," and He throws a planet up against another one. "Show us some cool tricks!" That's what people were always saying, "Jesus, show us some sign." He was doing signs all the time. He would do a sign and then they would say, "Show us something else." Never content, always wanting something sensational.

But there is something about God, He comes humbly and gently, and this is one of the most precious truths of the God of the Bible, the one true God, is that He is like a parent that loves its child, and wants to communicate to its child so much that it baby-talks, and it gets down on the level with a child, makes eye contact, and God prattles with us. That's what He is doing in His word, and that is what He is ultimately doing in His Son. When He comes He is coming, and He is communicating, but He's communicating truly, but He is communicating in a way that is not overly, if He were to come with all of His glory, we would just be destroyed, but He comes humbly and gently. I mean, Jesus said, "I am meek and lowly," the Lord of glory, but I think that the disciples struggle from the same kind of thing we do. We want more impressive displays. This makes people discontent with the way God reveals Himself.

I want to go through the text under three points. First of all, I want to call your attention to '*The Glorious Statement*'. Then '*The Galling Request*' and '*The Gracious Response*'. I've kind of already gone into these, but I want to just clarify our understanding of it.

1) The Glorious Statement:

First of all, the glorious statement is what Jesus says in Verse 7.

John 14:7 ~ If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.

There are some difficulties with the tenses in these verbs, and the way they translate into English, because to me, when I read that, ***If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also;***... it sounds like Jesus is offering a condition. You know, a conditional sentence is *'if something, then something'*, right? It seems like when you look at it this way, that the condition that He offers, ***If you had known Me,***... He is really saying it in a negative way, "And you have not." ***If you had known Me,***... Right? Like a woman might say to her husband, "If you had known me better, you would have never gotten me that for my anniversary." "If you had known me, you would never have done that." "If you had known me, and you don't," right? This is not the force in the grammar in the Greek.

What happens is there is a tense here called the pluperfect that doesn't translate well into English, and the idea really is, it really is, "If you have known Me, and you have, then you have known My Father." The context makes it clear that that is what He is saying. "If you had known Me and you have. The reason I can say that you are clean is you know Me. The reason that I told you, Thomas," a few verses ago, "When you said, 'We don't know the way,' I said, 'No, you know the way,'" in Verse 4, "You know the way to God." Thomas said, "We don't know where You are going. How could we know the way?" "No, you know the way because you know Me. I am the way." That is what He is saying. "If you had known Me you would have known My Father also." The idea really is, "If you have come to know Me, and you have, then you have come to know My Father. You have."

Then He says, "From now on I want you to understand you are knowing Him." That is the present tense there which means continuous action. "I want you to understand that from now on, I want this to be clear from you, from now on, you *know* the Father. You *know* Him, and you have seen Him." The force of this particular sense *'have seen Him'* means, it's a perfect tense, which means it happened at a point in time in the past with ongoing results. He's saying, "You've already seen Him." And what He is doing here. it is a glorious, really is a glorious restatement because He is just really restating what He's really been telling them along, which is, "When you look at Me, you see God."

I mean He said, for instance, in Chapter 5, "The works that you see Me doing are not My works, but the Father who sent me. He is the one doing the works. So when you look at My works, who are you seeing work? That's the Father working in

Me.” He says in Verse 19, “I do nothing of My own initiative. I do whatever I see the Father doing.” Then He says in Chapter 8, “The words that you hear Me speaking are not My own,” Verse 25-29, “but the Father’s words. I’m giving you the Father’s words. I’m doing the Father’s works.” In John 10:30 He said, “I and the Father are one.”

So He is just really kind of summarizing what He’s been teaching them. It is not necessarily a surprising statement. Now to them it was surprising because they weren’t doing their math very well. I was trying to think of an illustration like, if I was to say, “Follow this—if Johnny has two apples, and I give him two more apples, and then I give him three apples, how many apples does he have? Seven apples.” Is that shocking that I said, “Seven apples.”? He’s been telling them. “Listen, the things that I do, when you see Me working, it is the Father working. Johnny has two apples. When you hear Me speaking, it is the Father speaking. He has two more apples. I and the Father are one. Plus three apples. If you’ve come to know Me, you’ve come to know the Father. That is the solution— $2+2+3=7$.” It is that straightforward. What is shocking is not what Jesus said, but the response. So it’s a glorious statement, Verse 7.

