

Show Us The Father John 14:7-11

Have you ever had times in your life where you are going through such heavy trials and sorrows that they never seem to end? Do we ever sense that God is not near, or even might be tempted to think that God is not real? The distance seems so great and heaven seems so silent. Our agony and our distress just seem to go on and on. And we have been crying out to God, a lot like the Psalmist in Psalm 13:1-2, **“How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?”** Have you been there? Are you there right now? It is like a heaviness that is crushing us and there is no relief in sight. We feel forgotten of the Lord and have come to an end of ourselves. We might struggle with depression, others because of the weight of a relationship that brings such pain, still others because of physical pain, and others because of ongoing rejection of ones they love. But the world and people coming crashing down on us. We feel all alone in our agony and life even when people are around.

And if we are not there, here is the fearful thing — we will be there. No one escapes the pain and agony of this fallen world. And the question really should be, not whether we are there or not? But the better question is where do we turn? Where do we go? We have been looking at some very encouraging truths where Jesus is going away to prepare a place for us. And it is amazing that this is the very reminder that all our anxieties and suffering and trials have a termination date. They do not keep going. But this going away of Jesus was especially heavy on the disciples who had left homes, occupations and families to be with Jesus these last three years. All this talk about his departure left them fearful and full of anxiety about the future. And what this prompts is the request in verse 8, **“Philip said to him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.’”** This is what Philip wanted. He wanted some sign or some experience that God is with us, some visual experience that would validate the personhood of Christ, and that the Father was with them no matter what comes in the future. What he wanted was to walk by sight rather than by faith.

And I believe we can all relate to this request in one way or another. We want some sign from God in the midst of our pain that he is at least hears us and that he is aware of our plight. We do not want God’s face hidden from us but exposed so that we can see. And if we can just have that experience then we will be able to trust in him and walk according to his promises. Have you ever been there - desiring some sort of sign or indication - some sort of experience or sensory validation that God is with you? Modern day Christianity is full of those who claim experience and ask Christians to seek these and look for them, and long for them. And we can be hard on others who claim that heaven was open to them or God talked to so and so personally, but in the midst of sorrow and pain and struggle, don’t we want or even crave that also.

It is here that Jesus answers that very desire. And what he was doing here was preparing them for the time that he would be gone. He would ascend to his Father in heaven and prepare a place for them. And this section is so helpful for us because what it does is in our times of affliction and struggle is focus our attention right on

Christ again. So this should be such a helpful passage because none of us have never seen God, and none of us have ever seen Christ. We truly do walk by faith and not by sight. Even though God the Father and Jesus are in heaven and may seem distant. There is a way that we experience them in the here and now, and I hope this will aid us as we live in this fallen world and cry out to our ever present Christ who is always with us.

1. We see Jesus. Vv. 7-10a.

It is amazing how we always in our faith and in our struggles come back to Jesus. And the solution to our distresses is knowing him better — to continue to grow in our knowing him. We have something better than any sensory experience. We see Jesus through his word.

And this should be obvious by what Jesus says here in verse 7 that almost invites the question from Philip, “**If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.**” Now in one sense they did know Jesus, but they did not realize the true and glorious significance of Jesus or they would not be struggling with his departure at this time. If you know me then you know the Father. They are a package deal. But notice the second clause, “**From now on you do know him and have seen him.**” Now they know Jesus and the Father “from now on,” in other words, the events that are just about to transpire will be a revelation of who Jesus is and even a manifestation of the Father’s love through the death, burial, and ascension of Jesus, and the coming of the Spirit. But even though they are given this promise, we don’t like struggles or trial no matter how beneficial they are in our lives.

So look again at the request of Philip in verse 8, “**Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.**” What Philip wants with all of the coming trials on the horizon and the departure of Jesus is some kind of experiential manifestation of God’s glory that they will see. And maybe he is thinking of something like the request that was made by Moses to God that he might see his glory, and that glory might pass by him. And notice again what Philip says, “it is enough for us.” In other words, if we see this, if we see a visual demonstration of the Father in his glory, that will be enough no matter what life throws at us. And again, isn’t that like us so often? We go through loss and pain, and if I can just see some sign from God - maybe someone who trusts in Christ through this, or maybe some kind of sign in the heavens then I could get through this and make sense of it.

