

**Encounters With Jesus**

***“Unseen Reality”***

**Luke 9:28-36**

- Delivered at DHBC on August 18th, 2013 (Soli Deo Gloria)

Intro:

* one of the biggest burdens that lies on a preacher is communicating Truths accurately
  + “Is what I am saying true?”
  + We stay tight to the Scripture 🡪 but still have problem with balance
    - ie elevating one side to a point where we deny the other
      * God’s sovereignty / human responsibility
      * One person of the Trinity above the other two
* The struggle I am most attuned to is what Dietrich Bonheoffer called “costly grace”
  + GRACE
    - Bible makes it quite clear that our acceptance by God is not based on anything we do
* *for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,*” (Ephesians 2:1, NIV)
* “*made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.*” (Ephesians 2:5, NIV)
* “*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—*” (Ephesians 2:8, NIV)
  + So without anything we contribute, God saves us by grace. This goes against our natural inclination to work and to earn.
  + It seems to bring us right to a cliff 🡪 that how we behave – even after we come to Christ – doesn’t matter.
  + It seems that Paul was accused of standing too close to this cliff
  + Romans 6:1,15
    - There is a cost 🡪 not as payment but as sacrifice of new allegiance
  + COST
    - We’ve seen this cost in this series
      * June 🡪 Rich Young Ruler, wouldn’t drop his idol
      * Last week 🡪 listen to Jesus, cost of following, when you recognize who Jesus is, it is impossible to continue to pursue own goals.
  + This passage, this encounter with Jesus, serves as an excellent picture of this costly grace.

Character introduction :

* Peter’s history
  + Fisherman, called (Lk 5) to be fisher of men,
  + trained by Jesus, recognizes Jesus as Messiah, witness of the miracles (incl. transfiguration, raising of Lazarus),
  + Ate the last supper (“Even if I have to die, I will not deny you”), fell asleep while Jesus prayed for deliverance, drew his sword against the guards that arrested Jesus
  + Denied even knowing Jesus (so much for that commitment)
    - This was not a sin of ignorance, Peter just simply opted for self-preservation
    - He heard nothing of Jesus words
      * Last week (“I will die” & “is costs to follow”)
      * No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the Kingdom of God.
      * Peter has NO PART in the in the Kingdom of God
      * Remember, this is the guy that Jesus called “rock”.
      * And the worst part is he was probably the best of the bunch 🡪 easy to look down of Peter
        + Peter isn’t Touchstone (comedic relief in Shakespeare), he is us … on our best days
        + Me this week (“adversity”, annoyance, Fathers do not provoke)
      * Since the denial, Peter saw (from a distance) Jesus crucified, saw the grave clothes in the tomb (but didn’t go in), saw the resurrected Jesus with the other disciples
  + Safe to say, at this point Peter is an emotional wreck.
  + Back fishing. Don’t know why. Manuel work settles the mind?
  + “Even if I have to die, I will not deny you” “I swear I don’t know the man”, did He really rise?

**Textual summary**

Sermon body

1. The grace Jesus gives is unmerited
   1. Not ignoring sin
      1. Imagine seeing your wife after caught cheating?
         1. Everything is going to remind you of failure
      2. Similarity to calling of Peter (Luke 5)
         1. That passage ends with “from now on you will be catching men” (5:10)
      3. Charcoal fire
         1. Mentioned twice in the NT. Here (21:9) and at the site of the third denial (John 18:18)
      4. 3 times Jesus asks the question (3 denials)
         1. notice Peter’s brokenness at the three repetition
   2. earned grace
      1. After each time that Peter confirms his love, Jesus gives him a command
      2. But these imperatives (commands) are not the price of love, they are the outworking of it.
         1. Like flowers after a fight
         2. Not, “I give you a token gift as penance” but rather “a natural outworking of love” 🡪 fruit.
   3. Peter’s attitude.
      1. Not likely expecting Jesus (in fact takes some time to recognize him despite the odd command he gives)
      2. Excitement and eagerness to be with Jesus
         1. Jumps into the water (7), later grabs the net and hauls it in by himself (11)

