

Evangelism - Looking Ahead

... Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals for you were slain, and by your blood, you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth. (Revelation 5:9-10, ESV)

The game of golf requires imagination. When we “look ahead,” seeing a shot in our mind’s eye before we strike the ball, that process goes a long way toward executing the shot correctly.

For example, Jason Day stands behind the ball, takes his grip, breathes deeply, closes his eyes, and imagines the ball in flight. Looking ahead in our imaginations with optimistic expectations is an excellent habit to cultivate.

Of course, walking with Jesus is much deeper than merely conjuring him up in the mind’s eye. For one thing, Jesus is objectively real whether we imagine him or not. And he is who he is, no matter how many distorted versions people imagine him to be.

That is not to say we shouldn’t use our imaginations. Far from it! It would be a bland world without the imaginative abilities of artists, musicians, and entrepreneurs. Yet, immeasurably deeper than our abilities to imagine a particular art form, piece of music, or invention, God invites us to imagine the future in light of his promises.

Exploring the Bible, discovering his promises, and living the imaginative life within its storyline is the great adventure we are called to inhabit. After all, we should not confuse the gospel with Pop Psychology or Positive Thinking concepts found within secular ideologies.

In Scripture, God enters covenants with Adam, Abraham, David, etc. In each covenant, God unveils more details about his ultimate goals for creation. A considerable part of his original plan is to have a “people for his own possession.” God commands Adam to “be fruitful, multiply, and fill the [whole] earth,” a world filled with people who bear his likeness.

In the Abrahamic Covenant, God fills in the details—one day, all the nations of the world will be blessed through Abraham’s “seed.” Paul informs us in Galatians 3 that the “seed is Christ” (vs. 16) and those who are united to Christ (vs. 29).

What has this to do with us? From the beginning, God’s mission was to fill the

earth with sons and daughters in his image. Jesus will see the fruit of his suffering (Isaiah 53:10-11)—a people drawn from every nation will bow before the risen Messiah in adoration!

This is the “stewardship” given to the church. We are to join God in his mission, calling people “...from every tribe and language and people and nation” to engage in “white hot” worship of their Maker and Redeemer.

Using your imagination, explore the grand vision of God’s mission revealed in Scripture and see yourself involved and committed to that. That’s worth imagining!

To live any other way is to live in a false narrative about who he is, who you are, and what he is doing in the world.

Prayer: Lord, open our eyes to see our place in the grand scheme of your eternal plan.

READING - Isaiah 53:10-11; Luke 24:44-49

OPENING QUESTIONS: Discuss among yourselves your pre-shot routine. Do you imagine positive outcomes before every shot?

1. Read Isaiah 53, especially verses 4-9. What are some poignant truths that jump out at you as you read these verses? Discuss!

2. Isaiah 53:10-11 reveals the outcome of Jesus’ death and resurrection. What is it that “he sees?” Who are the many?

3. In Luke 24:44-49, we discover that the Old Testament was written about Jesus. Verse 46 reminds us that Jesus’ death and resurrection were promised and fulfilled. Verse 47 mentions another promise. What is that? Discuss!