But look at the answer Jesus gives in verse 9, “**Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip?’**” And you can almost here some heart ache in the words of Jesus. You need something more than what has already been given you and will be given you to convince you of who I am and your need to trust me? But I think there is empathy in the words of Jesus here. Sorrow, that he should have made the connection and saw his hope in Christ but has not, so that he is looking to or hoping for something more. And again, modern day Christianity is always looking for something more. What Jesus has given us is not enough. I need the next spiritual rush of adrenaline, and if I don’t get it, I will die. Instead of seeing and

savouring what Jesus has given we are on a constant quest for more, as if that would quiet our hearts once and for all and relieve our pain.

And look at what Jesus says at the end of the verse, John 14:9, **“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’”** Philip was with Jesus for three years and had not fully understood who Jesus truly is, which is seen in the request, “Show us the Father?” Philip wants a visual display of the Father, and why? Seeing is believing.

And here Jesus refutes that whole notion of what we truly need. And what we truly need is to see him. He says, **“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.”** Now to understand what Jesus means here, it would be helpful to realize there are three different Greek words for the word “see.” First is the word “blepo” which means the physical seeing of something. The another word is “theoreo” and it mean to theorize. This is the word that Peter used when he saw the grave clothes of Jesus. He theorized what happened to him. Then there is the third word that is used here. The word, “Oreo.” This is the word that the disciples use when talking to Thomas in the gospel after his resurrection, “we have seen the Lord!” And the meaning is more then physical sight but comprehending with that sight. They knew he was not only risen but the very Lord of glory.

So what does he mean here? He means if you have taken notice of my life you have seen the Lord. The invisible Lord has become visible through the actions of Jesus. We went back to Nova Scotia one year and played a popular game called washers. And my sister videoed part of it, and we watched it later. And it amazing to see myself in the video, because I notice the way I walked or swung my arms or gestured was just like my Dad. It was like I was seeing my Dad. And this is the same with Jesus. As we see his everyday activities, as we see his interactions with others, or how he taught or handled trials and opposition we are seeing the exact imprint of the Father. We are seeing him. It is a glorious truth: if you want to see how God the Father would respond in any given situation, then look at Jesus in the gospels.

But there is also a second truth being g emphasized here, and that is Jesus’ union with the Father. **“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.”** Certainly the members of the Godhead are distinct, but they are also One. There is a marvellous union of being. There is only One God. James White gives this definition in *The Forgotten Trinity*, **“Within the One being that is God, there exists eternally three coequal and coeternal persons, namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”** We do not worship three God’s but one God. We are monotheistic. So when Jesus says whoever sees the sees the Father sees the Son he speaks of this union, and also speak of the truth that Jesus is none other than God.

Now why is this important? And the reason why is if we want to know who God is, who the Father is, and if we want to know God in the midst of all our trials, all we have to do is look and see Jesus through the Gospels. If we want to know if God knows about our trials and cares, look at Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus. Jesus wept! He cares about our suffering. If we wonder if God really wants anything to do with us, we look at Jesus, who invites us, **“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”** (Mt. 11:28). If we wonder if God can give the necessary strength and grace to go through what we are going through. This is the One who still storms

and raised the dead. He is able to give the grace and comfort that we need. If we wonder if he cares about our plight, just look at Jesus suffering on the cross for you and me personally. These are not sensory experiences that come and go but the abiding truth of Jesus wherever we go or whatever we go through. And we can know the invisible God in a greater way than any past generations, because Christ took on human flesh. We do not need any other sign, wonder or revelation than the One that has been given through His Son.

2. Two reasons to believe on Jesus. Vv.10b-11.

The reasons we want some sort of experience is we really do not want to go through the struggle. But it is through the struggle of coming back and seeing who Jesus is and what he has done, is doing, and what he will do that we are truly changed. It is through the struggle we are changed to see Jesus and all his glory, and then we pronounce that whatever I am going through he is more than enough. But let me ask you: do you believe whatever your struggle or pain or trial right now that Jesus is more than enough not only to see you through but cause you to grow and magnify him? Because he gives us two reason why we should trust in Christ in this passage.

