



water from rock

## Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – December 16, 2021

The Lord be with you.

Last Christmas, I was able to get together with some cousins to celebrate, and when a cousin who lives in a different state, when she told me that she was sorry that she had not gotten to know my father... You know, I was sad. I was sad because I really love my father, my father was a wonderful man. I was proud to be his son, I was always proud to tell people about my father, and so that night as I'm driving home, I had this new understanding of Christmas.

I saw that Christmas is about Jesus longing for you and me to know his father. And so Jesus comes at that Christmas because Jesus wants us to know his father. Jesus loves his father. And you notice how Jesus was always telling people about his father as he wants us to know his father. And I think that is really the essence of Christmas, that Jesus wants us to know his father, and he wants to take us to be with his father.

I want to read to you today a fascinating verse, it's... In the Gospel of Matthew Chapter 11-27, as Jesus is speaking and He says, No one knows the Father except the son. Let me read that again. No one knows the Father except the son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. And so Jesus comes on that first Christmas for the purpose of you and me getting to know his father. To know his father like Jesus knows his father. The Gospel of John, Chapter 1, verse 18 says, No one has ever seen God. It is a God, the only son who was close to the Father's heart who has made him known. So Jesus comes from close to the Father's heart, he comes to Earth to show to us... To reveal to us the Father's heart. You know, I think my dad would have called Jesus and He would have... He would have said this reverently, he would have called Jesus a chip of the old block. You see Jesus, and you see the father.

Scottish theologian, Thomas Torrence, told of a time when he was an army chaplain during the Second World War, and he comes across a soldier has been mortally wounded, and the dying young man looks up at Torrance and he says, Padre can you tell me, can you tell me is God really like Jesus? And in those moments, just before the young man died, Thomas Torrenc got to tell him that, Yes, in fact, God the Father is just like Jesus. That anyone who has seen Jesus has seen the Father.

So if there are moments that you wonder What is God like, look at Jesus. Look at Jesus welcoming sinners, look at Jesus hanging out with the publicans and outcasts. And you see what the Father is like, and so that you and I would get to know what His Father is like. Jesus tells his magnificent story. For sake of the story, when Jesus tells about just about the worst person you could think of, I mean, he talks about a guy who's a total ingrate, he's a pitiful excuse for her son, he's a worthless



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kid who takes his father's inheritance, and he runs off to the far country, he throws away his dad's hard earned money on prostitutes and parties, and then when he runs out of money, he starts heading home, and as Jesus tells his story, the father sees his son from far off, and Jesus says that the father runs to his son, the old man is sprinting, and before the son can get out one word of repentance or confession, before the sun can begin to say, Hey dad, I'm sorry. Jesus says that the Father puts his own cygnet ring on the son's finger, he put shoes on his feet and the father says, Let's party my son has come home.

You see, Jesus tells that story because he wants us to know how much you and I are loved and forgiven by His Father. And that's why Jesus teaches us how to pray, how? He says, pray, Our Father, who art in heaven. Jesus wants us to know his father's heart, like Jesus knows his father's heart. And the Bible calls all of this, it calls it adoption, that is by faith in Jesus, simply by believing in Him as the way to the Father, we are adopted, we are made full-fledged members of God's family, so that we are coming to know God more and more as Father, that what Jesus is by nature. We become by grace, sons and daughters of God. Several years ago, I served on the board of a Christian adoption agency, and one day I met a young family who had these two cute little boys, and one of the boys said to me, he said, One of us is adopted, but I forget which one. And that's how you and I are loved and adopted into God's family. We are loved as Jesus is loved.

There's that beautiful scene in the Gospel of John chapter 20:17. It's right after the resurrection, and Jesus says to Mary, go to my brothers and say, I am ascending to my Father and your Father. You and I, we get to call Jesus' Father our Father. And you know, it's not a matter of church membership, it's not a matter of trying to be religious, it's not a matter of trying to be good, it's believing, it's trusting in Jesus as the way, the truth and the life. And Jesus says, No one comes to the Father but through me. And in Galatians Chapter 4 verse 7, it says that God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. And so it is the Holy Spirit who lives in every child of God, the Holy Spirit who is prompting us, He is urging us to run to God the Father and to cry out Abba daddy, Father.

So as you're getting ready for Christmas, keep in mind why Jesus came. Jesus came because he longs for you and me to know his father, like Jesus knows him. He wants you and me to know that we are loved and cherished by Abba Father. So why don't we just take the next few moments to be still and to let father love us, and as the Holy Spirit urges us, we cry out to Him, Abba, Daddy, Father.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thanks for listening until next.