

Encounter that Changes

by Francois Carr

This sermon emphasizes the transformation and change that occurs in the lives of individuals when encountering Jesus, using the examples of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus in Bethany. It highlights the importance of being conformed to the image of Jesus, serving with a grateful heart, and finding peace, joy, and forgiveness through encounters with Jesus.

Scripture: Romans 8:29, Luke 10:38, John 12:1, John 11:43, Philippians 4:6, Hebrews 4:12, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Colossians 3:17, 1 Peter 2:21

Topics: "Transformation in Christ", "Serving with Gratitude"

Description

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Transcript

In his letter to Romans, he wrote in chapter 8 verse 29, for whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. God's purpose is to conform us into the image of his son, because he wants us to live and to act and to speak and to behave like Jesus in every aspect of our lives. And for us to be able to do so or to be so, we have to be changed and transformed.

When I think about Bethany, I think about there was a moment, an encounter that Mary and Martha had with Jesus, where their lives were impacted and changed from where they were to what they have become in just a short period of time because of a moment and a word from the Lord Jesus himself. In Luke chapter 10, when Jesus shows up in Bethany for the first time of his disciples, Mary was seen rushing to sit at the feet of Jesus, while Martha was fixing food for them in the kitchen. But at some point she complained and asked Jesus even to speak to her sister in helping her fixing the food and serving the people.

But the words of Jesus said, Martha, you're concerned about so many things, but Mary has chosen the one thing which is needful. But then if you fast forward to John chapter 12, you find an amazing verse of scripture that shows the change that has taken place in the lives of Mary and Martha and even Lazarus as well. Then six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany where Lazarus was, who had been

dead, whom he had raised from the dead.

Then look at verse two, there they made him a supper. The verse starts with the word there, they made him a supper. Who was the they? Now we know that in the house of Mary and Martha, Martha was fixing the food in Luke chapter 10, but the Bible says here that they made the food and served him.

In other words, Mary was helping Martha. And it's just amazing for me that Mary got the message, even though she was sitting at the feet of Jesus in Luke chapter 10. And the best place to be is at the feet of Jesus, but she needs to have a balance by helping her sister even when there are guests arriving by working in the kitchen too.

And also, if you look at the same verse, the Bible says, and Martha served. In other words, in Luke chapter 10, Martha was preparing food, but she was complaining. But now in John chapter 12, she was serving Jesus with a happy and a grateful heart, but no complaining.

Two sisters, Mary and Martha, both heard the voice of Jesus and the words that Jesus spoke to them about the one thing which is needful, but also at the same time, and both received that message. One realizing that I want to be with Jesus, but I also need to help my sister. The other one, if I do want to serve with Jesus, I need to do so without complaining, but with a grateful heart.

Look at Lazarus in chapter 11, one word from Jesus that said, come out Lazarus, and he was raised from the dead. Even his life was transformed. And sometimes we only need one word or one moment or one encounter with Jesus for our lives to change.

And sometimes when you struggle with peace and joy and anxiety and things like that, we only need one word from Jesus. Be anxious about nothing, but let all things be made known unto me through prayer and supplication. Let the peace of God overrule of your heart.

Just the word from Jesus can give peace. A word from Jesus can give forgiveness. A word from Jesus can bring joy.

An encounter with Jesus can bring about change. And Bethany for me, not just speaking about the place, the house away from home, the home away from home for Jesus, but also as a place that is a beginning of change in the life of two people that were so close and dear to Jesus. Now, the question for you and for I today is a question of change.

How many encounters with Jesus do you need and I need for our lives to be impacted and to be changed? Only one. So what happened this morning in your quiet time and my quiet time when you spend some time reading God's word this morning in scripture and did the word from God spoke to your heart this morning and bring you peace and comfort and joy and put your life on a path to be changed and to become like Jesus. So when I think about Bethany today, might it be a place for you that can bring about change to become more and more and more into the image and be conformed to that place and that image that the father wants you and I to be, to speak, to behave, to act and to live like Jesus.

May God help us as we pursue change, even in Bethany, a place of change to become like Jesus. May God bless you.

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