

Sitting Where Others Sit

TEXT: “Then I came to them of the captivity at Telabib, that dwelt by the river of Chebar, and I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days.” (Ezek. 3:15)

THESIS: We need to try sitting where others have sat so that we might gain some for the glory of God.

INTRODUCTION:

1. Are we able to sit where others sit?
 - a. That is what Paul did in 1 Cor. 9:20-23, who said, “unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.
 - i. That means, we have to sit where other people sit.
 - b. What about Heb. 13:3, “Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.”
2. Have you ever tried to sit where some juror sits in some special case?
 - a. You can think to yourself of what you might do until you sit as a juror.
 - b. Like, in a murder case, to sit where they sit, to hear the discussions, to see what they see and then go into a final verdict and have to live, for the rest of their life, with that verdict.
 - i. It is not always easy to sit where others sit.
3. Have you ever thought of sitting where the judge sits?
 - a. To sit where someone else sits does not mean that we come to the same conclusion or that we go along with them.
 - b. And, while we may not be able to go along with those people, we can still get along with them.
4. In sitting where other people sit, we have to feel as they feel.
 - a. One person said, when dealing with different races, “I am white, they are black. I would like to feel as how they feel, but I’ll have to get into their skin to do it.” And so, this man had his doctor change the pigmentation of his skin and then, he sat where they sat. He lived among them. And then later wrote a book entitled, “Black Like Me.”
 - b. Now, even though you may think you know what other people believe or think or how they act, you can’t know until you sit where they sit.
 - i. Isn’t that what Jesus did?

DISCUSSION:

- I. WHY DID JESUS BECOME FLESH (JN. 1:14)
 - A. Why was he tempted in Matt. 4 as a man?

1. Why was he baptized?
 - a. If you were to give a reason why Jesus was baptized, what would you say?
 - b. In Matt. 3, we read that he did this because he wanted to do the will of the Father.
 2. He wanted to sit where man sits, but man is a sinner and he is not.
 - a. He wanted to be baptized with the baptism of John and his baptism was one of repentance.
 - b. But, our Lord had nothing to repent of.
 - (1) John said, "I indeed baptize with water unto repentance" (Matt. 3:11).
 - (2) They were being baptized, confessing their sins (Matt. 3:6).
 - (a) But, Jesus had nothing to confess.
 3. No wonder John hesitated when he saw Jesus standing in a line among those who were going to be baptized.
 - a. Wouldn't you have felt the same way?
 - b. Remember, "John forbid him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" (Matt. 3:14).
 - (1) But, Jesus said, "thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15).
- B. Now, Jesus came to be baptized to be placed among sinners so that sinners baptized might place their faith in Christ.
1. He was not a sinner.
 - a. He started off, though, being identified with sinners.
 - b. He was crucified between 2 thieves, but he was not a sinner.
 2. He was made flesh to sit where we sit, to think as we think, to feel what we feel and ache as we ache.
 - a. Rom. 12:15 states, "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."
 - b. It might be easier to weep with them that weep than to rejoice with them who rejoice.
 - (1) If, somebodies been very successful and you haven't, we learn, it isn't always easy to rejoice when others are successful.
- C. So, can you really sit where some else sits?
1. If you see a beggar by the wayside, you may think, "Oh, what a disgusting thing, what a poor man."
 - a. But, have you ever been able to be in that beggar's shoes and sit where he has sat.
 2. What about those in prison, maybe they have done wrong.
 - a. But, have you ever thought about ministering to them?
 - b. I use to go to prisons to teach.
 - c. There are others I know who teach in prisons.

- (1) I know of one preacher who went to preach at a prison once and after the service was over, a man walked over to the preacher. Well, the preacher thought that this is it. When the man walked up, he looked at the preacher and said, “Are those your real teeth?”
- (2) It is was hard for this preacher to sit where he sat.

II. CHRISTIANS NEED TO SIT WHERE OTHERS SIT

- A. Gal. 6:1, “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”
 1. How can you do this unless you sit where he sits, looks through their eyes.
 2. Can you be as the man, “Black Like Me”
 - a. We need to sit where others sit.
- B. Jam. 5:19-20, “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”
 1. You cannot always go along, but you can get along if you sit where they sit.
 2. If there is an atheist before you, it would be really difficult to stand in his shoes.
 - a. An atheist once told a preacher, “I don’t believe in Heaven.” And he said, “Oh, I wanted you to go to heaven with me.”
 - (1) And so, they started talking about it.
 - (2) But, was he really able to sit in his seat and see no God.
 - b. Until we can see what they see, even though we do not agree with it, we will not be good watchmen, good soul winners.
- C. You know, Daniel said, Those, “that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever” (Dan. 12:3).
 1. I like that.
 2. Are you going to be able to shine as the stars forever?
 - a. Not unless you sit where others sit in this life.
 - b. Don’t you think that Paul sat where others sit?
- D. Has Jesus really sat where we sit?
 1. When you think of his coming in the flesh, what an act of humility.
 - a. He became a part of the world without partaking of the world.
 - b. He was bruised because he wanted to sit where we sit.
 - c. “he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin” (2 Cor. 5:21).
 - (1) That is because he wanted to sit where we sit.
 2. In Heb. 2:17, “it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren.”
 - a. There are times when we think that he does not know how we feel.
 - (1) Oh, but he does.

