

Week 52: COME AND SEE

There are times when we see. And there are times when we *see*. Let me show you what I mean.

Imagine one morning you see a “For Sale” sign on your neighbor’s boat. The boat you’ve been coveting for the past three summers. All of a sudden, nothing else matters. A gravitational tug pulls you over to your neighbor’s yard. You sigh as you behold your dream glistening in the sun. You run your fingers along the edge, pausing to wipe the drool from your shirt. As you gaze, you are transported to Lake Tamapwantee. It’s just you, the glassy waters, and your boat.

Or maybe the following scenario explains it better. You are sitting in your English Lit class when suddenly you see *him* enter the room. Just enough swagger to be cool. Just enough smarts to be classy. You’ve seen him before, but only in your dreams. Now he’s here, and you can’t take your eyes off him. By the time class is over, you’ve memorized every curl and lash. By the time the day is over, you’ve resolved he’s going to be yours.

There are times when we see. And then there are times when we *see*. There are times when we observe, and there are times when we memorize. There are times when we notice, and there are times when we study. Most of us know what it means to fix our eyes on a new boat or a new boy. But do we know what it is like to fix our eyes on Jesus (see Hebrews 12:2)?

We’ve been taking an in-depth look at what it means to experience the heart of Jesus. The world has never known a heart so pure or a character so flawless. His spiritual hearing was so keen he never missed a heavenly whisper. His mercy so abundant he never missed a chance to forgive. No lie left his lips; no distraction marred his vision. He touched when others recoiled. He endured when others quit. Jesus is the ultimate model for every person.

And what we have done in these pages is precisely what God invites you to do with the rest of your life. He urges you to fix your eyes on Jesus. Heaven invites you to set the lens of your heart on the heart of the Savior and make him the object of your life. For that reason, I want us to close our time together with this question: *What does it mean to see Jesus?*

The shepherds can tell us. For them, it wasn’t enough to see the angels. You’d think it would have been. Night sky shattered with light. Stillness erupting with song. Simple shepherds roused from their sleep and raised to their feet by a choir of angels: “Glory to God in the highest heaven” (Luke 2:14). Never had these men seen such splendor.

But it wasn’t enough to see the angels. The shepherds wanted to see the one who sent the angels. Since they wouldn’t be satisfied until they saw him, you can trace the long line of these Jesus-seekers to a person of the pasture who said, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and *see* this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about” (Luke 2:15, emphasis added).

The examples continue. Consider John and Andrew. They were rewarded for seeking out Jesus. For them, it wasn’t enough to listen to John the Baptist. Most would have been content to serve in the shadow of the world’s most famous evangelist. Could there be a better teacher? Only one. And when John and Andrew *saw* him, they left John the Baptist and followed Jesus.

Note the request they made. “Rabbi . . . where are you staying?” (John 1:38). It’s a pretty bold request.

They didn’t ask Jesus to give them a minute, or an opinion, or a message, or a miracle. They asked for his address. They wanted to hang out with him. They wanted to know him. They wanted to know what caused his head to turn and his heart to burn and his soul to yearn. They wanted to study his eyes and follow his steps.

Jesus’ answer to the two men? “Come and see” (verse 39 NCV). Bring your bifocals and binoculars! This is no time for side-glances or occasional peeks. And so “the two men went with Jesus and saw where he was staying and stayed there with him that day” (verse 39 NCV).

The fisherman fixes his eyes on the boat. The girl fixes her eyes on the boy. The disciple fixes his eyes on the Savior. That’s what Zacchaeus did.

He was far from a big guy. In fact, he was so small that he couldn’t see over the crowd that lined the street the day Jesus came into Jericho. Of course, the crowd might have let him elbow up to the front, except that he was a despised tax collector. But he had a hunger in his heart to see Jesus.

It wasn’t enough for Zacchaeus to stand at the back of the crowd. It wasn’t enough for him to peer through a cardboard telescope. It wasn’t enough for him to listen to someone else describe the parade of the Messiah. Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus with his own eyes. So he went out on a limb. Clad in a three-piece Armani suit and brand-new Italian loafers, he shimmied up a sycamore tree in hopes of seeing Christ.

Would you go out on a limb to see Jesus? Not everyone would. In the same Bible where we read about Zacchaeus crawling across the limb, we read about a young ruler. Unlike the way they treated Zacchaeus, the crowd parted to make room for him. He was the . . . ahem . . . *rich* young ruler. Upon learning that Jesus was in the area, he called for his limo, cruised across town, and approached the Carpenter. Note the question he had for Jesus: “Teacher, what good thing must I do to have life forever?” (Matthew 19:16 NCV).

Bottom line sort of fellow. No time for formalities. “Let’s get right to the issue. Your schedule is busy; so is mine. So just tell me how I can get saved.” There was nothing wrong with his question, but there was a problem with his heart. Contrast his desire with that of Zacchaeus: “Can I make it up that tree?” Or John and Andrew: “Where are you staying?”

See the difference? The rich young ruler wanted medicine. The others wanted the Physician. The ruler wanted an answer to the quiz. They wanted the Teacher. He was in a hurry. They had all the time in the world. He settled for a cup of coffee at the drive-through window. They wouldn’t settle for anything less than a full-course meal at the banquet table. They wanted more than salvation. They wanted the Savior. They wanted to see Jesus.

“He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6 NKJV). *Diligently*—what a great word. Be diligent in your search. Be hungry in your quest, relentless in your pilgrimage. Step away from the puny pursuits of possessions and positions and seek your King. Do as the shepherds did and seek him. Do as John and Andrew did and ask for his address. Imitate Zacchaeus and climb out on a limb.

Risk whatever it takes to truly see Christ.

THE HEART OF THE MATTER

- Heaven invites you to set the lens of your heart on the Savior.
- Don't be content with anything less than intimately knowing Jesus.
- God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.
- Risk whatever it takes for you to truly see Christ.

MEMORY VERSE

This is it . . . one last review of your memory verse for the entire study! Write out the words of 1 Corinthians 7:17 from memory in the space below. Reflect on what these words mean to you.

The Heart of Jesus

She spent her days and nights in the temple. Fasting and praying. Waiting in expectant hope. Looking forward to the day the promised Messiah would arrive and the redemption of God's people would begin. By this point, she had been waiting a very long time. "A prophet, Anna . . . was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four" (Luke 2:36-37). But everything changed when she saw Jesus with her own eyes. Mary and Joseph had taken him to the temple to present him to the Lord. When she saw Jesus, "she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all" (verse 38).

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

READ: JOHN 1:35-46 AND LUKE 19:1-9

1. There are times when we see. And there are times when we *see*. What did John the Baptist “see” clearly about Jesus when he passed by (see John 1:35-36)?
2. When John and Andrew—the disciples of John the Baptist—heard this, they followed after Jesus. What did Jesus say to them? How did they respond (see verses 37-38)?
3. John and Andrew were not asking to just hang out with Jesus but to get to *know* him. What did Jesus say to their request? What did Andrew do next (see verses 39-42)?
4. Jesus also called Philip to follow him—and he found Nathanael. What did Philip say when Nathanael asked if anything good could come from Nazareth (see verses 43-46)?
5. Zacchaeus was so small that he couldn’t see over the crowd that lined the street when Jesus came to Jericho. What did he do to see Jesus (see Luke 19:1-4)?
6. What invitation did Jesus extend to Zacchaeus when he saw him in the sycamore tree? How did the encounter change Zacchaeus’s life (see verses 5-9)?
7. What has this study taught you about experiencing the heart of Jesus each day of your life? What especially stands out to you about what you have learned?