One is found right at the end of verse 10, **“The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.”**

Now the meaning here is not that Jesus is a puppet that God the Father speaks through, but his life is consumed at every moment with doing the will of his Father. And since Jesus is God, he cannot but say and act and do the will of his Father. There is such a union of persons. So when I come to the Scriptures I am with the words and works of Christ, I am reading the very words of God. I am reading the inspired, inerrant, authoritative, and sufficient Scriptures. Do you want to know God in the midst of your trial right here and right now? Do you want to know he is real and present and loves you? Do you want his presence and comfort? Pick up and read the Word of Christ. It is all that you need. You do not have to look anywhere else.

Listen to 2 Peter 1:3-4, **“His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.”** Christ has granted to us **“all things that pertain to life and godliness.”** Now how does he give me everything I need because there are times I feel like I am drowning? He says, **“through the knowledge of him.”** What happens when we are in the Scriptures is not just some academic exercise of gaining knowledge. But we see Christ and we change in the midst of our trials. Listen to 2 Corinthians 3:18, **“And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.”** We behold Jesus in the Scriptures, and the more we behold him, the more we are changed by him. He becomes so much more glorious that the things of this world and even the trials of life lose their grip. We come to have confidence in him. We fear him in a glorious reverence rather than fearing the things around us. We see that reflection of Jesus only in one place and that is the Scriptures.

Why would we seek or look any other place for the face of God rather than looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith?

And then the other reason he gives us to believe on Jesus is the miracles of Christ. Look at verse 11, **“Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.”** Jesus is so amazing because it would be easy in our struggles and doubts for him to be heavy handed. And what he does is come right back to his miracles. It should suffice for you just to accept the words that I have spoken, but if you cannot do that, look to the validation and the evidence that I am the Messiah and therefore, I am all you need — my words and works. You do not need anything else. And think of it, because Jesus uses a similar strategy and argument when John the Baptist was in prison waiting execution. Some of his followers come to him to inquire for John whether Jesus is the Christ or they should be looking for another. And we do, because of the feebleness of our human condition shake and often struggle with doubts, but listen to the answer Jesus gives in Matthew 11:4-5, **“And Jesus answered them, ‘Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them.’”**

Jesus through the will and oneness with the Father and the power of the Spirit authenticated his personhood through these signs and wonders. He has power over the natural elements - he walks on water and still storms. He has power to create in the creating of wine at Cana of Galilee, or the multiplication of fish and bread at the feeding of the five thousand. He has power over disease and every malady, and one day will deliver us from them all. He has power over the demonic and unseen world which is seen in him casting out demons. He speaks and they have to obey. He has power to forgive sins which is seen in the healing of the paralytic who was lowered down through the roof. Who can forgive sins? Only God alone. This is the One who is One with the Father - very God and fully God.

It is amazing how his enemies never refute his miracles. The greatest sign is the one at this point in the narrative has not been done yet, and that is his resurrection. Jesus is alive having conquered the penalty of our sin. As you see more and more who Jesus is and the authority and power do we really think that he is not aware of our problems or struggles or pain, or somehow he was deficient in not addressing them in his Word, or does not have the ability to help us in time or need, or has not given what we need to truly live for Christ? Do we believe that his Word and presence in his word is not enough?

Remember the request of Philip, **“Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”** What Jesus is saying here is: I am enough. I am more than enough for whatever you will face in life. He leaves His Word, His Spirit, and His people, to help us see Jesus through the Scriptures. We want to somehow try and convince ourselves we need something more. The trial is too great and the doubts too strong. If God would just manifest himself that would be enough. Let me say, we fool ourselves. If that is what we are looking for it will never be enough. Peter saw one of the confirming and one of the greatest manifestations of Jesus’ deity at the Mount of Transfiguration. And he says in 2 Peter 1:16-17, **“For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were**

eyewitnesses of his majesty. For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.' And we think if we could only have what Peter had, then I would never struggle again. Philip might even think, if I saw what the three disciples saw that would be enough. But remember, Peter is the one who denied him three times.

But listen what Peter says next in 2 Peter 1:19, **"And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts."** "More fully confirmed" means more fully assured or better. This is what we have. Something that is more substantial than any sign and wonder that could ever be done. Jesus says here, he is enough! And if that is true in whatever we are going through today are we in the Scriptures? Are we seeing and savouring all that Christ is? Are we being changed from one degree to another? Oh, fellow sufferer, find the solace and comfort for your soul in the only place you can. Look at our Christ. John 14:1, **"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me."**