2) A Galling Request:

John 14:8 ~ Philip *said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”

Now I think, in fairness to Philip, we would be just as dumb. We really would, if we were there. I think he’s thinking in terms of the Old Testament. He is thinking, “You know when Isaiah saw the Lord, what was it like?” Remember what Isaiah says in Isaiah 6, “In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord. I saw Yahweh,” and he describes what he saw. The temple filled with smoke, the foundations of the temple shook. He saw angels, seraphim flying, had six wings, and two that covered their eyes, two that covered their feet, with two they flew, and they kept crying out a continuous cacophony, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts. The whole earth is full of His glory.” And he saw the train of God’s robe, remember that? That is all that he saw of the Lord, he saw the train of His robe. The very tip, the hem of His garment, filling the temple. Philip is saying, “I want to see that.”

Or what about Moses? Remember Moses was put in the cleft of the rock? He said, “Show me Your glory,” and the Lord said, “You can’t see My glory full on, but I’ll put you in the cleft of the rock, and I’ll let My glory pass by.” And Moses saw the

hem of God's robe pass by, and he heard the Lord. It was what he heard more than what he even saw.

Exodus 34:6-7 ~ "The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; 7 who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations."

Philip's thinking, and I think he's voicing what all the other disciples felt like, "Yeah, let us see something like that," and the reality was they had seen something so much more wonderful. He was asking for a rice cake when he's sitting down at Thanksgiving dinner, and I would suggest we do the same thing. We would like an experience like that. Haven't you thought that before? "I wish I could hear God's voice. I wish I could see a glimpse of glory, the heavens opened for just a second just to see a second what God is like." And the reality is we have received fullness upon fullness. God has just lavished upon us the revelation. If our heart really was to see who He is, which is what it ought to be, to see what God is like, we have it in the most clear and wondrous way ever in the word of God as it reveals to us who Jesus is, because when you see Jesus, you see the Father.

He says in Matthew 13:16-17, in fact, turn over there for a moment. He's talking to the disciples here. Remember Philip saying, "I want to see what Isaiah saw. I want to see what Moses saw. Jesus had said this to them months before Philip asked Him, "Lord, I want to see the Father." Look what Jesus said in Verse 16. He said:

Matthew 13:16 ~ But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. 17 For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

He said, "Listen, all the prophets of the Old Testament wanted to see what you see and hear what you hear. You are more blessed than any of the prophets." This is why He said something like, He also said, remember when He was talking about John the Baptist? And He said about John the Baptist, remember when John the Baptist was doubting because he'd been arrested and things weren't going like he expected them to go? Evil seemed to be winning, and the righteous were being punished. John then was later beheaded himself, and when we see circumstances like that that don't seem to line up, that the God of Heaven is allowing these things

to happen, we don't understand that and it causes us to be troubled if we don't come back to the word. John the Baptist sent word to Jesus, and he said, "Are You the one?" That's the most amazing question. I mean, remember John the Baptist had recognized Jesus when they were both in the womb. Do you remember that?

Mary comes in and she's just barely pregnant. Elizabeth is three months ahead of her, basically, in the pregnancy, and the baby leaps in the womb of Elizabeth when Elizabeth, his mother, heard Mary's voice. And then Elizabeth had no idea Mary was coming. It wasn't like back then you could email and say, "I'm on the way." You'd just show up. She shows up, she hears the voice, and the Spirit of God comes on her and starts prophesying about the glory of her son. "Can it be that the mother of my Lord has come to visit me?" That's what she says. That's the baby John the Baptist who was ordained by God to recognize the Messiah. Well then later in his life, he says, "Are You the one?" Jesus of course says, "Look, John, the blind see, the lame walk, the dead are raised to life. Go back and tell John that. Of course I'm the one." John's disciples leave Jesus, and Jesus says, "Let Me tell you about John the Baptist. What did you go out to see?" And rather than condemn John, because he's had a moment of wavering, He starts talking about what a great man John was, and He says, "I tell you, among those born of women, no one is greater than John the Baptist." He's making John better than Moses, and Elijah, and Isaiah, and all of them, but then He says this: "But the least in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than he." That is reality. That is that on this side of the cross, everything is far better than it was on the other side, and He's telling the disciples that. "What you're seeing and what you're hearing is more wonderful than anything the prophets ever saw or heard." He asks that appalling question in Verse 8, that galling request.

