

**On the Road with Jesus: The Road to God's View**  
**April 2, 2017**  
**Lynn Haven UMC**

**Introduction**

Not long before it was time for Jesus to be taken up to heaven, he made up his mind to go to Jerusalem. He sent some messengers on ahead to a Samaritan village to get things ready for him. But the people there refused to welcome him. When the disciples James and John saw what was happening, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven to destroy these people?" But Jesus turned and corrected them for what they had said. (Luke 9:51-55 CEV)

Isn't it interesting that our initial reaction to wrongdoing is condemnation, yet Jesus' response is forgiveness? As a matter of fact in Matthew 18:22 (paraphrased) we are told to forgive not just once, but seventy times seven times! If only we could look at people the way God does. This week we will talk about a few ideas on how we can begin to do that.

**Digging Deeper**

As Christ's followers, we can expect God's view to bring us sorrow about those who...

Are FAITHLESS

- There are people in this world who have heard the message of Jesus, yet willfully reject Him as their Lord and Savior. There are others living in remote regions of the world who may have never heard His name. We believe that God created all of us, and as they are His children also, that He loves them equally. Do you ever think about how these people will get a chance to spend eternity with God if they reject Him (or are ignorant of His existence)? Aren't we to have hope for those we know do not believe? Discuss your thoughts on how God interacts with the spiritually disobedient (or ignorant) as they transition from their earthly bodies into eternity.

Are FICKLE

- God is the same today as He was yesterday, and He will be the same tomorrow. That statement can rarely be applied to us fickle humans as our convictions tend to waver from experience to experience. Our interests change as we grow older and our actions along with them. But what breaks God's heart should always break ours, and that includes the lost among us who reject or ignore His sovereignty. Have you ever considered the fact that maybe our own behavioral inconsistencies are preparing our hearts to be able to empathize and embrace those who are not reflecting His light? Or those who reject Him altogether? There is probably someone you could impact by sharing the struggles you face as a Follower of The Way as it relates to attempting to remain the same person no matter the circumstance.

FALL away

- Difficult times are meant to be viewed as opportunities to grow our faith. In our limited scope, we beg God to free us from our pain and suffering, but as it is always true, His understanding is higher than our own. 2 Corinthians 12:9 (MSG) reminds us of that by explaining it like this, "My grace is enough; it's all you need. My strength comes into its own in your weakness." Unfortunately, faith is tested and lost for some who are not deeply rooted. Have you known someone who turned away from God due to a difficult situation? Did you feel compelled to

comfort them by relaying a shared experience and/or speaking to your understanding of how suffering can be used to strengthen faith? Following Christ is hard, but the “hard” is what makes it great and it’s that view that keeps us going.

If you and I go on the road to God’s view it will cause us to...

Feel DEEP anguish

- Jesus wept for His friends, His enemies, and even for Himself. When we weep (the deep, “ugly cry” kind) it is probably coming from a place of personal anguish over something that is directly impacting our world. Do you take time to expose yourself to the conditions of others? Discuss how doing so can awaken a sense of compassion that extends beyond that with which we are familiar.

Having God’s view like Jesus did then causes us to...

DENY ourselves

- What if we prayed (and really meant it) for God to give us His eyes? When we have God’s view on the world, we realize that we have to make sacrifices in order to serve the needs of others. How could denying ourselves develop an empathy within that opens our eyes and drives us into action for others? The next time you are in a conversation with someone, try to reject all thoughts of self and focus on how God is calling you to be present in whatever way that person may need. Then you will be better able to discern how He wants you to put your feet in motion.

And once we lay aside our own interests, God’s view then causes us to...

DO something

- When Jesus gave His life for us on the cross He did so with an attitude of self-denial, at great personal expense and physical suffering, all with a willing heart. He loves us so much that He took on the punishment we deserve in order to save our very souls. We each have our own cross to bear. But when we put on our “God glasses” we see that there is always someone who has it worse. What are you doing about the things that break your heart? Recalling Jesus’ answer to that question might help us reconsider our efforts.

## **Conclusion**

If you stay on the road with Jesus, it’s going to take you down the road to God’s view. How are you going to respond when you get His perspective on things? Be forewarned, you will see the world and its inhabitants in a different light and you may even be moved to tears and, more importantly, to action.