

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN -- MESSAGE 5B

SOME GOSPEL IMPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS FOR THE GOOD OF OUR SOULS BASED ON THE WORDS:

"IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD AND THE WORD WAS GOD. HE WAS IN THE BEGINNING WITH GOD. ALL THINGS WERE MADE THROUGH HIM, AND WITHOUT HIM WAS NOT ANY THING MADE THAT WAS MADE. IN HIM WAS LIFE, AND THE LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF MEN." JOHN 1:1-4

JANUARY 16, 2011 VCF

BACKGROUND FROM MESSAGE 5A

We often think that the gospel
begins w/ us
majors on our need for salvation
in a sense saying God's greatest interest
is us

probably because we begin
most everything with ourselves
but coming into the gospels
that's just not the ultimate priority
Good News always starts w/ Jesus
w/ His supremacy / greatness
and decidedly NOT w/ us

This is not a minor point either
for whenever we begin with us
we don't arrive at the same place
as when we begin with Him
when we are truly converted
we are converted to much more than
an exalted self-interest
where God is our cosmic servant
giving a free ticket to heaven

conversion to Jesus
will embrace who He really is
and embrace His Word totally
His priority totally

and we can't do that unless
we exchange all we are
all we would choose
for Him and what He chooses for us

The rest of the book will draw out
this crucial conclusion . . .
salvation issues from the Word
the Word is the Lord Jesus Christ
who is both with God and is God
Faith in THIS Jesus alone
brings salvation

Not only acceptance of Him
but also resistance to Him
happens along this line
many willing to listen to Him
as a messenger of God
bringing unique blessings
but when He proclaimed Himself as God
they backed away

as long as they are able
to project onto Jesus
their own perceived self-interest
they followed Him
but when He turned / challenged them
to reject themselves and follow Him
they abandoned Him in droves

It's no different today
Many try and strike a bargain with God
As long as He will comply
with our own will and plan
we might choose to follow

God will never strike that bargain
any "following" of God or Christ
any "faith" in God or Christ
that functions on that basis
is bogus

for this very reason the following
that Jesus gathered

contained a mixed crowd of both
true believers
and temporary followers
those who had saving faith
those who had only temporary faith
not worthy to be called faith

Many will only listen to God
or give a listen to Jesus
or consider the Word
when they perceive He's talking
about them
and what they're interested in

that's not the real "listening"
of a disciple, real believer

Be sure of your faith then
What are we to believe about Jesus?
There are no shortcuts.
We are carefully cherish
study, reverence
how God goes about the business
of revealing His Son

We are to start where God starts . . .
and here the Lord begins:

Word is WITH God and IS God:
God is a Tri-personal Being
One Being and Three Persons

Son is another person from the Father
but not another Being from the Father

Though all of this is beyond
our comprehension it is not
beyond some basis of understanding
else it would not be given in Scripture
it is meant to be pondered as
part of living an informed
and godly faith

Jesus is only begotten Son of the Father
not think in physical/biological terms
not in creative terms
eternally begotten
eternally in relationship with the Father

Neither does John begin with
our need of a reconciled relationship
with God

It begins with the exalted
and awesome nature of the
connection between F and S

word "with" in Greek can be take
to mean, "toward"
combine the two
have outstanding understanding
with God but toward God as well
oriented toward the Father

Son is not only eternally "with" F
but is also eternally involved with
all His heart

in moving toward the Father
it's not just a static relationship
but a dynamic relating
John is the window, clearest
into F and S

"I and the Father am one."
"I am in the F and the F is in Me."
John 17

Here is the very good basis for saying
Xnty not 1st to be thought of
as a religion
but as a healthy/growing r

ultimate relationship
pattern for all godly relationships
it is not enough that h and w
p and ch, brother and sister
friend and friend or church members
simply hang out "with" each other
there's meant to be in each of these
a deliberate choice made
to move "toward" each other

to know and share
to enjoy and be responsible for
and to challenge one another
over and over

Only God can reveal God
only One who is both
God and man
can redeem us for God
before chapter one is completed
you have both realities
the incarnate X revealing God
the Lamb of God redeeming us
to God