John 14:8 ~ Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."

3) Jesus' Gracious Response:

Then look at Jesus' gracious response. Here is the Lord of glory again condescending graciously. He doesn't say, "Philip, get out of My sight," or, "All of you, I've got to get away for a minute." And you can see the sadness in His voice, in Jesus' humanity, His heart:

John 14:9 ~ Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip?..."

“You don’t really understand who I am. You do know Me, but you don’t know that you know Me.” And then He makes this statement:

John 14:9 ~ He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.

“You see, the words that you hear, the works that you see, are the Father in Me.” He says:

John 14:11 ~ Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me;

He’s giving us Trinitarian doctrine right here. He’s saying something that’s beyond our ability to comprehend, and the reality is the Bible teaches the Trinity. It doesn’t make sense to us, but it is clearly the teaching of the Bible, and what I would suggest that you ought to consider if you have trouble with that is that why would you think that you could measure and understand all that God is and that it would make sense to you? Why would you think that? Isn’t that just ridiculous?

Now, the wonder of it is that a God who is this glorious is able to stoop down and teach us things that are beyond our ability to understand, but there are all kinds of things in life that are beyond our ability to understand, but certainly He is. He’s basically saying that there is within the Persons of the Trinity, the Father and the Son are one in such a way that the Father is in the Son, and the Son is in the Father. It’s a mutual reciprocal relationship. And we also find out as we continue to read on that the Holy Spirit is part of the Triune God, that they are three in Person and One in essence.

Now, what is the Doctrine of the Coinherence of the Trinity? What does that mean? It means that there are three distinct Persons, but each Person coinheres in the other. They are completely one substance. They are one in character and they are one in essence, so that when the Father is here, the Son is here, and the Spirit is here. When the Spirit is here, the Father is here and the Son is here. When Jesus is here, the Spirit is here and the Father is here.

This is why when you understand that, and we’re just taking the Scripture and we’re bringing these different things together, the Bible teaches clearly that God is one. The whole Old Testament, think about that, hammers home the Lord is one, the Lord is one, the Lord is one, right?

Deuteronomy 6:4 ~ “Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!”

That’s the Shema. Jews learn that from a very early age. The Lord is one. But when you look at the Old Testament even, you see way back in the beginning, anticipations of the Trinity. “Let Us make man in Our image...” Where did that come from? Genesis 1:

Genesis 1:26 ~ Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;...”

And then in Genesis 11:

Genesis 11:7 ~ Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, so that they will not understand one another’s speech.”

In Genesis 1, God/Elohim is a plural noun and should be translated gods, but it’s with a singular verb, so there’s a plurality in the singularity of God. There are just intimations of it in the Old Testament, mainly with the main thrust being there’s only one God, because we’d misunderstand it if He didn’t teach it that way. It’s kind of like how you have to learn 2 + 2 before you can learn algebra. God is one, but this one God is revealed in three Persons, because this one God exists in three Persons. He is one and three. Jesus is fully God and He’s fully Man, but He’s fully God and has always been God.

John 1:1 ~ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

He was at creation. He’s the one that brought things into the world, that brought to birth the world. And think about this. After Jesus accomplishes our redemption, He pays as a human being, fully Man, He lives a perfect life, He offers Himself as a sacrifice. He’s never sinned. He’s perfect. Then all the sins of the world are imputed to Him. All the sins of everyone who would ever believe are imputed to Him, credited to Him, so that God treats Him as if He had done every one of our sins, and pours out His wrath upon Him, and there God the Son also fully Man bears the punishment for the sins of everyone who would ever believe, so that He takes it away. That’s why His next to last words from the cross before He said,

“Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit,” those were His last words, but the things before that were, “It is finished!” It means it’s paid in full. “I’ve paid it in full. I’ve paid the debt in full.” Well, He accomplishes our redemption, He pays for our blood, and He then is able in the economy of salvation, the Son of God returns to Heaven, and the Spirit of God comes to the earth, but the Spirit of God when He comes, when we receive the Spirit, we also receive Jesus.

