

Sunday 11th June 2023

Becoming More Like Jesus: Part 1

Text: John 1:18 NIV

Who is Jesus to you?

Perhaps one of the questions many people would ask God today is, “ God what is your purpose for my life? You’ve saved me, given me eternal life, what do you want to do with my life?

Apostle Paul has responded to this question by saying,

“29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. (*Romans 8:28-29 NIV*)

In other words, God's desire for us is to become more like Christ, God's purpose for His children is to restore that image that He gave to man at the beginning of all creation when He said,

“Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” (Genesis 1:26)

My question today is, who is Jesus to you? I have learned that many times we become what we believe.

Many believers today have stopped seeking to become more like Him (Jesus), instead we've created a Christ who looks more like us. We want a Christ who can conform to our character.

- In her book “Organic God” Margaret Feinberg writes that, “In my quietness of my soul, I cannot help but wonder, how much of God do I really know? If we met on the street, would I even recognize Him?”
(Feinberg, 2007, p. 17).

Question:

Would I know my God if I met him on the street? The Jews rejected Christ not because they didn't want a messiah, because they had created an image of a messiah they wanted

In his book “Your God Is Too Small” *J.B. Phillips* explains that “Many men and women today are living, often with inner dissatisfaction, without any faith in God at all. This is not because they are particularly wicked or selfish or, as the old-fashioned would say, “godless,

But because they have not found with their adult minds a God big enough to “account for” life, big enough to “fit in with” the new scientific age, big enough to command their highest admiration and respect, and consequently their willing co-operation. (*Phillips, 2004, P. 8*).

Jesus asked a lot of questions. One of the questions Jesus put to the disciples was, “Who do you say that I am?” (*Luke 9:20*). The context of Jesus’ question “*Who do you say that I am?*” is important: “Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, ‘Who do the crowds say I am?’

“They replied, ‘Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life.’ “‘But what about you?’ he asked. ‘Who do you say I am?’ “Peter answered, ‘God’s Messiah’” (*Luke 9:18–20*). Parallel accounts are found in Matthew 16 and Mark 8.

Apostle John begins his book by presenting Jesus as the only begotten son of God who became flesh, he gives him a very good introduction. Before we can talk about becoming more like Him, John gives us his observation.

John 1: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

a) According to John, the word was Jesus Christ, the eternal ultimate expression of God. In Genesis God spoke the world into existence. In the gospel God spoke His final Word through the living word, His son. The phrase “the Word was God” attributes Deity to the word without defining all the Godhead as “the Word” John declares that through Him all things were made.

b) Friends the only thing that can unite us is the word of God, because we are very different. Jesus said, *“Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the father who sent me.”* (John 14:24 NIV).

c) Probably the greatest question we should be asking is “how can this Word can become light and life in us?” We can read the most recent Bibles, we can wake up very early in the morning and read the Bible, but those words can only remain on Paper.

d) We can read how our God is a wonderful Counselor, yet deep in us we are dying because of depression, we can read how he is the Father of Fatherless, yet we are feeling lonely. If His words can be light and life in us, we can be more like Him. Christ's message and his Father were one.

John continues from verse 9-11, “The **true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.** 10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.”

Verse 12-13, “Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, **he gave the right to become children of God—** 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.”

1. a) According to these verses 9-13, **we can become more like Christ when we receive the right to become the children of God.**

We may not be from the same race, tribe or even have same history, but majority of us have been given the right to be Australians.

- b) Jesus told Nicodemus that, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. (John 3:5-6)
- c) Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. (1 John 3:2 NIV)

Verse 14;

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

2) We can be more like Him if His presence is dwelling in us.

a) My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand; I and my Father are one. (John 10:27-30 NIV)

Conclusion

Where are you in your journey of becoming more like Jesus?

Becoming more like Christ is a journey