



12 March 2018

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Matthew 11:2 When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴ Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." ⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

"What did you go out to see?"

While this question was directed at the people around Jesus, it is the enduring question of the past 2 000 years: "What do we see in Jesus". The truth is that humanity often sees only that part of Jesus that we want to see.

- Do we want a compliant, gentle Jesus? He is there.
- Do we want a fierce, revolutionary Jesus? He is there.
- Do we want a mystical, other-worldly Jesus? He is there.
- Do we want a blessing-giving, materially rewarding Jesus? He is there.

It is the enduring problem of our human nature to shrink Jesus to fit our particular desires. Jesus is aware of this – and protests that he is "more" than whatever conception the people have of him (Matt:11:9).

Lent can be a time where our understanding of Jesus is challenged to become bigger than is comfortable for us. Discover the work of Jesus in the lives of those who make us uncomfortable: "*The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them*". The challenge for today is to look beyond the first impression and see God at work in the people around you.

For thought:

Extract from a Song by [John Fisher](#)

Have you seen Jesus my LORD?
He's here in plain view
Take a look. open your eyes
He'll show it to you

Have you ever stood in the family
with the LORD there in your midst,
seen the face of Christ on each other?
Then I say...you've seen Jesus my LORD

There is also a later rendition of this poem by David Griffith in Texas.¹
By Phyliss McCormick

What do you see, nurse, what do you see? What are you thinking when you're looking at me? A crabby old woman, not very wise, Uncertain of habit, with far away eyes...	Inside this old carcass a young girl still dwells, And now and again my battered heart swells. I remember the joys, I remember the pain, And I'm loving and living life over again.So open your eyes, nurses, open and see, Not a crabby old woman, look closer - see ME!!
---	--	---

The Fifth Sunday in Lent

From death to Life

The Scripture passage for the day is drawn from Rueben Job and Norman Shawchuck, A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and other Servants, (Nashville, The Upper Room 1983), 129.

This reflection is from my own devotional exercises for the day. (Rev. Pete Grassow)

¹ <http://www.hoax-slayer.com/cranky-old-man-poem.shtml>