



Jesus – Like Father like Son

Welcome and Opening Prayer

During our studies over the past few weeks, we have taken a ‘behind-the-scenes’ look at some of the great Old Testament heroes and heroines. Surely it makes sense to end our exploration with Jesus Christ Himself! Why? Simply because, however useful it is to study all those who came before Him, it is only the One True Son of God who lived out and perfected the divine blueprint. Every other person (and there are many more faith heroes and heroines in the Scriptures) was ultimately a human being. They had gifts, talents and stories to tell. They also had failures, weaknesses and flaws. Only Christ perfected what all others set out to achieve for God. We study and learn from the heroes and heroines of the faith, all the time looking to Jesus Christ as the author and perfecter of our faith.

Reading – Mark 6:1-6

One evangelistic initiative that took place in my home church was door-to-door mission. The first question people would be asked was – if you could ask for one miracle what would it be? This question brought up all kinds of answers, reflections and sometimes even more questions! I’ll ask you that question too – if you could ask for one miracle what would it be?

I want us to reflect on the fact that however tough the circumstances of everyday life can be or can become, we have a relationship with the God of miracles – miracles that He is more than capable of performing.

In our reading from Mark’s Gospel people around Jesus asked questions –

Where did this man get these things?

What’s this wisdom that’s been given to him? He even does miracles! Isn’t he the carpenter’s son?

It’s interesting to think that one of the issues people had with Jesus was that he was or had been a carpenter, the son of a carpenter! Surely a miracle-worker would have a more prestigious upbringing? Perhaps a priestly background? Or even military training! But a carpenter? Really?

Carpenters pull on clothes cloudy with sawdust, nurse blistered hands, and stretch weary backs from physical work. Good carpenters are perfectionists. There's a motto – measure twice, cut once. Skilled carpenters are also problem solvers, knowing that anything can be fixed. Carpenters are artists too. They understand that their work can be both functional and beautiful.

Not a wonder God chose a carpenter's house to be the home of His most beloved Son. Jesus would of course have learned the trade of His earthly father. He too take pride in woodcutting, chiselling, hammering and smoothing the rough wood. The hours would have been long and perhaps this gave Jesus time and space to consider and cultivate His relationship with His heavenly Father.

Jesus learned that building and repairing took great strength along with gentleness, persistence with patience, an eye for quality alongside an appreciation for beauty. He didn't despise this humble environment, because He didn't make a distinction between the natural and the spiritual. Jesus knew that every act in the earthly realm has resonance in the heavenly realm.

As a young man Jesus left His earthly father's carpenter's shop to go out into the wider world. Men and women would now be His craft – those who would recognise the deeper implications of His miracles and His profound words. With a heart full of compassion Jesus the carpenter drew on all His formative experiences and worked at rebuilding and repairing a broken world.

Questions

- What are the two best things about your daily routine (at work or at home) and why?
- What are the worst things about your daily routine? If you had to take something positive from your answer what would it be?

When we look at Jesus' early life and formative years we see that He did not exclude Himself from the everyday details of life that we all face. A closer look at His early years shows us that Jesus didn't just use this experience as the time He had to get through before He got to the good bit! Jesus was taking everything in from an early age. His daily life and routine as a carpenter in His earthly father's house was the environment in which He grew and prepared for what was to come.

Why didn't God just send an already prepared 32-year-old Jesus into the world? Why did He send His Son into the world as the Son of Mary, born in a stable, raised in Nazareth? Surely the three-year ministry of Jesus was the good bit? But! God knows what He's doing. The divine blueprint would have to be piloted by Jesus first – in the day-to-day, the seemingly ordinary, the ups-and-downs of normal life.

How else could Scripture tell us, 'For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet without sin (Heb. 4:15).' The formative years of Jesus' life helped

Him connect His earthly ministry with His heavenly destiny – He understood and fully engaged with the divine blueprint.

Questions

- If you could transform one quality of Jesus onto yourself, what would it be?
- How do you feel that the divine blueprint could apply to you?

Personal Application

Let's not make the mistake in thinking that we can only serve God during our evenings and weekends. Our Monday-Friday lives are not just something we have to tolerate in order to make money which then allows us the opportunity to do God's good work on Sundays or when we're not busy with other things. Maybe that's not the exact position you find yourself in but do reflect on your attitude to the ordinary, every day things that you do. Is your expectation to encounter God greater when you're going to church/church activity or when you leave for work on a Monday morning?

We are all on full-time contracts for the Lord and if we could see the potential that we have to transform our world through small victories, then who knows what we could achieve! Our everyday lives and experiences offer us multiple opportunities to engage with the divine blueprint.

It's like someone said – 'We can't change everyone's world everywhere, but we can change somebody's world somewhere.'

Seeing Jesus in the Scriptures

Although we know Jesus as our Saviour and Redeemer, His formative years were spent developing a skill that He was able to translate into a career and in preparation for the great purpose that He came to fulfil. This not only gave Him insight into the everyday pressures that many of us encounter, but also gave the workplace (in whatever capacity) a value and status that we devalue at our peril. The blueprint and character for Jesus ministry was being set down right there in His carpentry apprenticeship and would form valuable lessons and preparation for what was to come.

Any thoughts/questions?

- What for you have been the 'highlights' of our Bible study series?

Closing Prayer