

John 14vs8-21

Seeing is not believing...

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Seeing is not believing...

John 14 vs 8-21

In this study we're going to look at the third question that Jesus' disciples ask him – this one is asked by Philip...

Let's start by reading ch 14 vs 8-14:

ch 14 vs 8-14: *Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."*
⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? 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. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

¹² "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me for anything in my name, I will do it.

If only...

Welcome to the "if only" believer!

v 8: *Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."*

➤ "If you would only give me a glimpse of God!"

When might you hear this?

- When doubt sets in
- When difficulties come
- When commitment is required

In other words: "Give me some proof!"...or "some more experience!"

So this study is going to be all about "seeing" God and "experiencing" him!

There are four different parts to Jesus' answer:

Part 1 - "Don't you know that already?!"

v 9: *Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"*

The key to Jesus' response comes in between the two questions:

“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father”

➤ Remember John ch 1?

ch 1 v 18: ***He (Jesus) has made him (God) known.***

➤ Please note the past tense - it's an action that is complete!

➤ An alternative translation would be :

“Jesus has declared God once and for all”

So back to Philip's question: ***“Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”***

...And Jesus' answer: ***“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.”***

In what ways have we seen God in Jesus, and in John's Gospel so far?

Philip should have remembered what he has seen of Jesus:

- Nathanael being seen under the fig tree before he was physically seen by Jesus (ch 1)
- Turning the water into wine (ch 2)
- Knowing all about the woman at the well and her five men! (ch 4)
- The healing of the official's son (ch 4)
- The man born paralysed – leaping up after 38 years! (ch 5)
- The feeding of 5000 people (ch 6)
- Jesus walking on water – and delivering everybody in the boat (ch 6)
- The repeated inability of the Jews to arrest or stone Jesus
- A man born blind is healed (ch 9)
- Lazarus is raised from the dead! (ch 11)

And Philip is about to see the resurrection of his Saviour, Jesus!

He has heard Jesus' teaching:

- The powerful logic and consistent depth of teaching that means Jesus is called LORD!
- The clarity of the lecture to Nicodemus (ch 3)
- The talk with the woman at the well (ch 4)
- The teaching of the crowd of 5000 (ch 6)
- Jesus with the Pharisees and religious leaders
- The constant fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy

He has witnessed the claims of Jesus:

- ***“I AM”*** – the very name of God!

And finally:

- The way that Jesus exposes us all for what we truly are (chs 7-9) ...and which side we are really on!

No wonder Jesus says to us: “Want to see God? LOOK AT ME.”

But Jesus’ response to Philip contains more than simply the statement at the centre of the two questions...

What do Jesus’ words in vs 10-11 suggest about Philip?

v 10a: “***Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?***”

v 11a: “***Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me...***”

- Put simply: “...If you don’t yet grasp that I am God, and therefore find all the evidence you need in me, then you do not yet have faith!”

This leads us on to

Part 2 – “Which part of ‘I and the Father are one’ didn’t you understand?!”

Jesus points Philip to the evidence as to why he should believe:

- v 10b: “***...the Father who dwells in me does his works***”
- v 11b: “***...or else believe on account of the works themselves***”

v10b is really interesting!! Let’s look at it again without the last three words (“***does his works***”)

This would give us: “***The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me _____***”

Just think – surely we would have expected this sentence to say:

“***...but the Father who dwells in me SPEAKS***” (NOT “***does his works***”)

- Jesus’ words ARE God’s words
- So that... as Jesus speaks – GOD WORKS!

So – Jesus answer to Philip’s question is:

- “Every time I open my mouth – God works!”
- “Want to see God?! LISTEN TO ME!”
- “Want to experience God more?! HEAR MY WORDS!”

In other words - if we want to see God work in our lives – where do we go?

- NOT to a ‘spiritual experience’ of some kind... but:
- to the WORD of Christ...

Remember John ch 5:

ch 5 v 24: *“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.”*

- Eternal Life – through the authority of his WORD

This leads on to

Part 3 – Asking for the impossible

“You want to do God’s work..?”

- ***SPEAK TO JESUS:***

Read ch 14 vs 12-14: *“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me for anything in my name, I will do it.”*

v 13: ***“Whatever you ask for in my name, this I will do...”***

How do we ask?

