Can't See the Forest for the Trees?

Going down Interstate 95 in Virginia I was shocked to see the landscape, or rather the lack of it. It was my first trip to America's east coast. In my mind I had imagined bumper to bumper houses, business, and people, not forest! Yet here I was, southbound out of Williamsburg and there were stretches of highway that had thick trees right up to the highway. All I could see was a thick forest of trees, no actual landscape scene, no houses, no business and no opportunity for wide angle sweeping pictures. I literally *could not even see the forest for the trees!*

Sometimes I fear our Christianity can get like that. We see what is up close and immediate but fail to see the wide-angle picture. We see what our own needs are, we see where *we* are and what applies to us personally but fail to grasp God's overall plan for His church, His people.

When that happens, we easily become self-centered and, heaven forbid, begin to think it's *all about me!* I have experienced people, even some New Testament Christians, who have gotten so off track that they actually believed (whether consciously nor not) that God's purpose is to give them what they want, materially or personally. *"If God doesn't answer my prayers, what good is Christianity, what good is He?"* Yipes!!!

Have you ever heard, "God let me down. God didn't come through for me. God didn't do His job," etc.? Yes, God answers prayer… sometimes He says, "Yes," sometimes He says, "No," and sometimes He says, "Maybe later." But whatever that answer, God is answering with what is better for His children, whether we understand it or not. Whatever the answer, we must never be so silly as to presume that God's job is to answer my prayers, give me what I want or do what I want Him to do!

Listen carefully, our overall job on earth is clear from Ecclesiastes 12:13, "The conclusion, when all has been heard, *is*: **fear God and keep** His commandments, because this *applies to* every person." Yes, there are many specifics, such as we find in James 1:27, **"Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of *our* God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, *and* to keep oneself unstained by the world," (NASB).** Notice the outward focus on others, not self. God is helping us see that our greatest joys are found in being a blessing to others, not merely *getting what **I** want.*

Understanding who we are and who God is, is foundational our walk with Him. If we even *think* we want to be a Christian, our first realization must be, ***"He is God, and I am not!"*** Sit with that awhile.

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