

Encountering Jesus in the Midst of a Pandemic

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Our primary concern in planting is to help planters hear the voice of God, to help them understand that God loves them, and to remind them that apart from Jesus they can do nothing.

Everything we do flows from God's love for us and our love for God.

John 15:5-8

⁵ "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

Implications:

- If you're not abiding and dwelling in Jesus, you can do nothing. You are just leading the ministry out of who you are.
- If you abide in Jesus, he will give you whatever you wish in ministry.
- God wants you to bear fruit.

Luke 10:17

The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name. He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

Implications

- Jesus affirm the advancement of his kingdom, but ultimately he is more concerned about our relationship with him and the fact that we belong to him.

Matthew 7:21-23

²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

Implications

- It is possible to prophesy in the name of Jesus, to drive out demons in his name, and to perform miracles in his name, and still not know who Jesus is. In other words, you can be doing great ministry and not have relationship with Jesus.

Philippians 3:8

Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ.

Implications

- We should strive to know Jesus more and get rid of everything that keeps us from knowing him. In fact, all these things are garbage in comparison.

Exodus 33: 15-18

¹⁵ Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. ¹⁶ How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?"

¹⁷ And the Lord said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name."

¹⁸ Then Moses said, "Now show me your glory."

Implications

- God promises his presence to those he knows by name.

God wants relationship with us.

- If you're not abiding and dwelling in Jesus, you can do nothing. You are just leading the ministry out of who you are.
- If you abide in Jesus, he will give you whatever you wish in ministry.
- God wants you to bear fruit.
- Jesus affirm the advancement of his kingdom, but ultimately he is more concerned about our relationship with him and the fact that we belong to him.
- It is possible to prophesy in the name of Jesus, to drive out demons in his name, and to perform miracles in his name, and still not know who Jesus is. In other words, you can be doing great ministry and not have relationship with Jesus.
- We should strive to know Jesus more and get rid of everything that keeps us from knowing him. In fact, all these things are garbage in comparison.
- God promises his presence to those he knows by name.

Practically Speaking

1. Our primary concern should always be to love Jesus. This is true for us, and for the people we lead. Our primary concern is not to teach bible studies or to do evangelism or to plant, but to love Jesus. All ministry will flow out of love for Jesus.
2. Take an honest assessment of your prayer life. Where are you at?
3. Set goals for yourself and keep track. If you're not self motivated, get accountability. In "Longing for Revival", James Choung and Ryan Pfeiffer share practical steps to getting closer to God (pg.112-115).
4. Do the things you did at first. Journal. Pray. Sabbath. Read Scripture. Study scripture, etc. Strive to seek his face, for the sake of being with him.