“God is the only comfort, He is also the supreme terror: the thing we most need and the thing we most want to hide from. He is our only possible ally, and we have made ourselves His enemies. Some people talk as if meeting the gaze of absolute goodness would be fun. They need to think again. They are still only playing with religion. Goodness is either the great safety or the great danger - according to the way you react to it. And we have reacted the wrong way.” – C.S. Lewis

* + - 1. How does this show us the grace of God? We have already seen how Peter is not unaware of his sin. And yet here he runs toward Jesus – this resurrected Lord that he had denied.
      2. Peter knew well, his desire to be at Jesus feet demonstrates that Peter knows Jesus to be full of grace. It also shows us Peter’s repentance.
    1. No response to “more than these” (v.15)
       1. Picking up on “even if everyone else falls away, I will never leave you” (pre denial)
       2. Peter repents of this
    2. Our response to grace
       1. Run to Jesus
       2. We often hide after sin thinking that time will heal the breaking of God’s law. This is what Adam and Eve did.
       3. Instead grace tells us to go straight to God. Never are we more aware of God’s ultimate goodness than when we are most aware of our sin. And never are we more aware of grace than when we are aware of both His goodness and our sin and yet sit in His presence

1. **The grace Jesus gives is costly**
   1. Feed/care for
      1. All encompassing
      2. Became Peter’s life work – be a shepherd like Jesus looking after Jesus’ flock
   2. Follow me
      1. Present active imperatives 🡪 continue to follow me
      2. Jesus alive 🡪 shepherd 🡪 cross 🡪 resurrection
      3. Peter alive 🡪 shepherd 🡪 cross 🡪 resurrection
      4. Prophecy
      5. Individually. We are called to follow Jesus in different ways. We will make different sacrifices when we set Jesus up as Lord of our life, we aren’t meant to look around and see who is getting away with sacrificing less.

- at this point it is still possible to have a large disconnect between this concept of free grace and acceptance to come to Jesus despite our sin and yet this cost of obedience. But I want to spend some time looking at one concept we have skipped over.

1. **The grace Jesus gives is based on love**
   * 1. I spent a lot of this week without a computer and without the things I normally use to prepare a sermon. So I spent more time walking and thinking and praying and trying to hold all my thoughts in my head.
     2. One thing from this passage that kept echoing in my mind was Jesus’ question to Peter – “Peter do you love me”.
        1. two different words
     3. **what does it mean to love Jesus**
   1. Love is personal
      1. It isn’t some scheme or secret right. It isn’t mere faith in an idea or set of principles
      2. We have changed the word “love” but it has an inherently personal mark to it – you can’t really love ideas or inanimate objects.
      3. Relationship with Jesus

“*I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.*” (John 15:15, NIV)

* 1. love is costly

“*Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.*” (John 15:13, NIV)

* to engage in any relationship is costly but that doesn’t
  1. love is simultaneously easy and difficult to maintain
     1. love is easy to maintain because, if the object is worthy of love, it is perpetual (wisdom and worship)
     2. love is difficult to maintain because of “self-gravity”

1. **The grace Jesus gives is backed by power**
2. What is different here as compared to Peter’s promise pre-crucifixion?
3. Peter follows through for two reasons
   1. Resurrection and Spirit
   2. The resurrection gives hope of victory (the following Jesus pattern is a lot harder when we don’t see resurrection but Resurrection is talking to Peter)
   3. The spirit empowers us. Acts 1:8.
4. So there is this cost of obedience to grace but there is power and motivation that it is worth it.

What we are left with is this. Jesus offers a grace that is unmerited but it costs us dearly. It costs because it envelops everything we are and is based on love. But though our love can falter, Jesus’ grace is back by power. And when our love does falter, we know that we can run back in the presence of God – not because we deserve to, but rather because His grace does not depend on merit.