

He > me

john 3:30

Contrasting Characteristics

Contrasting Characteristics

- Contrast = Showing a difference, like photos that reveal how much weight someone lost by contrasting the "before" and "after" shots or the destruction after a tornado or war
 - The opposition or dissimilarity of things that are compared like an apple from an orange
 - The act of distinguishing by comparing differences like when CSI uses a flashlight in a dark room
- We have spent a few weeks looking at an individual named Nicodemus and his interactions with Jesus
 - He comes to interview Jesus full of himself

Contrasting Characteristics

- Jesus gives Nicodemus truth he had missed or overlooked
 - **John 3:3 NIV**, Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.”
 - **John 3:13 NIV**, “No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man.”

Contrasting Characteristics

- Jesus gives Nicodemus truth he had missed
 - **John 3:16-18 NIV**, “16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.”
 - “Nicodemus you stand eternally condemned right now depending on your belief or rejection of Me.”

Contrasting Characteristics

- Nicodemus didn't accept Jesus' words, but fought Him, challenged Him, and went away with more and different questions than he came with
 - Questions about himself and what he had been taught, his beliefs
 - He may have felt insulted by Jesus' words
- This is the way the world interacts with Jesus – challenge, resentful, dismiss, prideful
- The Apostle John immediately takes our attention to another person who had interacted with Jesus

Contrasting Characteristics

- The Apostle John immediately takes our attention to another person who had interacted with Jesus
 - **2nd Timothy 3:16a AMP**, “All Scripture (*every part of Scripture*) is God-breathed [given by divine inspiration]” – What does this mean?
 - The purpose of God’s Scripture is found in the last part of verse 16
 - **MSG**, “showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God’s way.”

Contrasting Characteristics

- John's desire is to show us the contrast between these two individuals – to answer the question, “What differences do you see? Who are you more like?”
 - **John 3:22-23 NIV**, “22 After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, and baptized. 23 Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were coming and being baptized.”
 - John the Baptist was probably the most popular man in all of Israel at that time

Contrasting Characteristics

- John the Baptist's role or purpose was to prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah and identify the Messiah
 - **Matthew 3:1-2 NIV**, 1 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea 2 and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."
 - **AMP**, Repent [change your inner self—your old way of thinking, regret past sins, live your life in a way that proves repentance; seek God's purpose for your life]

Contrasting Characteristics

- **John 3:26 NIV**, They (*John the Baptist's disciples*) came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—look, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him.”
 - What do you hear in their statement?
 - What do you think Nicodemus would have said?

Scripture

- **John 3:30 NIV**, “He must become greater; I must become less.”
 - **ESV**, “He must increase, but I must decrease.”
 - **MSG**, “This is the assigned moment for him to move into the center, while I slip off to the sidelines.”

Contrasting Characteristics

- What a contrast in response to Jesus Christ
 - John the Baptist didn't have it all figured out
 - He had his ideas, thoughts of what the Messiah would do, and Jesus wasn't doing any of that, but he kept coming back to Jesus for clarification
- In this one simple statement, John the Baptist gave us truth that must be applied to every area of our lives for us to live as Children of God
 - Jesus – His desires, His way of thinking, His way of living must increase in our lives and our Nicodemus way of living must decrease with ever increasing measure

Contrasting Characteristics

- The answer to your addiction is more of Jesus, fear, anxiety, marriage, home, financial, history, future....
- We want God to immediately change our lives when in reality we must grow up or mature in three areas for this to happen
 - We want to immediately jump to the doing without the foundation or change to support it
 - We will then fail and that brings a slew of other negatives to our lives
- We must grow up or mature in three areas of life

We must desire what God desires

- You can read the Bible every day, but it will mean little to you unless you desire in your life what it is teaching
- One of the benefits of salvation is a new heart or new desires
 - **Ezekiel 36:27 NIV**, “And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.”
 - **MSG 26-27**, “I’ll remove the stone heart from your body and replace it with a heart that’s God-willed, not self-willed. I’ll put my Spirit in you and make it possible for you to do what I tell you and live by my commands.”
 - God places a Spirit filled competitor desire into your life

We must desire what God desires

- As born-again children of God we now have within us another voice, God's voice through His Holy Spirit
 - His purpose is to seal you in Christ Jesus until the day full redemption comes (*Eph. 4:30*)
 - He is also drawing you to God, not just for salvation of our sin debt, but in salvation living by desiring to live as God defines
 - We now have the mind of God living in us (*1st Cor. 2:16*)
 - We also have the mind of God in His Scriptures – **2nd Timothy 3:16b MSG**, “showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God's way.”

