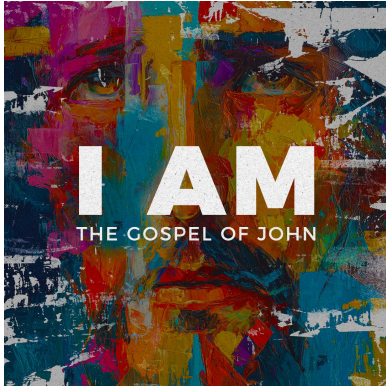


Title: Seeing is Believing

Series: I Am

Speaker: Joshua Parrish

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Introduction

Oftentimes, we think that seeing is believing. The issue that Jesus addresses in this passage, however, is that we do not believe, and that it is because we do not believe that we are unable to see. When we hyperfocus on what we have always known, we can miss the greater things that Jesus wants to reveal. Jesus invites us to open our eyes to His presence and to His work all around us.

Key Texts: John 5:1-47, Exodus 20:8-11, Deuteronomy 19:15

Icebreaker

Has there been a time when you found it challenging to believe (or even marvel at or appreciate) something incredible that you've witnessed or experienced? Why do you think that was?

Discussion Questions

1. Read **John 5:1-9**. What stands out to you from this interaction? What do we learn about Jesus?
2. Read **John 5:10-18**. Josh reminded us that witness (the attestation of facts, as in a trial) is a central theme in the Gospel of John. Where do you see the trial motifs emerge in this passage? What do you think is so shocking or upsetting to the religious leaders? How do you think their hyperfocus on this "crime" hinders them from truly "seeing"?
3. Read **John 5:19-30**. What stands out to you about Jesus' response to the religious leaders - what do you think they were "missing" in focusing on the "crime"? What does Jesus focus on instead - where is He re-directing their attention to?

4. Read **John 5:31-47**. What does Jesus' response to the man and his response to the religious leaders reveal about the invitation He is extending to us? Where do we see Jesus pointing to a deeper, changed life?

5. Where in your life might God be highlighting or graciously exposing a need for change? How might God be inviting you to set your attention and focus on Him?

6. Is there a small step of faith that Jesus may be inviting you to take? Where might you need to pray for an extra measure of belief, even though you might not be able to see right now? How can our group pray for you?

Key Takeaways

- Jesus does nothing by himself. He is in constant connection with the Father and fulfills the will of the Father.
- Jesus is a God who takes people who are down, lifts them up, and gives them new life.
- Jesus is the true judge - He alone has the authority to pass final, declarative judgment over us.
- Whoever hears Jesus and believes will not be judged, but has been moved from death to life.
- Without belief, there is so much we won't see. Without belief, we won't see love or hope, the glory of God, or the work of His hands - because we can't see Jesus.
- There is a paradigm shift that can happen. When we choose to believe, God opens our eyes to all the ways that He is at work, and to all that He is able to do.

Silence and Solitude

In John 1:50-51, Jesus said to Nathanael, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that." He then added, "Very truly I tell you, you will see 'heaven open, and the sounds of the angels of God ascending and descending on' the Son of Man."

Belief enables us to truly see - to see beyond that which we can see now. Take a moment with the Lord to honestly speak to Him about where you may be desiring to grow in belief. Ask God to stretch your imagination of the way He works and moves. Invite Him to open your eyes in order that you may see Him and know Him more deeply. Bring to Him any areas of doubt or struggle, trusting that He holds those safely and will with you walk you through it.