

November/December 2012, *Equipping* #131

“Sir, we would like to see Jesus.”



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The above request came to Philip from “Greeks” who had come to celebrate the Passover in Jerusalem. Whether the question came out of their curiosity about the triumphal entry or the resurrection of Lazarus (Jn. 12:17) is unsure, but this was their request. In many ways, this request is still with us today, whether in the words of those who critique the church, in the unspoken desires of those who live in our communities, or within our own hearts: “We would like to see Jesus.”

Jesus’ response in John 12:23ff appears at first glance both unrelated and disconnected. What follows is a brief message on glorification, death and multiplication, priorities and servanthood, Jesus’ presence with us and a declaration of how God honours persons. The greatest challenge perhaps is to understand that seeing Jesus requires a profound commitment (including servanthood, self-denial and even death).

In a consumer culture, where our hands instinctively know what to do with remote controls, cell phones, and computer tablets, we expect to be served and we expect to be shown things. For the most part we do not want much effort (i.e. little investment), relinquish control (i.e. no servanthood), or suffer (i.e. no death).

Despite our personal preferences and comfort with the convenience of the marketplace, there are some who suggest that we are not in as much control

as we think. Jonathan Bonk, Mennonite mission scholar, writing in *Forming Christian Habits in Post-Christendom* (Herald Press, 2011) says that “Christian citizens yield obeisance [i.e. investment] to the presumably infallible hidden hand of the marketplace – a merciless idol [i.e. servanthood] that is satisfied with nothing less than the sacrifice of human beings [i.e. death] and even the planet.” These stark words echo those of Jesus, except that there is no honour in this arrangement and Jesus is neither served nor is He present.

I am thankful for each of our international ministry workers and our numerous ministry partners who all, in their desire to see Jesus, are willing to be where Jesus is. The desire to see Jesus is not theirs alone, but it is for each of us, and for those around us. To see Jesus we are called to serve and follow Him, to invest our very lives. Not only will we see Jesus, but those around us will as well.

May God bless you as you respond to Jesus’ life giving words:

“Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honour the one who serves me.” – John 12:24-26