This is why Jesus says a little bit later in this chapter, “Hey listen, I’m going away, but I’m not going to leave you as orphans. I will come to you.” “What do You mean You’re going to come to us?” “When the Spirit comes, I’m coming.” That’s why the Spirit is called the Spirit of Christ sometimes. Then other times He’s called the Spirit of God, because if you have the Spirit, you have God. If you have the Spirit, you have Christ.

So Jesus is explaining, “This is the reason you’ve already seen the Father is because I and the Father are one. To see Me is to see the Father. To have Me is to have the Father. To have the Spirit is to have Me. To have the Spirit is to have the Father.” This is the wonder of this divine communion that God has always existed in a relationship of love—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—there’s no need in God. People say He created the world because He was lonely. That is a foolish, ridiculous lie. Nothing in the Bible says that. He is fullness. Of His fullness, we have all received, and grace upon grace. He is fullness because He’s always been joyful and content in Himself.

The wonder of it is He creates human beings and He makes them personal, and He makes them different from every other part of His creation, with an ability to intimately know Him in a relationship. He calls us the image of God (Genesis 1), and He makes you to know Him. And then He makes a way after we sinned and rebelled against Him, for us to know Him through the blood of Christ like I just explained, Jesus dying for our sins according to the Scriptures, rising from the dead according to the Scriptures. And then He brings us into fellowship with God and He gives us His Spirit as a down payment. And now we on this side, standing 2,000 years roughly after the events of the cross and the resurrection, we have more than the apostles had on this night that Jesus was talking to them. They had more than the prophets had. “Blessed are you to see what you see and to hear what you hear.”

You and I have more than they did, because we have the Spirit, we have the fullness, we have the whole Bible. They didn’t have that. They just had the Old Testament. We have the full Bible, the full revelation of who Jesus is, in these pages. Now, let me tell you something. It’s not as sensational as you and I would

like, because we're foolish. Really we're stupid. So people go around looking for it. This is why the fads that you see in the church are so prevalent. I mean, everybody's looking for a new level of experience, things like, why do these books sell like they do, and then they're forgotten? The Prayer of Jabez, do you remember that? "This will change your life," is what people said. "Pray this prayer." That was taken from the Bible, but it was just totally misunderstood. This isn't a secret prayer hidden away in Chronicles, that's going to change your life. It's valuable like all the word of God is valuable.

The Prayer of Jabez teaches you how to pray, and somebody else wrote a book *The Prayer of our Lord*. If you want to learn how to pray, where do you go? You go to the Lord's Prayer, not Jabez. The disciples said, "Teach us to pray," and Jesus forgot to say, "Oh, let's go back to Jabez." I mean, I think these are well-meaning people, but they're just foolish. Forty days of purpose, that's going to change your life—*The Purpose Driven Life* is forty days of purpose. "This is going to do it. I'm finally going to have the experience I need." So people sell millions of books and they get all excited because I'm going to have an experience. What about *The Shack*? I remember reading this will change the way you see God. That was true. It will mess up how you see God. I read that book so that I could talk to people about it. Man, I felt like I needed to wash my brain out with a hose after I was done. It's a compelling story, but ridiculous foolishness. A man just spouting off on what he wanted to be true of God. "This is what I think the Trinity is like." You're just making stuff up, wacky, weird stuff." It had a pleasant appeal to a lot of people, because people are always looking for something that's new and exciting, and we can find ourselves being attracted to those things, can't we? Why is it? We're just like the disciples. We're blind.

A lot of people are that way because they're not saved, and they go after every single wind and wave of doctrine, but there are a lot of Christians that have been caught up in those things certainly, a lot of people who really love God and who just haven't been as focused as they need to be, and they're like the disciples saying, "Show me the Father." They're saying it, and He's right in front of them. When you're looking for an experience and you go outside of the way that God has ordained, God does it in less exciting ways than we might like, but He does it in the best way.

