

Point of View is Everything Feb 28, 2010

In the book of Mark Jesus had been teaching preaching and healing for three days until the crowd grew to over four thousand and had exhausted their food provisions that they had been traveling with. In a stunning replay of a previous miracle Jesus fed them with seven loaves and a few small fish. He sent them home well fed thereby ordaining the sacrament of the church potluck.

They got in a boat and went to Dalmanoutha located at the far end of Mark 8:10, got jacked up buy some Pharisees asking for a miracle demo...who Jesus told to take a hike...in a totally Christian way of course...got back in the boat and headed to Bethsaida...a city located in the front part of Mark 8:22

Message Mark 8: 22 They arrived at Bethsaida. Some people brought a sightless man and begged Jesus to give him a healing touch. 23 Taking him by the hand, he led him out of the village. He put spit in the man's eyes, laid hands on him, and asked, "Do you see anything?" 24 He looked up. "I see men. They look like walking trees." 25 So Jesus laid hands on his eyes again. The man looked hard and realized that he had recovered perfect sight, saw everything in bright, twenty-twenty focus. 26 Jesus sent him straight home, telling him, "Don't enter the village." 27 Jesus and his disciples headed out for the villages around Caesarea Philippi. As they walked, he asked, "Who do the people say I am?" 28 "Some say 'John the Baptizer,'" they said. "Others say 'Elijah.' Still others say 'one of the prophets.'" 29 He then asked, "And you - what are you saying about me? Who am I?" Peter gave the answer: "You are the Christ, the Messiah." 30 Jesus warned them to keep it quiet, not to breathe a word of it to anyone. 31 He then began explaining things to them: "It is necessary that the Son of Man proceed to an ordeal of suffering, be tried and found guilty by the elders, high priests, and religion scholars, be killed, and after three days rise up alive." 32 He said this simply and clearly so they couldn't miss it. 33 Turning and

seeing his disciples wavering, wondering what to believe, Jesus confronted Peter. "Peter, get out of my way! Satan, get lost! You have no idea how God works." 34 Calling the crowd to join his disciples, he said, "Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You're not in the driver's seat; I am. Don't run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I'll show you how. 35 Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to saving yourself, your true self. 36 What good would it do to get everything you want and lose you, the real you? 37 What could you ever trade your soul for? 38 "If any of you are embarrassed over me and the way I'm leading you when you get around your fickle and unfocused friends, know that you'll be an even greater embarrassment to the Son of Man when he arrives in all the splendor of God, his Father, with an army of the holy angels."

NLT ver says Mark 8: **33** as "**Get away from me, Satan! You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God's.**"

So...what does this vision entail

How important is perspective...is point of view everything.

What matters more, what you see or how you see.

The Mirror

What do I see when I look at me

Do I see myself as a property owner, a builder, an entrepreneur, and a leader

Or do I see my self as a steward, a servant, a worker, a shepherd

Do I see myself as redeemed holy and anointed

Or do I see myself as damaged goods, a man of unclean lips and thoughts, struggling...one foot in the world and one in the Kingdom hoping neither foot slips...

Do I see myself as strong, steadfast, determined, and motivated
Or do I see myself as weak, flighty, capricious, and lazy

Do I see courage, faith
Or do I see a man lacking in both?

The Window

What do I see when I look out at the people around me

Do I see liars hypocrits and sinners
Or do I see the lost and confused

Do I see Satans supporters rightly bound for hell
Or do I see people who need Jesus

Do I see lazy people who are a burden to society
Or do I see the poor, the homeless, the needy

Do I see fools who squander what little they have
Or do I see children of God who need guidance and education

The Sky

When I look up do I see an angry capricious God ready to damn
me

Or do I see a loving forgiving God who wants to save me

Do I see a Great Spirit vast and aloof and unknowable
Or do I see a close friend who knows my name

Do I see YHWH in the burning bush
Or do I see Jesus the risen Messiah

Do I see a puppeteer who pulls the eternal strings
Or do I see a creator who calls to me and lets me choose

How important is our perspective?

Zero, Zilch, nada, nothing...

Why...because it's OUR perspective

Mark 8:33 Jesus turned and looked at his disciples and then said to Peter very sternly, "Get away from me, Satan! You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God's."

If it were up to Peter's perspective Calvary and Resurrection and Salvation and The Easter Bunny, and chocolate eggs would never have come to pass.

Our 'perspectives' lead us to the thin ice of self deception and then tell us "go ahead...looks pretty solid to me"

And we drown cold and wet and oh so very confused....but don't be confused...it's only flesh that seeks to 'divine' (and let me define divine –to discover, to perceive by intuition or insight; conjecture ...) it's only flesh that seeks to divine those things in the mirror, the people out the window, the spirit in the sky

It only seems logical that we should figure these things out...use good judgement...I mean we have brains...mostly...I haven't seen them? Sometimes we stand at the window with our friends...