Regarding the Revealing of God
It's not what I "believe" about God
that counts
It's what God says about Himself
what I or anyone else
has to say is w/out merit
this is part of X's exclusivity
not only redeeming by cross
but even revealing God
is His territory alone

**just as clearly as we'd know
that no one can save themselves
by own merit/works/character**

**we should also know
that no one can explain God
except Jesus Himself**

Jesus then is the Word
the only One qualified to explain God

*No one has ever seen God; the only
God, who is at the Father's side, he has
made him known. (John 1:18 ESV)*

*At that time Jesus declared, "I thank
you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth,
that you have hidden these things from
the wise and understanding and
revealed them to little children; yes,
Father, for such was your gracious will.
All things have been handed over to me
by my Father, and no one knows the
Son except the Father, and no one*

*knows the Father except the Son and
anyone to whom the Son chooses to
reveal him. (Matthew 11:25-27 ESV)*

speaking of God's revealing Himself
two interesting verbs used in first verses
one is essentially the "to be" verb --
implying ongoing existence
J "was" with God and "was" God
self-sufficient, eternal

the other is the "to become" verb --
coming into existence
All else "was made . . ." by Him

NOTE THE STARK CONTRAST
created things are all dependent
and temporal
and subject to Him ultimately

God's existence, reality and nature
reflected in some way by His creation
He compares Himself to
inanimate objects
and animate objects

most clearly seen in people!
made in image of God
made w/ conscience

Despite the content of revelation
clear evidence of the existence of God
and the nature of God
contained in the natural creation

people willingly blind to this fact / gift
inability is NOT tied to problem
in the creation
or insufficient data

the problem is with us
it is tied to the will
fallen people are stubborn, idolatrous
refuse to acknowledge God

Not that they don't know it's true
but according to Romans 1
we suppress that knowledge

DENY TO ESCAPE IMPLICATIONS

acknowledging Him means too much
that all our affection, obedience
heart-service and worship
belong to Him exclusively

this condition of soul
summarized in John and called
"the world" and "darkness"
the term, "the world" cosmos
sometimes means whole world
natural creation and people
sometimes means all people
sometimes means fallen world of evil
sometimes means both Jews/Gentiles
sometimes means the redeemed
like "Hokie" nation

words give possibilities
context gives meaning

into this darkness the light shined
Jesus graciously came
the revelation of God now given
in / through the Word Incarnate
far exceeds even what contained
in the creation

Jesus is the express image of God
this is a stunning masterpiece
the greatest of all representations
of any sort

People may be portrayed
in a variety of ways
by their shadow
by a picture/photo
or even by a statue

in OT you can learn something of X
by types and prophecies
but now the real One is on the scene
Son is the living revelation of God

In Matthew 17 and Mark 9
on the Mount when Jesus transfigured
God Himself spoke from heaven:

*"This is my beloved Son in whom I am
well pleased. Listen to Him."*

John Arrowsmith: "All the Scriptures are
but swaddling clothes in which Christ,
the child Jesus, is wrapped up."

the obvious question is,
"Who is yet listening?"

*Long ago, at many times and in
many ways, God spoke to our fathers by
the prophets, but in these last days he
has spoken to us by his Son, whom he
appointed the heir of all things, through
whom also he created the world.*

*He is the radiance of the glory of
God and the exact imprint of his nature,
and he upholds the universe by the
word of his power. After making
purification for sins, he sat down at the
right hand of the Majesty on high,
having become as much superior to
angels as the name he has inherited is
more excellent than theirs. (Hebrews 1:1-4 ESV)*

*See that you do not refuse him who is
speaking. For if they did not escape
when they refused him who warned
them on earth, much less will we escape
if we reject him who warns from
heaven. (Hebrews 12:25 ESV)*

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you
richly, teaching and admonishing one
another in all wisdom, singing psalms
and hymns and spiritual songs, with
thankfulness in your hearts to God.
(Colossians 3:16 ESV)*

Gospel message emphasizes
over and over
that our listening and knowledge
our perception and practice
our response to the Word
and anything else regarding
Jesus as the revealed Word
are entirely dependent on God
there is no stand-alone ability in us
to gain from the word
to lovingly respond to the word
to do the word

without Christ Jesus

without Me, you can do nothing

"If it be a precept it leads you to Christ
for the strength to perform it.

