



WORKTALK WEEKLY

05 MAY 2009

This is the sixth piece in a mini series on daily disciplines (DD)

DD6 - Seeing

There is a discipline which can be extremely powerful when practised and extraordinarily discouraging when ignored. You can taste the meaning of what I am saying if you take yourself to a sales counter in a large store and remember a time when the assistants took no notice of you. Transfer yourself to a restaurant when you are hungry and cannot get the waiter's attention. Conversely, remind yourself of the undivided attention of a caring physician, specialist counsellor or massage therapist and you will be on the right thought track.

Nobody likes to be ignored, everybody likes to be noticed - even shy people, who don't want a fuss, still want to be valued.

There is an amazing moment during the last hours of the life of Jesus of Nazareth which is encapsulated in the three words "when Jesus saw". The context is such that he caught sight of His mother and best friend standing nearby His place of execution.

This was not a one-off, out of character moment for Jesus. Whilst others were crowding around Him, He noticed a blind man shouting for help. When others were suggesting He move on, He called a woman out from the crowd to confirm her healing and restoration. When one of His closest friends hit rock-bottom He looked him in the eye even though that friend was ashamed of his own actions.

In short, Jesus of Nazareth specialized in seeing, in noting and then doing something. Here is a complex and profound skill to develop and practise on a daily basis.

God, it seems, is inviting us to see. Right at the beginning of time during the first recorded working week, there is a repeated phrase - God saw - interestingly repeated seven times. God is a God who sees, reflects and celebrates. His Son is a Son who notices and takes in.

So how about learning to see on a daily basis? I would suggest you keep asking questions such as 'what just happened here?' or 'what did she just say?' or 'what am I seeing?' or 'is there anything I've missed?'

These questions will open you up to two worlds - the world of celebration and the world of pain. You will see good things that people do, their kindness, their compassion, their well meaning actions. You will also see the hurt, the pain, the disappointment and the sadness.

What you do with your sight will depend on what you see. For Jesus on the cross, when He saw John and Mary, He turned their eyes to each other. Sometimes seeing means helping others find strength in the right person, possibly the person next to them.

When God saw His own work, He issued an invitation to celebrate the fact that it was good. Sometimes seeing means making sure achievement is not missed.

When people are in pain, noticing is the first indicator of sensitivity. Depending on the nature of their pain you may stop there, or you may, like the Samaritan, cross the road and do something about it. Which response is most appropriate will depend on seeing, not just what is happening, but what response is needed. This is a kind of double vision which sees both the problem and the implied request in the pain.

Some days you'll get it right - others you won't. The more you practise, however, the more you will see, and the more you see the more skilled you will become - see?

Work Well
Geoff Shattock

© Geoff Shattock May 2009

BIBLE SECTION

John 19:25-27

25Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," 27and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

All WORKTALKweekly archives are for personal use only. For permission to use for any other purposes please email using the address below thank you.

WORKTALK, 56 Baldry Gardens, London SW16 3DJ
T:+44 (0)20 8764 8080
<http://www.worktalk.gs>
comms@worktalk.gs