

Intro: Sitting in my chair last Wed am having my morning coffee. Relaxed and comfortable.

Darlene says to me: "What do you think we should take to BYB tonight?"

I say: Banana Pudding...Luv That! Potato Salad...Luv That...New Coconut, Pudding Dessert....

Now, I'm not the brightest crayon in the box...but we did celebrate 38 years yesterday: "Honey, what do YOU think?" Corn...

All of a sudden...THAT chair wasn't so comfortable anymore...because my wife had a plan...I was slow starter...got there!

That is what is happening with Peter, James and John in our passage this morning: Comfortable...Time for a Change!

Learning To Love Like Jesus: Loving Those Who Are Spiritually Comfortable!

Matthew 17:1-23

Page 694

1. We Usually Like To Stay Where We Are Spiritually Comfortable.

Vs 1-4

Number of different reasons for this:

- We LIKE the sense of God doing something wonderful!
Vs 4: Lord this is "GOOD" Lit =beautiful, valuable, virtuous, "This is a beautiful thing!"
Let's build a shelter...and we are just going to "camp out" here...not leaving...stay up on this mountaintop
We like the mountains...and we are not so fond of the spiritual valleys. Given our way...stay on mountaintop
- Because the road ahead is unknown and scary
It is good here and we KNOW it... What we don't know is what it out there!
Illus: Wizard of Oz: Lions and Tigers and Bears...Oh My!
The unknown frightens us...Makes us unsure. Here, where we are...especially if it is a mountaintop...we LIKE it!
- Because the Past was hard...now this place is good...not painful anymore...stay here...might end up there again!
Churches are notorious for that: Something difficult happens: They react...create boundaries...
But...those boundaries they thought to protect...also divide and distance them from the community called to reach

Applic: For Peter, James and John it was the first one: God was doing something wonderful, and they didn't want to leave!

For RTBC: I think we have become "spiritually comfortable" and it is the result of the last two

>3 years ago we went through a very difficult time as a church: Of necessity we turned inward: Protect, Heal, Restore

>Now, we have been inward focused for a while...gotten past the hard times...time to go forward...SCARY!

Listen to me Church: *Time to turn back outward. Healing has taken place: Protected and Restored: Time to leave comfort*
God has worked in some amazing ways: The stage is set...everything in place. Time to Move!

2. The Call Of Christ In The Life Of A Disciple Is Almost Always To Move Forward!

Vs 8-9

- CALL: Now, notice I said ALMOST ALWAYS: Because there are times when God calls us to wait on Him
Jesus did that in Acts 1:4: Wait for HS Then in Acts 18-10 He said: Move out!
Told that to Gideon...Be still, Wait: Then...Move Same with Moses, Joshua, Elijah: All heard the same:
Wait for me: When I say Go...you be ready to move out!

• STRUCTURE Notice the way the passage is structured: Transfiguration: Peter: Stay God: Listen: Jesus: Go!
Peter wanted to hang out up on top of the mountain, in the glory of God...Enjoy it...Soak it up...Revel in In: Experience it!
He was ready to build a house...and Just stay there...

- Other Disciples waiting for us: Not my concern
- People hurting down in the valley: Someone else's problem
- Nothing better! I have found the glory of God...what could POSSIBLY be better than reveling in and enjoying God!

And Yet, God speaks: And He Says: Listen to my Son

And the VERY NEXT THING THAT HAPPENS IS:...THEY GO BACK DOWN THE MOUNTAIN!

- REASON? WHY? Because there is something that is overlooked when we are in the Glory of God
We forget...We don't see...sometimes we don't care about: Those that are hurting down in the Valley!
Because the mountaintop...is so amazing!
They didn't know...They didn't see...The boy that was hurting...Father heart broken...Family being destroyed...
But Jesus Did And so He tells them: Move Out!

Applic: RTBC: Same Thing He Tells us: That is Always His Call In The Life Of His Disciples

Only Reason He had people wait...was for His presence and His Power!!!

- One of the Last Things He told his disciples Mt 28:16-20
- It is the VERY first things He Told the Church Acts 1:4; Then 1:8
- We have spent 3 years putting our house in order: And we have done it well
- Now it is time: For us to move out! Refocus Our Hearts, Our Lives, Our Resources, Our Efforts on Kingdom
- WE have a Choice to make: Stay in the Comfort of the presence of God: Go Out To where people are hurting!

3. God Calls His People To Those That Are Hurting Without Him.

Vs 14

- The Story: 17:14

The disciple's heart was up on the mountain:

Jesus heart was down in the valley!

Look at what is going on down in the valley

There was someone down the valley that needed Him!

He LEFT His home in glory...and he traded the glory of God for a crown of thorns and a cross instead of a throne

And...now listen to me. He was NOT going to surrender the Call of God and the life of that boy...for His own comfort!

- Jesus Story Phil 2:1-11
- Our Story! Phil 3:7-11 (That is what a church is called to!)

I am studying for our fall series on Acts:

7 Marks of the early Church:

Evangelistic Preaching: Christian Baptist: Apostolic Teaching: Genuine Relationships: Christ Centered Worship: Prayer

Sacrificial Living:

- In the same way Jesus gave up HIS life for us...so we are to give up our life for others!
That was what Jesus was teaching Peter, James and John up on the mountain: Go down...where people are hurting!
 - It requires that we leave something behind: (Comfort of our pew; of our home; of our routine
 - Requires that we reach beyond ourselves to the power of God....without that we aren't sufficient
 - Requires that we have faith: Not our strong suit: We want to function on what we KNOW:
God wants us to function on who He is!

Appl: For the Last 40 Days we have been waiting...and praying...and some of us fasting.

We are coming together tonight to bring what we believe God has said to us in answer to one question

"Father, what would You have us do to see the lost brought into relationship with Your Son Jesus?"

Here is what I know:

God has sustained Us;

He Has Started To Restore Us:

He has blessed us beyond measure

Now We have a Decision to make:

Are we going to "Build a Shelter Here, where it is comfortable? Bless Him, Sing His praises, Enjoy His presence?

Or, are we going to go down to the valley?

CONCL:

There are people all around us that need are hurting

Like the man in the story they have done everything they can do...but they haven't found the help they need

We have: We have found Jesus...And His call is to leave our comfort, leave our mountaintop,

Be Just like Him...and invest ourselves in hurting people

CHALLENGE: Come Out Tonight: Seek God with us as we endeavor to answer the question

Father What Would You Have US do?

And Remember: There are people all around you...every day...that need Jesus

They are hurting...struggling...dying and facing a Christ less eternity

Maybe you are here...and you feel like the father in the story...or even the son

There is something in your life that is destroying you...and you can't escape it

Listen to me: Jesus is the answer to whatever the problem is

I'm not saying He will remove it...but if He doesn't...He will give you grace and peace to endure it