

Contagious But Controversial Jesus

Showdown with Jesus in the Gospel of John

You Can't Put Jesus in a Box

Exploding Our Expectations

John 11:1-44

Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Brad Bigney, Aug. 28, 2011

'What to Expect when Jesus Doesn't Do What You Expect!'

I. You'll be Forced to Expand Your Narrow Definition of What His Love Has to Look Like in Your Life

God loves us enough to disappoint us and shake up the timetable of our expectations to accomplish a greater good. That greater good is not just to deliver us from trouble, but to grow us through it... and to show us more of His glory and goodness.

II. You'll be Confused by His Timing and Forced into God's Waiting Room

John 11:6 "Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Yet when He heard that Lazarus was sick, He stayed where He was two more days."

Waiting is hard for us, but we're not the first to struggle with waiting on God!

Psalms 70:1 "Make haste, O God, to deliver me! O LORD, make haste to help me!"

Psalms 40:13 "Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me! O LORD, make haste to help me!"

Psalms 130:5-6 "I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning."

Isaiah 40:31 "But they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."

"Waiting does not mean doing nothing. It is not fatalistic resignation. It means going about our assigned tasks, confident that God will provide the meaning and the conclusions... It is the opposite of desperate and panicky manipulations, of scurrying and worrying... It is imagination put in the harness of faith. It is the willingness to let Him do it His way and in His time. It is the opposite of making plans that we demand that God put into effect, telling him both how and when to do it. That is not hoping in God but bullying God." **A Long Obedience in the Same Direction**—Discipleship in an Instant Society, Eugene H. Peterson, pg 139-140

III. You'll be Forced to Really Move from Lip to Life When it Comes to Your Theology

You'll have to OWN your theology... and you'll find out what you really believe!

John 11:20–22

If you have a theology that is untested and untried, then you're going to pull back from Jesus, again and again... with each new disappointment... until you're left with not only a stinging litany of bitter hurts and disappointments... along with a distant, cool, superficial relationship with Christ.

John 11:25–26

IV. You'll be in the Best Position for Seeing and Savoring the Glory of God

The glory of God is when God goes public with His power... and beauty... and moral splendor... and perfections.

2 Corinthians 3:18 “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another...”

And so - notice it's the glory of God that bookends this troubling passage about disappointments with Jesus... and unmet expectations.

John 11:4 “... this illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”

John 11:40 “Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?”

The glory of God marks us most indelibly when we've been disarmed and disoriented by a recent disappointment that forced us to lay our man-made, self-serving version of Jesus has to do... and to lift up open hands and say, “Show me who you are. I want to embrace the real Jesus that's bigger than my expectations... and outside the borders of how I've tried to frame Him and box Him in.”