

“Second Guessing God: *Upstream*”

Joshua 3:1-17

“You will lead by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore I will trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.”

Thomas Merton

The Question Everyone’s Asking...*Where’s God?*

Many assume that after you’ve followed Jesus for a long time, you’re somehow exempt from ever thinking dark thoughts about God. Unfortunately, we aren’t. Even seasoned believers ask the question.

Joshua 3:1-17

“Yet as soon as the priests who carried the ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water’s edge, the water from upstream stopped flowing. It piled up in a heap a great distance away, at a town called Adam.” (vs.15-16)

The town of Adam was roughly nineteen miles *upstream* from where the Israelites stood, far beyond where they could see. God performed a miracle *upstream*, out of their sight.

I believe the same situation occurs in our lives today. Here’s the powerful truth the children of Israel learned that day: *God is always at work upstream in our lives.*

Learning to See God Upstream...

How do people like us today and the Israelites crossing the Jordan have so much faith?

How do we, in the face of overwhelming circumstances, have within us a sense of peace that God has not left us but is working upstream in our lives?

There are three difficult lessons we have to learn in order to change our spiritual outlook.

1) Trust What You Can't See

The entire foundation of modern science is built upon what we can experience through our five senses – what we can see, taste, touch, smell, and hear.

The problem is that God is outside our five senses. Unless God chooses to reveal himself in some way, we don't see, taste, touch, smell, or hear him. But that doesn't mean that there isn't a God.

People who see God at work upstream are those who have learned... to trust what the Bible calls 'the eyes of the heart'

2) Let Go of What You Can't Control

Following Jesus means giving up control. It means pulling your life over to the side of the road, tossing your keys to Jesus, hopping into the passenger's seat, and saying, 'You take it from here.'

This is the only way you're going to see God at work upstream, because God can't work in a situation until we get out of the way. As long as we continue to meddle with a problem and try to fix it ourselves, we haven't turned it over to God so *he* can work on it.

3) See Your Pain Within the Bigger Picture

Finally, the last reason we can't see God at work upstream is because we're too focused on today. We become impatient because we want our situation changed right now. We want a miracle – if not today, definitely this week. We'll wait, but it better not take a month!

Waiting on God's timing can be frustrating, especially when we're in the hospital lobby wondering about a loved one in surgery or we're thumbing through the want ads. But God can see the big picture; therefore, he isn't as concerned as we are with the short-term fix.