- b. He doesn't understand my problems.
 - (1) Yes, he does.
- c. Do you realize that he listens to every heartbeat and he knows every thought, every ache, every pain.
 - (1) He knows all the trouble, he knows the difficulties.
 - (2) Has he ever been where we are?
 - (a) He has.
- 3. What about that trial?
 - a. He wasn't really tried (Isa. 53).
 - b. They violated every rule in the book.
 - (1) And, even before any evidence, he was condemned.
- 4. And when Jesus later said, "Forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Lk. 23:34), think about what was to be forgiven?
 - a. All of the hypocrisy and so forth,
 - b. But, don't forget, Jesus was trying to sit where they sat.
 - (1) And, even through all those things, you know, the Sanhedrin was only one party and was never to give a condemnation so as to make the court system fair.
 - (2) And yet, they all condemned him.
 - (a) In Matt. 26:59, it states, "the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death."
 - (b) That was in violation to the law of Moses.
- E. Spend some time really studying the trial of Jesus and then sit where he sat and walk in his shoes.
 - 1. Indians have a saying, "Never criticize an Indian's walk until you have walked in his moccasins for three days."
 - 2. Our Lord was able to walk in other people's moccasins and he was able to appreciate their limp, their hurt.
 - a. Jesus even shed tears with us because he wanted to sit where we sit.
 - b. And as a result, we have the great, glorious privilege to someday sitting where he sits.
 - (1) To sit with him in heaven.
 - (2) To be with him eternally.

III. AS SOUL WINNERS AND FISHERS OF MEN, WE MUST IMITATE JESUS

- A. In Acts 10:38 it states that Jesus went about doing good.
 - 1. What an example and pattern we should follow.
 - 2. Even people who are on the opposite side, the people who widely disagree with us, are we really able to sit where they sit?
 - a. If we are able to do this, we might be able to change their mind.
- B. When Paul was speaking to Timothy, didn't he tell him to pray for all men (1

Tim. 2:1)?

1. Who are we to pray for?
 - a. Our president.
 - b. Leaders of other countries? That's right.
 - (1) Pray for all in authority that we might live peaceably and those prayers are needed, now.
 2. We need to pray constantly for those who lead.
 - a. Do you realize how fortunate we are to have been born in America?
 - b. We didn't choose this land, God chose us to be put in this land.
 - (1) And, I wouldn't trade it for all the gold in all the hills.
- C. Have you ever looked at other nations where every single move that one makes is watched?
1. People are followed and publically searched.
 - a. Where everything is wired and you have to be careful of every word that you say.
 - b. But, could you sit where they sit?
 2. Those terrorist, it is hard to sit where they sit, who attacked the Trade Towers.
 - a. The dedication they had, however wrong it was, to kill themselves for a cause, with all those promises and then later, find out that the promises were not going to be any good.
 - b. Giving everything they had to that which is wrong and hateful.
 - (1) But, even though they were very sincere, sincerity alone is not enough.
- D. Our conscious is not a safe guide unless that conscious is safely guided.
1. And, Paul's conscious was not at first, safely guided.
 - a. He said and thought that he would not do anything that was contrary to the Lord Jesus.
 - (1) But, he did those things.
 - (2) He said, "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day" (Acts 23:1).
 2. Now, when Paul went to the city of Athens and saw the city given to idolatry, the Bible says that his spirit was stirred within him (Acts 17:16).
 - a. And we would have become stirred to look upon the Parthenon, Mars Hill and other such places.
 - b. But, that was not what Paul was interested in.
 - (1) He saw something else, something more important.
 - (2) He saw a city that was wholly given to idolatry
 3. The Scripture says that when Paul "passed by" (Acts 17:23) and saw the objects of their devotion.
 - a. Do you realize that people are passing by every day that are observing the objects of our devotion.

