

Climbing with Christ Matthew 5:1,2

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday April 26

Mountain moving faith (Mt 17:20) requires mountain climbing faith!

Our expectations & experiences affect our perspectives. They predispose us to view life through the lenses of our personal interests. This affect the way we view God and His ways.

1. There's a natural tendency to "re-imagine" God. Ro. 1:19-25

"that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. ²⁰For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, ...

²⁵Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator..."

A. We tend to Americanize Christianity by recreating God into our image, or at least an image we're "comfortable" with.

1) Modern American Christianity emphasizes what God does for us; and de-emphasizes what we should do for God.

- a) Too many behave as if God exists to serve and help us when we get ourselves into a bind.
- 2) This is more of a "Fire Escape Faith" than a "Fulfilling faith" Jesus spoke of. (Jn 10:10)
 - a) Much of modern evangelism plays to this view and presents the gospel as the answer to an unhappy life and a miserable death (Hell).
 - b) The focus seems to be on getting people to just believe the right truths about themselves and God, then God will reward them with Forgiveness, Happiness and Peace.

B. If God doesn't "Bless" this hybrid Christianity, Their faith is challenged. (Pr. 19:10)

- 1) Jesus warned of this type of "shallow faith" in Mt. 13:5,6 and 21,21 *"He that receiveth the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. "*

C. This emphasis on a type of "belief" that doesn't affect "behavior" is inconsistent with the clear teaching of God's word.

- 1) This is at the root of the "Great Falling away" that the Bible warns of.
 - 2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-9; 2 Tim. 4:1-4.

2. God's focus isn't only about Information, But Transformation! Ro. 12:1,2; 2 Cor 5:17

A. A faith that changes our eternal destiny, should change our lives! Mt 5:16;

Mt 7:24 *"whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man..."*

- 1) The word "Believer" is only found 2 x in NT. (Acts 4:14 and 1 Tim. 4:12)

The Greek word for "Believers" is pistos' and it means to be trustworthy!

Are most modern "believers" really trustworthy when it comes to the things of God?

(2 Cor. 5:20; Eph. 2:8-10; Phil. 3:17-20; James 1:20-27; James 2:20)

- 2) The word "Disciple" is found 255 times! Mt. 5:1 is the first reference.

"Disciples" here is Mathētēs and it means to learn and understand! (See Mt 13:11-16)

- b) The word "Disciple" also carries with it the idea of "Discipline!"

We like the picture of the Shepherd of Ps 23 and draw comfort from the fact that Jesus is *"the good shepherd"* that comes to give *"abundant life"* and *"gives his life for his sheep"*. Jn 10:10,11

Jesus makes it clear that: *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they Follow me."* (John 10:27)

3. Jesus calls us to “Kingdom Living”. Colossians 1:12-13

“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:”

Mt 6:33 *“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God...”*

A. Notice and important transition in Jesus ministry.

- 1) In Mt. 4, Jesus had taken care of their physical needs and wanted desperately to reach deeper than their leprosy and blindness.
- 2) In Mt. 5 he decides to climb a mountain and only those who bothered to climb with him heard the amazing truths of the Sermon on the Mount. (Mt. 5-7) Notice the epilogue to this message: Mt 7:28,29 *“the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority.”*

B. This is was a pattern with Jesus. (Multitudes, Disciples, Apostles, Inner Circle)

- 1) He “ministered to the multitudes”, but revealed himself & his ways to the disciples!

John 14:21 *“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”*

C. Mountain Climbing Is Tough, That’s Why Crowds Thin Out Along The Way.

- 1) In John 6:1-14 He Fed 5,000 (Probably over 15,000) by the end of the chapter we read: *“From that time many of his disciples went back, ... Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?”* 66-67
- 2) 500 saw him after his resurrection (1 Cor 15:6) But 10 days later only 120 were left. (Acts :14,15) Luke 18:8 *“when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”*

*“The easy roads are crowded, and the level roads are jammed;
The pleasant little rivers, with the drifting folks are crammed,
But off yonder where it’s rocky, where you get a better view,
You will find the ranks are thinning, and the travelers there are few.
Where the going’s smooth and pleasant, you will always find the throng,
For the many, (What a pity) seem to like to drift along.
But the steps that call for courage, and the task that’s hard to do,
In the end results in glory, for the never-wavering few.”* (Messick)

Conclusion: What we truly value, We Prioritize and PURSUE!

Mt 6:33 *“where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”*

Jeremiah 29:11-14 *“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. 13 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. 14 And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity”*

What (who) has captivated your heart?

Pr. 23:26 *“My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.”*



Over the next several weeks we’ll be taking a “hike” to find the paths that will move us closer to Christ.

Are you willing to Climb with Christ? Hab 3:19

“The LORD God is my strength, he will make my feet like hinds’ feet, he will make me to walk upon high places.”