

Chapter 3 What Jesus Knew, Our God-Bathed World

Foundational ideas of Jesus that people often miss, which keep them from understanding what he taught

Introduction: We are invited to see the world through Jesus' eyes and see a new vision of God's universe. Not only does Jesus offer a new vision of God's universe, but he gives us a new vision of ourselves. We come to understand that the central core of our identity is spirit, that we are "never-ceasing spiritual beings with an eternal destiny" in God's great universe. (p86)

- **Words:**
 - * **Core Identity** "we are never ceasing spiritual beings with an eternal destiny."
 - * **Apprenticeship** "To trust Jesus and become his apprentices, we need to grasp our situation in God's full world. (p84)
 - * **Spiritual Reality:** all things visible and invisible
 - * **The Great Inversion:** the First shall be Last and the Last shall be First
 - * **The Smartest Man in the World**
- **Images:** The splendor and glory of seeing the beach in South Africa. We see a fish tank full of fish and enjoy them, God sees seas full of fish which he constantly enjoys.
- **Quotes:**
 - * "While man is at home with animals and the stars, he is also the cosmic neighbor of the Absolute." Gustave Marlelet
 - * "God is inconceivably great, interesting, and joyous; God exists and acts in the space around us and that we can interact with him; the invisible spiritual world is real and that it nourished the never-ceasing human spirit despite the hopelessness of life on earth; that becoming Jesus' apprentice is the smartest thing we can do to take care of ourselves."
- **Scripture:** Col 1:15-17, Romans 8:28, 29.

To Discuss:

Which idea about God surprises you? A) God leads an interesting life B) God is full of joy C) God is a single great eternal experience of all that is good, true, beautiful and right

When have you ever thought of God as a A) disengaged or miserable monarch B) a frustrated parent or C) a policeman on the prowl?

Willard discusses how the world is a perfectly safe place for us to be (p66) (but the world does not feel safe). In what ways does this statement challenge you?

Four aspects of spiritual reality (no physical substance, having power and energy, thinking, and valuing) For Willard, becoming a disciple of Jesus is about integrating our life into the spiritual world of God. As a result we are sustained more by spiritual realities and less by physical realities. What does this look like?

How do we experience God's joyous being? (such as.....God leads an interesting life, God is full of Joy, God is a single great eternal experience of all that is good and true)

- What did you connect with in this chapter or in this week's sermon?
- What questions do you have? What gave you pause?
- Where does this connect with your life today?

Choose a practice this week:

Paraphrase Psalm 93. Re-read it aloud, addressing God about God's greatness and majesty. Or write your own psalm reflecting the truth of God's greatness expressed in the universe.

Choose a phrase such as, "God is here," "God is present" or "In God, I live and move and have being." Then put your hand out in front of your face and say that phrase out loud, slowly, repeat. Put your hand over your head and finally put your hands on your face, cradle your jaws and say the phrase.

(content adapted from Dallas Willard's The Divine Conspiracy and Study Guide by Jan Johnson and Keith Matthews)