"If it be a threat it leads you to Christ
for grace to escape it.

"If it be a Promise it clearly conveys
a dependence on Christ to enjoy it."

John Arrowsmith

Lesson of the prologue
lesson of the gospel of John
many remain in darkness
love darkness rather than life
you'd expect that when God
came on the scene
that He'd be recognized / welcomed
but that's not the case

J is the redeeming Lamb
but He is also the avenging Lamb/Lion
Both shown in John
all ability to redeem in Him
all judgment also in Him

If we refuse to hear Him speak on earth
how can we expect to have Jesus
hear our request for heaven

Lord merciful towards repentant sinners
tender in the extreme
gracious
forgiving
restoring
but this same Jesus is full of wrath
towards all others.

When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?" Revelation 6:12-17 ESV

Jesus proclaimed the Word
our response is noted
there are but 2 categories
those who receive
those who reject

there's no middle ground here
a non-decision is considered
a decision against the Lord

Think of this
God 1st more than adequately
showed His existence and reality
in the creation
outwardly through the creation

The Lord also showed
more than adequately
our obligation to Him
by writing His law
 inwardly in our conscience
we chose to ignore everything
Then in Jesus
the Lord took up residence
 among us
moved into the neighborhood
and made all even more clear
and still we chose to ignore everything
When approaching highest ranked gen
the lowest ranked soldier
 will not examine the stars
 on officer's shoulder
consider what they are made of
then briefly inquire as to how
 he actually achieved that rank
turn his back chit chat w/ fellow private.
No, the soldier must salute the general!
Anything less than a salute
 of repentance and heart belief
to the LIX is insufficient
Jesus is not here to be studied by us
His claims examined by us
 as to their worth.
He is here to be recognized
 and cherished and admired
 and obeyed and worshipped.
True disciples aren't blasé then.
True disciples aren't giving
 mere intellectual assent
 to facts about Christ
or categorizing life
 part of Jesus
 part for me

What does our belief-response look like?
What does our "salute" look like?

In coming to this Living Word
we anticipate both
the greatest enjoyment possible for us
and the greatest responsibility as well.

Read here, *Radical*

These first few verses set out an order
 Jesus made all
 Jesus was before all
That order is crucial
 not only in explaining reality
 but also in governing our life.

Implication: What is Jesus in our heart?
Is He before all else?
 before all things He made?
 above all things He gives us
 to enjoy?

Remember, the crowds cried out
 for Barabbas instead of Jesus.

WILL WE HAVE JESUS OR "BARABBAS"?

In time of need, in time of desire
 in leisure time, in time of success
in time of enjoyment
in time of desperation
in time of discouragement
 in time of offense
 and at all times
will we have Jesus?

King David never read gospel of John.
But He knew the Word:

*Whom have I in heaven but you? And
there is nothing on earth that I desire
besides you. My flesh and my heart
may fail, but God is the strength of my
heart and my portion forever. Psalm 73:25-
26 ESV*

Jesus left heaven for us
-- became incarnate for us.

In response John Arrowsmith exhorted:

"How should this fire enflame our hearts with love to Christ. He who was the delight of His Father from all eternity, had His delight with the sons of men.

"So how should the sons of men have their delight in Him? Has Christ left heaven for me and shall not I leave the world for Christ? Has He thus emptied Himself for me of His joy and glory for a time and shall not I deny myself for Him in my pleasures and profits and ease?"

pp. 32-33

Not that we are actually giving up anything of permanent value.

For all surrendered
will be replenished
with so much more
and so much the better.

Job lost all.
Yet when God restored him
the Lord doubled the blessing of Job

So with us He will do that much
and more
some to be experience on earth
and all in heaven.

Those who learn to prefer Jesus
over themselves
over this temporal world
over the next paycheck
by giving generously to others
and tithing to the work of God

over the greatest comfort
by sharing it with others

over all that makes for mere earthly security and significance . . .

**all of them will have
an understanding given to them
of the Incarnation of God
in the Lord Jesus Christ**

**and will be used of God
to share this Word
with a dark and dying world**

Do you want to be among them?