

41. How is your point of view of Jesus?

August 7, 2016

People look at the things, situations, and other people from the point of view according to their hearts and intentions. Am I correct?

What we are about to study today is like watching a Jerry Springer show. It's riddled with adultery, incest, lust, jealousy, murder, violence, political fighting, and all the other garbage that you would see in today's movies. Herod has his point of view regarding Christ. Then, we'll find ourselves looking at the multitude of people who were fed by Jesus and yet they were coming up with a completely different view of Jesus. We also will see the disciples looking at Jesus with their own point of view. Finally, we will see the whole thing from Jesus' divine point of view.

A. HEROD'S SUPERSTITIOUS POINT OF VIEW

Mark 6:14-20 Now King Herod heard of Him, for His name had become well known. And he said, "John the Baptist is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him." 15 Others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is the Prophet, or like one of the prophets." 16 But when Herod heard, he said, "This is John, whom I beheaded; he has been raised from the dead!" 17 For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her. 18 For John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." 19 Therefore Herodias held it against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not; 20 for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just and holy man, and he protected him. And when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

The reports of Christ's ministry even reached into the palace of Herod Antipas. Mark called him "King," which is what Herod wanted to be called. But in reality, this godless Herod was only a tetrarch, the ruler of a fourth part of the nation. After Herod the Great died, the Romans divided his territory among his three sons and Antipas was made tetrarch of Perea and Galilee.

Herod Antipas had married the daughter of King Aretas IV and then had divorced her, so he could marry Herodias, the wife of his half brother, Herod Philip.

It was a wicked marriage that was contrary to the Law of Moses, and the fearless John the Baptist had denounced the king for his sins. Herod feared John, privately listened to his preaching. However, Herodias, on the other hand, hated John, wanted to kill him, and patiently waited for the most convenient time. You know what they say, "Hell has no fury like a woman's scorned."

The request of Herodias shows that she had this planned out all along. She knew her husband and she knew what kind of a pervert he was to look at his own step-daughter Salome, who also was his niece with lustful eyes, and knew she could get what she wanted this way.

Even though Herod promised a half of his kingdom to Salome, he couldn't keep his promise in reality, because he was nothing more than a puppet of the Roman government, and he had no authority to compromise any of his territory. He just wanted to impress the party guests.

Just as we have read, Herod is looking at Jesus with his superstitious eyes. To Herod, Jesus is nothing more than a somebody who can do a few nifty magic tricks as a court jester.

Matthew 14:13-14 When Jesus heard it, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself. But when the multitudes heard it, they followed Him on foot from the cities. And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick.

When the difficult times hit us, we don't know what to do because of the overwhelming circumstances. That is a good time to tell Jesus about it. He is our Counselor and the Good Shepherd. He may not tell you the reason you are going through it, but He will be there with you every moment. I am sure that Jesus felt grief for the death of His cousin, John the Baptist.

B. THE DISCIPLES' UNCOMPASSIONATE POINT OF VIEW

John 6:5-6 Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" 6 But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do.

We need to go to the Book of Mark to get what the disciples in general said first to Jesus.

Mark 6:35-36 When the day was now far spent, His disciples came to Him and said, "This is a deserted place, and already the hour is late. 36 Send them away, that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy themselves bread; for they have nothing to eat."

Nice, that is very compassionate, guys. Before we look down on their heartless comment, let's think about ourselves. Don't we do the same thing sometimes? Because someone in our fellowship or unbeliever is in our way or an inconvenience to us, we try to brush them off. I am so glad that our Lord God doesn't do that to us. Next time when you have a chance to extend the compassion of God, please remember this lesson.

Did you notice what Jesus was doing in v6 in John? Was He picking on poor Philip or being mean to him? No, He wanted to build Philip's muscle of faith, to help him grow and make him rely on the Lord instead of his own capability.

C. PHILIP'S CALCULATED POINT OF VIEW

John 6:7 Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little."

A denarius was approximately a day's wage for the common laborer. Philip was thinking, "200 day's wages would not make any dent on feeding these 5000 men plus their women and children." With computer speed, he had already calculated their odds against the mass and decided that there is no way they, nor could even this miracle worker Jesus pull this off.

You see, Philip's balance sheet doesn't include the infinite wealth and power of God, who owns everything in the universe and who can do exceedingly abundantly beyond all that we ask or think.

Ephesians 3:20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us

D. ANDREW'S LIMITED POINT OF VIEW?

John 6:8-9 One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, 9 "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?"

You have to give credit to Andrew. He somehow was able to con a kid to give up his lunch lox. But Andrew came up with the same song the second lyrics as Philip.

