



Sermon Series Notes

“What is God Really Like?”

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I. IDENTIFYING A CHRIST FOLLOWER

A. What Is Christ Really Like?

* Heb.1:3; John 14:7-9

* The representation of God by the religious leaders at Jesus’ first coming gave people a completely wrong view of what God is really like. If we based what God looks like on how the Pharisees and Teachers of the Law presented him, we would end up being extremely legalistic, manifest little or no joy in life, never hang out with “sinners,” become self-righteous, and be proud of being this way! Have you ever been around people who misrepresent the Lord?

* Examples: Everett Farris, Kevin Arthur; The group in Israel that demanded closed communion at the Garden Tomb.

* Jesus blew the minds of the religious establishment of the day, but He never compromised truth, never violated the holiness of His character. The Jews thought a kosher diet was one of the things that made them holy, but Jesus declared all foods clean. The religious leaders tithed meticulously, yet Jesus accused them of missing the more important matters of the Law – justice, mercy, and faithfulness. Their teaching had no real authority, though they studied the Scriptures diligently. And their lives reflected no real personal connection with God.

B. The Jesus People Need To Know

* Devotional Life - There was something about Jesus’ prayer/devotional life that made him different from the religious leaders of the day. His disciples knew he had a relationship with God by the way he prayed, and that is why they asked Him to teach them to how to pray. When God spoke to Saul of Tarsus about how hard it

was for him to kick against the goads, I believe one of those goads was the memory of listening to Stephen's prayer and witnessing how he faced persecution/death (See Acts 6:15;7:59-8:1a).

* Full of joy (Heb.1)

- See Phil.4:4

* Others-oriented; came to serve not to be served (antithesis of the Pharisees and Teachers of the law)...See '09 Merritt Island Pastor's Conf. Message, especially last part.

* Friend of publicans and sinners ; Jesus had a way of befriending sinners without compromising truth.

* Full of mercy/grace

- Examples of His unmerited favor, the poor, blind lame, lepers, a woman caught in the act of adultery...

C. Character Qualities Of Christ-Like Leaders

1. Humility

* Matt.11:29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart...

* Matt.12:19 He will not quarrel or cry out; no one will hear his voice in the streets.

* Jesus would many times tell people He had miraculously touched not to tell anyone. I believe this was not only because of the Spirit arranging the perfect timing for Him to endure the cross, but also because it was part of His nature. Can you imagine Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead, then saying "Who's da man?"

2. No Hypocrisy

* Luke 12:1...Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

* See Matthew 23:25-28

* Hidden sin is foolish (Heb.4:13), and yet man has a tendency to try and hide sin (Gen.3:8-10; Achan; II Kings 5:19-27; The beginning of Samson's ultimate downfall was when he kept hidden the sin of eating the honey out of the lion's carcass. And of course Ananias and Sapphira's attempt to hide their sin brought about deadly consequences.

* See Prov.28:13

3. Head In The Clouds/Heavenly Mindset

* Jesus never became attached to the things of this present world. Admittedly, he had an advantage on us, because he came from glory (See John 17:5). Remember how frustrated he became in his desire to go home (see Matt.17:1-17).

* See Mark 1:35; Luke 5:15-16; 9:58; John 8:23; 18:36

* These are people who talk about more than baseball, hot dogs, and apple pie! Their lives are not consumed with the things of this world but the things of heaven...