
Devotional

Looking into the face of Christ

Simeon had dedicated his life to obedience and fidelity to God day after day after day. And finally he comes into the temple and there's the baby. There's the Messiah! And that's all I need! I don't have to hang around and watch the public ministry. I don't need to see the miracle of changing the water into wine at Canaan. I don't have to see the transfiguration. I don't have to see the cross. I don't have to see the resurrection. Just viewing the presence of Christ is all I need.

Now, God, let now thy servant depart in peace according to your Word, for my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared before the face of all people. A light to bring revelation to the gentiles and the glory of your people Israel. I've seen the Messiah, the light of the nations. I look at this baby and I behold the glory of Israel. Israel's consolation. Israel's glory and it is enough. It is enough!

What would it mean to you to look, visibly, into the face of Christ? I think of the many scenes in the New Testament where people beheld Him face-to-face. Those who were assembled at Golgotha and looked into the tortured, twisted face of Christ as He was making an atonement for our sins. I think of the women who came to the garden tomb looking for the body of Christ and were so distressed when they couldn't find it.

And how they looked into the face of the one they thought at first was the gardener, and Mary realized she was looking into the face of the risen Christ, and she said, "Rabboni." Master. Of those who saw His face at the transfiguration, of those who looked into His face as He was lifted up by Shekinah clouds. As magnificent as all of those events were, none exceeded in glory the single glance of Simeon into the face of a baby. Because he saw and recognized the Consolation of Israel and it was enough.

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R.C. Sproul (1939-2017) was an American theologian and pastor, author, and founder of Ligonier Ministries.