



## LIFE WITH GOD:

### What do you see?

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When I was a kid, I love to play with toys called Transformers. They looked like cars and trucks but would turn into action figures! My favorite ones were an entire set of construction vehicles that would all combine to make one huge warrior that would fight off the bad guys! Their theme song said, "More than meets the eye!"

Things aren't always what they appear to you. It reminds me of trying to name colors with my wife. I might see grayish-blue and she will be adamant that it's green! HA! We are looking at the same thing, but seeing something different!

What did the crowds see with Jesus? Some thought he was a miracle worker, but others saw him as a criminal and had him crucified. What about the disciples? They were often considered trouble-makers that were stirring up trouble and leading people away from their Jewish traditions and religion!

In Acts 3, God used Peter and John to heal a crippled man. The crowd was amazed. The next verse says, "Peter saw his opportunity and addressed the crowd. 'People of Israel,' he said, 'what is so surprising about this?'" (Acts 3:12 NLT).

Peter was definitely seeing things differently than the crowd. He saw an opportunity and wondered why they were surprised!

- 1. We can probably relate to the crowd's reaction. What surprises you about Peter's perspective and mindset here.**

READ Acts 4:1-14. Peter and John had great boldness, despite getting thrown in jail and the threats made against them. Where did their courage come from? Verse 8 says that Peter was "filled with the Spirit" as spoke and gave all the glory to Jesus.

- 2. What was a time that God helped you do something extraordinary? Something that you know was beyond your own strength to do?**
- 3. Have you ever noticed God's power working in someone else? How did you know?**

The religious leaders were so threatened by the disciples that they threw them in jail for the night. They wanted to do more, but they could not deny that a great miracle had taken place. Notice that they asked Peter, "By what power or what name did you do this?" (vs. 7). They knew something amazing had happened. They interrogated the disciples, then verse 14 tells us, "But

since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say.” It’s hard to argue with transformation, when it’s standing right in front of you!

4. **What does the religious leaders actions tell us about their hearts and motives?**
5. **What are ways that we can be more open about the transformation in our lives?**

The religious leaders saw the miracle, but the truth of the kingdom of God was hidden. This might remind us of a time when the Disciples asked Jesus, “Why do you speak to the people in parables?” READ Matthew 13:10-17.

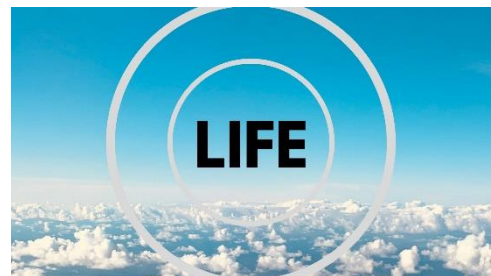
6. **After reading this, in your own words, why did Jesus speak in parables?**
7. **Why do you think that the truth is hidden from some people?**
8. **What has helped you discover truth and not get “calloused.”**

You might say the problem that many people have is that they simply aren’t looking! Like Jesus says, their eyes are closed. When they encountered Jesus, some thought he was just the son of Joseph from Nazareth. Others claimed he was a criminal and deserved to be crucified. Yet he was God! Others saw the disciples as simply “unschooled, ordinary men,” yet they were living in the power of the Holy Spirit.

After the crippled man was healed, the disciples had more trouble and ended up in jail. On the surface we see persecution, but the disciples saw opportunities. They saw the kingdom expanding! Did the disciples run and hide? No, they seemed to only get more courageous! Here’s what they prayed after the ordeal: “Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. <sup>30</sup> Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” (Acts 4:29-30).

9. **What was a time when you endured a hardship or struggle and realized afterward that it made you even more passionate and courageous?**

Here’s a simple illustration to challenge us to consider what we see. We live life in the middle circle. This is our experience. It represents where we have been and our comfort zone. Places we know. The next circle is what we think *might* be possible. We all dream of accomplishing more. But there’s a limit. The outer circle might represent what we imagine is *possible*. The problem with this is that Jesus invites us to ask for the *impossible*. He may be calling us beyond what we’ve even imagined. It may be well outside the limits of what others think we can do. But this is the kingdom lifestyle. Living with a heavenly perspective. Seeing what Jesus sees! Colossians 3:2 says, “Set your mind on things above, not on earthly things.” I call this “living in the impossible!”



10. **What is your greatest challenge to seeing from God’s point of view. What can you do to improve that?**

