

Social Justice: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Growing up in the 90's as a Seventh-day Adventist, there were few things more impressionable than evangelistic meetings or what many would term "Revelation Seminars." These meetings would last for weeks with the goal to bring individuals to Christ at their culmination. As an 8-12 year old child those seminars were quite daunting and foreboding. The preacher's emphasis was heavily placed on Biblical prophecies, "signs of the times," and ultimately the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

While it was a very captivating experience, I often left more confused about Jesus, and my salvation. I would think to myself, "If I have heard this stuff for years and am still confused, I cannot imagine how a visitor might feel!" Revelation Seminars seemed to be anything but a revelation – at least not a revelation of Christ. Don't get me wrong, I understand their intent and have witnessed God work on the hearts of those who sat through them. But looking back sometimes I wonder what exactly was being revealed.

A World in Need of a Revelation

We live in a time when we have unlimited and unfiltered access to information, but the least sense of direction. We can communicate with one another across the globe, and yet we feel the loneliest. There is a desire for community, belonging, and a hope that the God everyone talks about is actually real and relevant to our lives. In other words, the world (and the church for that matter) is looking for a revelation of Jesus Christ.

The Bible is replete with passages that reveal a God whose ear is tuned to and brokenhearted. Better yet, we serve a God whose heart breaks over the injustices of this world. However, the mantle has been laid on the Christian believer to make sure that the world experiences the love and power of a God that sees their plight. It is clear that the follower of Christ is primarily called to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:16-19 NIV), but how can we disciple a world that has yet to have a revelation of Jesus?

Christ Revealed to the World

The Apostle Paul provides profound insight as to how Christ is revealed to the world. In the Book of Romans Chapter 1:20 he says "For His (Jesus Christ) invisible attributes, namely, His eternal power and divine nature, have been *clearly* seen, and *understood* by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead!" In other words, the long-standing question of "is there a God?" "Who is God?" and "does God care about what takes place on earth?" can all be answered by the actions of those who claim to serve this God according to the scripture above. Through the power of the Holy Spirit we have the power to reveal the "invisible attributes, the eternal power and divine nature of God" just by how we relate to one another and the world!

Paul places more emphasis on our role in revealing God to the world when he pens Romans 8:19 (NIV) "For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed." If Paul were writing in laymen terms today he would be saying "Would the real Christ followers please stand up?" If God is revealed through His creation, then there is little wonder why at this moment in Earth's history the entire creation from plant to person is under

attack. The enemy aims to suppress the revelation of God to the world! On the contrary, mankind has been ordained to facilitate the revelation of God. I submit to you that it is through acts of benevolence and a keen sense of justice that God is revealed to the world.

A Christian Code of Ethics

As a practitioner in the Social Work profession, my practice is bound by a code of ethics. As listed in the National Association of Social Workers Book of Ethics, I am bound to Service, Social Justice, Dignity and worth of the person, Importance of human relationships, Integrity, and Competence. If a secular profession can hold its practitioners to such noble standards of Righteousness and Justice, should those who stand under the banner of Christ live by anything less? Christ has in fact given us a "code of Ethics" that calls for its practitioners to not just agree with the code but to also live by the code! In fact, the primary criterion for entrance into Heaven is not based on our doctrinal subscription but on how we served those who could not help themselves (Matthew 25:35-40).

When we as the body of Christ are ready to give, that is when the Kingdom of God will receive. When we are ready to listen to the plight of the downtrodden, those same individuals will in turn become receptive to the message of a crucified and risen savior. When we are ready to extend a hand in our community, our community will make their presence felt in our midst. I believe we are called to move away from some of our traditional practices that often only yield conversion to a denomination. Now, God is calling us to move toward the practices of the early church: genuine benevolence and a pursuit of justice that yields conversions to Christ.

He's Revealed in Me

Recently, I had an encounter with a young man who was homeless. I felt led to give and as I did, he looked me in the eyes and said, "I feel so alone, confused, and misunderstood." I believe his are the sentiments of the world at large. We can no longer afford to be benefactors of a revelation of God in our own lives, and not share it with those who are seeking for it as well. The question then becomes; "how do I do my part in revealing God to the world?" Author and messenger of God, Ellen White penned a familiar statement that I believe provides a guideline for those seeking one.

In her book, *Ministry of Healing* p.143 she states "The savior *mingled* with men as one who desired their good. He *showed* His sympathy for them, ministered to their *needs* and won their confidence. Then he bade them, 'follow me.'" That passage and formula is riddled with genuine, tangible ways in which Christ revealed himself to the world. When we become more intentional about being present in the triumphs and trials of those around us, we wont need them to sit through a Revelation seminar in hopes that they see Jesus. They will have already seen him revealed through our love for them and for one another.