We must desire what God desires

- He is working at changing our desires, not by force, but by choice
 - Are you willing to pray this today, “Oh God, I desire your way, your truth, your life in me”?
 - “Expose my rebellion. Correct my mistakes. Show me your truth so I can follow it”
 - “Help me desire you Jesus more than what I think, or I want.”
 - King David prayed this in **Psalms 25:4-5 ESV**, “4 Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. 5 Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long.”

We must think and process the events of our lives as God does

- Godly desires are great things, but they will not lead to godliness unless we think and respond to the events in our lives based upon His truth
 - True Godly desires will always lead you into His Word
 - It is His Word that will, *“show us truth, expose our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God’s way.”*

We must think and process the events of our lives as God does

- I need to see myself as God sees me
 - We must speak God's truth into our lives
 - **1st John 3:1 NIV**, "See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!"
 - **Romans 8:1 NIV**, "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus"
 - **Romans 8:31 NIV**, "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."

We must think and process the events of our lives as God does

- I must fill my mind with the truth of living God's Word
 - **Proverbs 15:14 NLT**, "A wise person is hungry for knowledge, while the fool feeds on trash."
 - **Proverbs 2:6 NLT**, "For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding."
- Allow God's truth to begin to change your desires and responses to life events
- Let God build strong convictions into our lives by allowing Jesus to increase in your thinking and you decrease
- We must think God's thoughts before we can live God's way

We must choose to live out the desires of God daily

- We will never consistently choose to live as God desires unless
 - Our desires are really His or His desires are really ours
 - We are convinced of the truth of His Word and have filled our minds and thoughts with them
 - Then we must choose to trust and live that truth daily
- Do I really trust God to simply live His truth even if everything around me seems to be falling apart?
- Do I really trust His voice even when it is not something I want to do or see a need to do?

We must choose to live out the desires of God daily

- Will I just say,
Yes, Lord yes to your will and to your way
Yes, Lord yes, I will trust you and obey
When your Spirit speaks to me
With my whole heart I'll agree
And my answer will be "Yes, Lord yes"
- This must be decided ahead of time

We must choose to live out the desires of God daily

- As your addiction is screaming in you heart you remember **Philippians 4:19 NIV**, “And my God will meet all your (*my*) needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.”
- When you really want to get your pound of flesh from the person standing in front of you, you remember **Proverbs 15:1 MSG**, “A gentle response defuses anger, but a sharp tongue kindles a temper-fire.”
- When you really want to run from your marriage covenant you remember **Ephesians 5:25 MSG**, “Husbands, go all out in your love for your wives, exactly as Christ did for the church—a love marked by giving, not getting” and **Ephesians 5:33 MSG**, “each wife is to honor (*respect*) her husband.”

We must choose to live out the desires of God daily

- I will choose to live by **Romans 8:18 NIV**, “I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.”
- When it seems like you have failed again you remember **Isaiah 41:10 NIV**, “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

Contrasting Characteristics

- Our inability to be perfect in God's desires for our lives should never be used as an excuse, *"Well, that's just the way I am"*
- Apostle John presented a contrast between two individuals
- John Ortberg, *The Life You've Always Wanted: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People*,
 - "Too often people think about their "spiritual lives" as just one more aspect of their existence, alongside and largely separate from their "financial lives" or their "vocational lives." Periodically they may try to "get their spiritual lives together" by praying more regularly or trying to master another spiritual discipline. It is the religious equivalent of going on a diet or trying to stick to a budget.

Contrasting Characteristics

- John Ortberg, *The Life You've Always Wanted: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People*,
 - “The truth is that the term spiritual life is simply a way of referring to one’s life – every moment and facet of it – from God’s perspective. Another way of saying it is this: God is not interested in your “spiritual life.” God is just interested in your life. He intends to redeem it.”

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