Remember the story of Elijah after he's had the miracle on Mount Carmel, and he then is on Mount Horeb, and God tells him to come out on the mountain and He's going to speak to him, and He's going to show him Himself? He's got some things to say to Elijah, and so Elijah goes out and he sees this strong wind. He's waiting

for God. God's going to meet with him. What's it going to be like when he meets with God? This strong wind comes in, and it's like blowing stuff all over the place, and the Bible says in 1 Kings 19, "God was not in the wind. The Lord was not in the wind." Then a violent earthquake shakes," and Elijah is sitting there holding onto the rock wondering, and the Lord was not in the earthquake. And then a fire comes. Fire falls and comes around him, but the Lord was not in the fire. The Lord spoke in a still small voice, unimpressive at first, not outwardly that awe inspiring.

When Jesus came, when people saw Him from a distance, He wasn't that impressive. Isaiah prophesied this when he told us about Jesus to come. He said, "He will have no stately form or majesty that we should be drawn to Him." He looked like an ordinary Jewish man. And think about the guys He had with Him. I mean, these weren't rocket scientists with Him. He had the apostles with Him. They weren't impressive, and so here He comes, and this is how God comes—born in a stable in Bethlehem, lives His life like this, but if you want to know God, that is how He came. And now how do you know Him? You know Him through this which many people think looks very unimpressive. This is just rows of black print on white paper? No, this is a living Book from the living God, and if you will come to it with faith, and you will read the texts of Scripture, and you will submit your mind to it, and you will ask of Him as you do it, "Lord, speak to me," and you're not saying, "Lord, speak to me," when you're reading some drivel that somebody else wrote—there are some good Christian books, but a good Christian book is known by the fact that it helps explain and it helps you get into this Book. It doesn't supplant it, replace it. When you get into the word and you come to God the way He wants you to come, one of the things that we're trying to do as we teach the word is teach you how to read the Bible, and what you want to do when you read the Bible is you want to let the Bible dictate what you're thinking about. You may come with all kinds of issues. I've got all kinds of questions. When I come to a passage, my goal in the passage ought to be, "Lord, what are You saying in this passage? What were You saying? and I'm not imposing my meaning on it. I'm carefully observing it to let You speak to me," because that's the way language works. The speaker determines what He means, and so you let God show you what He means, and what happens is then you get on God's agenda, and our agenda suddenly start falling into place when we get on God's agenda. It's so much more wonderful, and that's where you see glory.

The people that dismiss Jesus, saying, "He's a Galilean? He's from Nazareth? You've got to be kidding me," they missed out. But those who lingered before this outwardly unimpressive Man, they could say like John says in John 1:14 when he's summarizing:

John 1:14 ~ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

We've seen Him. He is the glory of God, and this is the path to glory for you and me, is to learn to be content in what God has given us, and when you stop striving for things that God doesn't want you to have, and you get content with what He's given you, you find that what you have is more than you ever dreamed possible, than you ever imagined. He is more wonderful.

Let's go to Him in prayer...

Father, how grateful we are that You are a God who has made Yourself known, that You do not leave us in the dark. We deserve to be left in the dark, but You didn't, Lord. You are so compassionate and so gracious, that You have spoken, and You have spoken to us in such clarity in Your Son. He is the image of Your glory, the exact representation of Your likeness. He is everything that You are.

Father, we pray that You would have Your way in each heart. We pray for those that are here that have not repented and believed in Christ, that they would see that their biggest problem is that they are trying to live their lives their own way, pursuing their own agendas, living for their own glory and their own pleasure. When we live like that, we find emptiness, Lord, increasing emptiness and increasing darkness, but when we die to ourselves, when we surrender to You, when we say, "Lord, I realize that I'm a sinner and I need a Savior," and we look to Christ, we find that we have as we lose everything in His presence, we lay everything down, we find that we have received everything. Help them, Lord, today to turn to You in faith. Thank You that You turn away no one. Lord, You said that You will never turn away someone who comes to You with that kind of heart.

Father, we pray for all of us here, those who already know You, that we would be people who are learning to repent of our discontentment and to drink more of Your fullness. And even when we don't feel the things that we would like to feel, because You withhold from time to time that kind of blessing, we would trust You in those moments because of what we have received. Thank You that even in that, You're teaching us, and deepening us, and expanding our ability to receive more of Your fullness. Lord, You are so good, and we praise You in Jesus Name, Amen.

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