After all let's be reasonable...logical...

One of the forefathers of logic Socrates came up with two simple rules for life: Know Thyself Take nothing in Excess

And though half of it it good for Tecate ads...

Guess what...Socrates is dead...dead, dead, dead...and dead wrong

Take advice from the living:

“Be still and know that I am God” Psalm 46:10

“...be filled with the Holy Spirit” Ephesians 5:18

God is alive... alive, alive, alive

God doesn't tell us to get to know ourselves better...

Just like God never said “you have to love yourself before you can love anyone else” probably Ben Franklin said it...

God only wants us to know one thing about ourselves...that we are His... 1 Corinthians 6:19,20 You do not belong to yourself, 20 for God bought you with a high price.

God only wants us to know one thing about those people out the window...that they are His too

For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten son”...for them, for you, for me...

God will open the sky and our eyes at His pleasure for His Kingdom and glory to be displayed but He wants us to know that He is.

Jesus spoke often of ‘seeing’ and miraculously gave sight to the blind.

What is even more miraculous is that he gives sight to the seeing as well.

It takes a miracle when our eyes are so fixed on our ‘spiritual pathway’ that we never look beyond our pre-occupations...so sometimes He has to deconstruct to reconstruct...

Message Acts 9:1 All this time Saul was breathing down the necks of the Master's disciples, out for the kill. He went to the Chief Priest 2 and got arrest warrants to take to the meeting places in Damascus so that if he found anyone there belonging to the Way, whether men or women, he could arrest them and bring them to Jerusalem. 3 He set off.

When he got to the outskirts of Damascus, he was suddenly dazed by a blinding flash of light. 4 As he fell to the ground, he heard a voice: "Saul, Saul, why are you out to get me?" 5 He said, "Who are you, Master?" "I am Jesus, the One you're hunting down. 6 I want you to get up and enter the city. In the city you'll be told what to do next." 7 His companions stood there dumbstruck - they could hear the sound, but couldn't see anyone - 8 while Saul, picking himself up off the ground, found himself stone blind. They had to take him by the hand and lead him into Damascus. 9 He continued blind for three days. He ate nothing, drank nothing. 10 There was a disciple in Damascus by the name of Ananias. The Master spoke to him in a vision: "Ananias." "Yes, Master?" he answered. 11 "Get up and go over to Straight Avenue. Ask at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus. His name is Saul. He's there praying. 12 He has just had a dream in which he saw a man named Ananias enter the house and lay hands on him so he could see again." 13 Ananias protested, "Master, you can't be serious. Everybody's talking about this man and the terrible things he's been doing, his reign of terror against your people in Jerusalem! 14 And now he's shown up here with papers from the Chief Priest that give him license to do the same to us." 15 But the Master said, "Don't argue. Go! I have picked him as my personal representative to Gentiles and kings and Jews. 16 And now I'm about to show him what he's in for - the hard suffering that goes with this job." 17 So Ananias went and found the house, placed his hands on blind Saul, and said, "Brother Saul, the Master sent me, the same Jesus you saw on your way here. He sent me so you could see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." 18 No sooner were the words out of his mouth than something like scales fell from Saul's eyes - he could see again! He got to his feet, was baptized, 19 and sat down with them to a hearty meal. 20 but then went right to work, wasting no time, preaching in the meeting places that this Jesus was the Son of God.

I always thought of Saul's 'enlightenment' as a punishment but later in Ephesians 1 as Paul he writes...

NLT Eph 1:18 I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the wonderful future he has promised to those he called. I want you to realize what a rich and glorious inheritance he has given to his people.

I feel a strong suspicion that the 'blinding light' showed Saul the Savior's goodness, mercy, glory, and love. Had it been the light of God's wrath Saul would not have become Paul he would have become charcoal...

Sometimes God has to go Old Testament on us to get our attention or rather to get our attention off ourselves and off our homebrew spirituality

Though God had every right to wrath he chose mercy...He still does.

Paul's love letter to the church at Ephesus is as valid in its petition for vision for us as it was then.

The Message Version Eph 1:16 I couldn't stop thanking God for you - every time I prayed, I'd think of you and give thanks. 17 But I do more than thank. I ask - ask the God of our Master, Jesus Christ, the God of glory - to make you intelligent and discerning in knowing him personally, 18 your eyes focused and clear, so that you can see exactly what it is he is calling you to do, grasp the immensity of this glorious way of life he has for Christians, 19 oh, the utter extravagance of his work in us who trust him - endless energy, boundless strength!

Lord give us eyes to see. Amen