- b. What a person goes after here, will determine, where he will go in the hereafter.
 - (1) What are we doing for heaven's sake?
- 4. Well, Paul was stirred because of the people, because they were really turning against God.
 - a. Wouldn't you have like to have been there to hear that sermon?
 - b. And, wouldn't you like to have felt what he felt?
 - c. He spoke to them about the unknown God.
 - (1) And he made known God.
 - (2) He wanted them to sit where he sat and later, some did, all because Paul put himself in their place.
- 5. The Bible says, "whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (Matt. 7:12).
 - a. Isn't that sitting where others sit?
 - b. You know, someone, you may not really care much for and one who you may even be repulsed by, is still worth us trying to really see what he sees and feels as he feels.
 - (1) There was a lady, who saw a young man, for the first time come in to Wednesday Bible class. She was nice looking, silver hair and neatly dressed. And, she asked the boy if he had ever went to church before." The boy, with a big smile, replied, "Yes, when I was about 10 and he was so excited. He was excited about the song he sang and to hear the story of Joseph, Noah and others. And, the young man said, I just could not wait to come back again and learn more. After the class, the teacher took him aside and said, "Son, don't ever, ever come to church dressed the way that you are. We want to look our best when we come before God. The boy stood there in his raggedly, patched overalls and looked down at his dirty, shoeless feet and said, "No ma'am, I won't ever."
 - (2) Surely that teacher meant well, but what she said after that class, was more lasting than what she taught in class.
 - (a) She was not able to sit in his seat.
- E. In order to sit where others sit, it will take a great deal of sacrificing and changing places.
 - 1. Now, some tried to sit in Moses' seat (Matt. 23:2).
 - a. We can't do that.
 - 2. There are some who sit in the scorner's seat (Psa. 1)
 - 3. But, not many people even try to sit where other people sit, trying to view what they view and have the perspective that they have.

IV. THERE IS SO MUCH TO DO TODAY

- A. Souls need to be saved and time is short.
1. There is a great task in front of us.
 2. The Lord said, if somebody is guilty he is going to be condemned, but if you don't warn him, you will also be condemned
 - a. In Ezek. 3:18-19, the Bible states, "When I say to the wicked, 'You will surely die,' and you do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way that he may live, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. Yet if you have warned the wicked and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered yourself."
 - b. That really bothers me.
 - (1) When Paul said to the elders at Ephesus that, "I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men" (Acts 20:26-27).
 - (2) I wish I could say this.
 - (a) But I cannot because there are still many people who are still not saved.
 - (b) Everybody on this side of heaven ought to be interested in everyone on this side of hell.
 - i) And, the soul you save, might be your own.
- B. Saving souls is not optional.
1. It is obligatory
 2. We cannot be fishers of men without helping to save souls.
 3. "He that winneth souls is wise" (Prov. 11:30)
 - a. But you cant do that unless you put yourself in that person's position.
 - b. If there is someone you know that is in a denomination, find out all you can about that religion, about their beliefs.
 - (1) And, even though they are far off, try to understand how somebody can raise them that way.
 - (2) Know that they are sincere.
- C. You see, conscious is only a safe guide when it is safely guided.
1. We need to be able to feel as they feel.
 2. Some people are so sincere.
 - a. Televangelist sound so sincere.
 - b. And, some old lady, old and on a pension and needing every dollar, but would give her last one.
 - (1) She is very sincere.
 3. Not long ago, a man claimed that he was the Messiah.
 - a. A lady was asked if she believed he was the Messiah.
 - b. And, she said, "Well, I hope he is."
 - (1) So honest and sincere, but wrong.

- D. We need to sit where they sit so that we can one day sit with the Lord eternally in heaven.

CONCLUSION:

1. Let's become all things to all men that we might save some (1 Cor. 9:22).
 - a. Let's strive to be like Paul so that we can be free from the blood of all men (Acts 20:26).
 - b. On judgment day, there are going to be some with a half smile, others with a half frown.
 - i. There will be some shouting and singing the hallelujah chorus or they are going to be weeping and gnashing their teeth.
 - (1) And, we are going to be in one of these two groups.
 - ii. And, when we hear the Lord say to one, depart from me I never knew you, how would you feel?
 - (1) Will his blood be required of thy hand?
 - iii. If you hear the Lord say, enter thou into the joy of the Lord, knowing that you had a small part to play, that is compensation enough.
 - (1) Those whom we reached.
 - c. And, when we finally think of what we could of made, financially, remember there is no compensation on earth for those who stand before the Lord justified.
2. We have a responsibility.
 - a. Who gave it to us? God did.
 - b. Let's shoulder our responsibility.
 - c. Let us become all things to all men, to gain some.
3. Let's all go to heaven.
 - a. Let's not anyone of us miss it.
 - b. And, wouldn't it be wonderful if we all did go to heaven?
 - i. You know, the law of average tells us that somebody in this audience is not going to make it.
 - (1) I hope it is not me and I hope it is not you.
 - (2) It doesn't have to be either one of us.
 - ii. But, it could be and it will be unless we are able to sit where others sit.
4. We need to do whatever we can, despite the cost.