

Introduction:

- I believe that we live in a time in which it will be important to us and to others to have a heart after God.
 - I believe it will be important to us because of the severity of the times that we might very well see in our life time.
 - I believe it will be important to others, in that if we have the heart of God we will be a voice of hope to those living in darkness.
- It is a pattern of God, that when His voice is rare, he raises up people with His heart and His voice. *"Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord in the presence of Eli. And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision."* (1 Samuel 3:1, ESV)
 - In those times God raises up people who carry the heart and voice of God.
 - It is for the purpose that others might "encounter God."
- We spent nearly 5 weeks in November and December last year looking at the heart of David. Tonight, we are going to look at another man, in the NT, who also had a heart after God.

I. The Glory Is In The Face Of Jesus

- A. When we talk about David being a man after God's own heart. *"And when he had removed him, (Saul) he raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, 'I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.'"* (Acts 13:22, ESV) We are talking about a man who:
1. Knew God intimately. He knew the emotions in the heart of God. He knew what was important to the heart of God. (two commands - Deut 6:4 and Lev 19:18)
 2. Obedied out of love. (John 14:15) He reveled in knowing that God was attentive to his desire for obedience, motivated by love, while understanding his weakness.
 3. Those two things reveal to us the heart of David as a heart living out of pursuit of God.
 4. David saw himself as one whom God loved! Powerful identity fact.
- B. In the face of Jesus is glory.
1. *"For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."* (2 Cor 4:6, ESV)
 2. God commanded light to shine out of darkness. That is amazing in itself.
 3. And yet out of our darkened hearts the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines from the face of Jesus. When you find the face of Jesus you find the glory of God! *"Blessed are those who believe and have not seen!"* Jesus.
- C. The glory is our reward! When you find Jesus, you find saving grace! When you find Jesus you find light in your dark world. When your dark world has light, God has become your great reward!

1. *"After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.""* (Genesis 15:1, NKJV)
2. This is our two fold identity now: Like Abraham...
 - a) "I'm loved [by God], and I am a lover [of God]; therefore, I am successful." He, alone, is my reward!" Mike Bickle.
 - b) "My spiritual identity is that I am loved by Jesus and I also love Jesus" Mike Bickle.
 - c) "My natural identity is what I accomplish before people and how they see me." Mike Bickle.
 - d) John the apostle, like David, wanted to be known by how he related to God/ Jesus not what he did before others.

II. John Saw Himself As One Whom Jesus Loved!

- A. *"Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who also had leaned back against him during the supper and had said, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?""* (John 21:20, ESV)
 1. Remember, it is John who is writing this Gospel. Not only does he call himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved, he wrote his *"signature" for his life work*. In this verse, he interpreted what it meant to him to live as a *"son of thunder."* It tells us how John carried his heart and expressed his highest life goal (his primary dream), defining for us what it means for Jesus to be our great reward." Mike Bickle.
 2. He was the disciple who leaned back against Him! ...and asked for secrets!
 3. He saw himself as loved! And he loved back well! "John never mentions his own name in his gospel, but refers to himself five times as *"the disciple the Lord loved"* (Jn. 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20)." Oh to have that kind of confidence in the love of God!
- B. God loves us in the way that God loves God!
 1. Jesus feels the same intensity of love for us that the Father feels for Him. This truth gives us the right to stand before God with confidence as one of "His favorites."
 2. Our confession is: *"Jesus, You love me like the Father loves You."*
 3. *"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love."* (John 15:9, ESV)
 - a) John hung onto these words for the rest of his life.
 - b) We know in Mt 26:31 Jesus said that they all would stumble! They all did but look how quickly John recovered! He made it to the foot of the cross with Mary the mother of Jesus.
- C. We can't ever think our sin is bigger than the love of God! That would be such a proud thought. It takes humility before God to be bold in His love.
 1. John took hold of what Jesus said in John 15:9 *"As the Father has loved me, so*

have I loved you. Abide in my love.", and held on to it for the rest of his life.

2. It was foundational to his identity. About seventy years later, he was still saying, "I am the disciple that God loves." When we know the King loves us, we are unmoved, even when others overlook us.

III. Being Near The Heart Positioned Him To Hear

- A. Having Jesus as our great reward involves gaining insight into what is near and dear to His heart from Scripture, dreams, etc.
- B. How do we practically do this? Sit at His feet...rest, in the Word...study, worship Him.
 1. Sit at His feet. Luke 10:39-42 To meditate on His word.
 2. Sit at His feet to encounter Him. To allow Him to speak to us.
 3. We sit there to understand His heart! He is our reward!
 4. David: *"One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple."* (Psalm 27:4, ESV)
- C. Note the shift in John.
 1. He wanted to call down fire on Samaritan. Jesus called James and John sons of thunder.
 2. He wanted to be the greatest sitting by Jesus right hand.
 3. Later he brings the fire of the Holy Spirit to the Samaritans in Acts.
 4. Later he is know as the disciple with thunderous love towards God and man.

Conclusion:

- God is raising up people after His own heart like Abraham, David, and John, who leaned against Jesus' chest.
- Who are leaning into?
- What secrets is the Lord revealing to you?

- Resource helps: MikeBickleLibrary.org