- By prayer

What does it mean to ask ***“in my name”***? ie in the name of Jesus?

- We must ask in line with the things of the character of Jesus – the Son of God!

It is helpful to know that at the time the Bible was written, names were often chosen to reflect the (hoped for) character of the person. Hence:

- God – ‘I AM’
- Jesus – ‘God rescues’...

Therefore... praying “in Jesus’ name” means:

- Praying in line with what Jesus has shown to be his work, priorities and agenda.

For Jesus, doing his ‘work’ means glorifying the Father:

v 13: *“Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”*

Praying in Jesus is therefore NOT a blank cheque!!

- NOT – “Name it and claim it!”
- NOT – “Please give me that promotion so that I can buy that bargain Lamborghini!”
- But rather – “Help me do your work, Jesus... Help me be more like you, Jesus... help me love and serve my Christian brothers and sisters, Jesus...”

Let’s look again at v12:

v 12: *“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.”*

- So what are the ‘greater’ works of Jesus?

Let’s look again at John 5 vs 20 -24:

ch 5 vs 20-24: *“For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. ²¹ For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. ²² The Father judges no one, but has given all judgement to the Son, ²³ that all may honour the Son, just as they honour the Father. Whoever does not honour the Son does not honour the Father who sent him. ²⁴ Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgement, but has passed from death to life.”*

The ‘greater works’ = introducing the possibility of eternal life to those we meet through the passing on of Jesus’ word.

They are ‘greater’ because after Jesus’ death and the coming of the Holy Spirit, far greater numbers of people are able to come to life.

What is the purpose?

- TO GLORIFY THE FATHER

How should we ask?

- PRAY!! It’s important... and SO worthwhile!

Summary: so what are we doing when we pray to do these 'greater works'?

➤ Asking for help to proclaim Jesus' WORD

...to the glory of God

...through the giving of spiritual life

...as we pray in Jesus' name.

Does Jesus want to answer such prayers?

➤ OF COURSE – that is what Jesus' name means – 'God rescues'

➤ Prayers that ask for the glorifying of God the Father and proclamation of the Word WILL be answered.

So far - this passage is a three part summary of 'experiencing God' today:

- 1) LOOK
- 2) LISTEN
- 3) TALK (Pray to Jesus – in line with his will)

But – there is more!!

Now... do you want to see God?

Part 4 – “How could the impossible possibly be done?”

...Through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Let's look at vs 15-21:

Read ch 14 vs 15-21: *“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you for ever, ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.*

¹⁸ “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹ Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

- “LOVE ME”
- “OBEY ME”
- “RECEIVE ME”

v 15: *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments.*

- Expressed differently: "As you love me – so you will WANT to keep my commandments!"

What will happen to the person who loves Jesus?

v 16: *"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you for ever..."*

- The Holy Spirit will come as their... Helper

v 17: *"...even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you."*

- The Spirit of Truth...
- ...whom **"the world cannot receive"**

When Jesus says in v16 - **"I will give you another"** - he means the Holy Spirit is to be an advocate – in the place of Jesus (who is about to go back to his Father).

So then... God the Holy Spirit is not some impersonal "force" – like the force in Star Wars!!

- He is **"Another"**, **"Helper"**, **"the Spirit of truth"** – he is the third PERSON of the Trinity who Jesus promises will come and dwell within anyone who loves the Lord Jesus!!

So... what has Philip failed to grasp?!

- When Jesus goes to be with his Father, Philip will NOT be left alone:

v 18: *"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."*

Look at what more Jesus promises his followers:

vs 19-20: *"Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you."*

- "You will see me"
- "You will live"
- You will know that Jesus is in the Father... and we are in Jesus

So how close is our relationship going to be to God the Father and the Son..?

v 20: *"In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you."*

- Yes – you did read that right! Jesus will be within us... bringing revelation and life!
- Is this not what Jesus would have said to you and me if we had been there like Philip?!

So... in summary:

Philip is asking for a fresh or 'greater' experience of God.

Jesus' answer goes like this:

- “LOOK at me – you will see the Father walking on earth.”
- “LISTEN to me – you will see the Father working on earth.”
- “PRAY in my name – you will experience the Father.”
- “LOVE & OBEY me – I will be with you by the Spirit.”

What next..?

But what about everyone else..?!

John 14 vs 8-21

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