By the way, some people might say, "Those five barley loaves and two small fish were a healthy and expensive lunch." No, sirree. Barley bread was for poor people during that period and small fish meant to be a couple of pickled sardines, not some big size salmons or trouts.

Speaking of seafood, I used to be one of those daring people who would try different dishes. One time I tried a spoonful of caviar at a really fancy restaurant, because the company I used to work for treated a group of employees. I must admit that I don't have the class, nor taste for it. Because it tasted like taking a bite of the mud from the bottom of a murky fish pond. If you like it, because you have class, more power to ya.

Andrew probably was holding the kid's lunch box and looked around and saw all those thousands of people, he looked down on the five loaves and two small fish, then he blurted out, "What are they among so many?" He was looking for loaves in all the wrong places.

While Philip was burning his pocket calculator's battery busy and checking the numbers, while Andrew was counting the people's heads vs. five loaves and two fish, they all forgot Whom they were with, just as the Israelites in the wilderness after they escaped Egypt continuously forgot what kind of God they were following.

Though the disciples of Jesus heard the claims of Jesus as the Son of God, which He meant that He is God Himself, they really didn't believe in Him as the Jewish religious leaders didn't. By now, the disciples had been with Jesus about two years, yet they were not getting it.

Ladies and gentlemen, we really cannot laugh at the lack of faith in the disciples' hearts because they represent many of us. We have a tendency to analyze the situation and calculate what God can do according to our limited capability and assume that He cannot do more than what we think He is able to do. Do you see how we limit God by not trusting Him?

God is faithful to keep what He promises. He means what He says, what He says He means.

When Jesus says, "I will meet all of your needs," He will.

When Jesus says, "I will guide you through the darkness," He will.

When Jesus says, "I will carry your burden on My shoulders," He will.

When Jesus says, "I will give you peace in your heart that passes all understanding and guards your heart as long as you depend on Me," He will.

Whether your impossibility is a health problem, financial problem, family problem, or job problem, the Lord is with you and nothing is impossible to Him. You cannot find a better person to depend on.

E. JESUS' DIVINE POINT OF VIEW

John 6:10-13 Then Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thou-

sand. 11 And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted. 12 So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost." 13 Therefore they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.

The Lord took the little boy's lunch, blessed it, broke it, handed it out to His disciples, and they fed the whole multitude. The miracle took place in the hands of the Savior, not in the hands of the disciples. He multiplied the food, they only had the joyful privilege of passing it out as channels of His blessing.

Jesus could have the people to come forward to Him to get food or had angels from heaven to deliver "In-N-Out" cheeseburgers, fries, and Coke to everyone instantly.

But He chose to use His disciples to distribute the food. Can you imagine yourself being one of the twelve disciples of Jesus carrying baskets of barley loaves and fish and handing them out? The more you give out, the more you have in your basket and the more you get excited about doing what the Lord told you to do.

We can find two very important principles we must take notice:

1) Our God chooses to use us as channels of His blessings to bless others.

What a joy beyond description to serve the Lord our God and His people! We get to be His representatives to bless others. You really don't have any idea what it is like until you start to serve others and the Lord.

2) The more you give and serve others, the more blessings you get from the Lord and receive the fulfillment of your life.

There are many, many selfish Christians who absolutely do nothing for the Lord and His people, the church. They go to church and sit, listen, get fed from the Word, get served by others, and leave the church building expecting someone else to take care of everything for them. They have the mentality of a slave master instead of the heart of our Servant King Lord Jesus Christ.

Some of you may think, "Did you just call me a selfish Christian because I am not doing anything in this church?" Yes, I did and I don't apologize. It is not because our church needs your help, rather I want you to be blessed beyond measure by serving the Lord and His people.

By the way, I want all of you to notice what Jesus did before He distributed the food to His disciples: He gave thanks to the Father in heaven for the meal. If you are wondering whether you should pray before your meals or not, especially in restaurants, what do you think? Yes, absolutely pray before your meal and give thanks to Him for the provision. Yes, that's including the school cafeteria food and hospital food.

The twelve baskets for the twelve disciples as a reminder for them. As each one carried a basketful of the leftovers, I am sure that their hearts were still pounding in excitement and wonder of the identity of Jesus, their Master. Jesus is generous, but not wasteful.

F. APPLICATIONS

1) God may work with no belief, but not with unbelief.

God doesn't have a problem when a seeker has a doubt. He would meet that seeker at his level. But when a scoffer demands proof from God, he will hear nothing but dead silence from heaven.

2) The first step is not to measure our resources, but to determine God's will and trust Him to meet the need.

Instead of looking at the difficult situation as a road block, we need to see it as a great opportunity to trust our Lord.