

What Do You Want from God?

Luke 7:18-35

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To what then shall I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like? They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another,

“We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;

we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.’

For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ - Luke 7:31-34, ESV

We're in the midst of a presidential election season right now, and it's clear from watching the news and reading articles online that people have widely varying expectations of the president. Frankly, many of the expectations are just unrealistic. If you combine everyone's expectations, it would seem that we want a president who can keep us safe, make us prosperous, bring harmony to our society, bring peace to the Middle East, increase the real wages of the middle class, end global warming and probably end all diseases, too.

Jesus could literally walk on water, feed the multitudes, heal the sick and raise the dead, but He still dealt with disappointed people who felt like He wasn't quite measuring up to their expectations: When was He going to overthrow Rome? When was He going to get John the Baptist out of prison? When would He raise the Jewish people to be the rulers of the world, head of all nations?

Many people have been disappointed with God because He has not met their expectations. They expected a better life, an easier life, a more prosperous life, a less painful life, etc. Even pastors and ministry leaders can be disappointed in God, as they labor in obscurity and see such little evident fruit from their labors for the Lord.

Disappointment can often blind us to the reality of what God is doing right in front of our eyes. When two disciples of John the Baptist asked, "*Are you the One who was to come or should we expect another?*", Jesus responded by telling them to take a good look around them. Jesus answered them, "*Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.*"

Sometimes we are tempted to be offended by God. His ways can be so very different from ours. At those times, we need the eyes of faith to see what God is doing in our midst, right around us. He is saving the lost. He is healing the broken. He is restoring the fallen and wayward. He is leading His people home to Himself. If we can see what He is doing, we can stop being offended that God did not dance at our jig or weep at our dirge. Instead, He has done something so much better!