

“More Than a Vision”
Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Acts 16:9-15;
Revelation 1:9-11; 21:10, 22-22:5

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Today’s Scripture Lessons were really hard for me to get my head around. I struggled and struggled and struggled to pull them all together. They are very different stories about very different people.

Moses is a leader. He guides the people of Israel in the wilderness for 40 years. Along the way he loves them and scolds them. He is their lawgiver and military commander. By his leadership and force of personality he unifies the Israelites so they can successfully cross the Jordan River into the Promised Land. Moses is a leader who leads God’s people in the way they should go.

Paul is a teacher. When he gets to Philippi, he seeks out the locals who worship God and when he finds them he sits down and talks to them. Remember, when a rabbi teaches he doesn’t stand. He sits. Paul is a teacher. Paul teaches the people about Jesus and about how much God loves us. He teaches them how to live the way God wants us to live.

John is practically a mystic. Using poetic imagery, he paints a picture of what the world will be like when the Kingdom of God is as real on earth as it is in heaven. The world will be lit up with God’s love. The water of life will be constantly flowing, and we will see God face to face, we will know God as intimately as God can be known. By his powerful imagery, John encourages the people to hold on, to be faithful, to trust in God’s good time all will be well.

Wow.

What do you do with that? They're wonderful scripture but what's the point? What holds them all together? What's the take-away that will guide our living in the days ahead?

I was sitting in the narthex Thursday afternoon about 2:30, ready to pull my hair out I was so frustrated, when I looked through the window at this cross. I was looking at the cross and admiring it and thinking about it when it hit me: Jesus is all three in one. Jesus is all three - in one.

Jesus is our leader. Jesus is the one who guides us in our living. Jesus loves us and scolds us. He is our lawgiver and commander against the forces of evil. By his living and his force of personality, Jesus unites us in ministry to make the Kingdom of God as real on earth as it is in heaven. Jesus leads us in the way we should go.

Jesus is also our teacher. By his words and actions, by his parables and pronouncements, he teaches us how to live holy lives. Jesus teaches us how to pray. He teaches us how to resist temptation; how to love our neighbor **and** our enemy. Jesus teaches us how to live the way God wants us to live.

Jesus is a mystic whose inspired language encourages us to be faithful to God. He is the Good Shepherd who calls us by name. He is the Son of Man, coming on the clouds at the end of days. By his prayers, especially in the Gospel of John, Jesus calls us to unite with God as intimately as a tree is united with its branches, as a grapevine is united with its grapes. By his powerful imagery, Jesus encourages us to hold on, to be faithful, to trust in God's good time **all** will be well.

Jesus is our Moses, our Paul, our John and many, many more. Jesus is our vision for living.

As Easter people we look to Jesus as our vision for living. Jesus is our guidance for living a meaningful life. Not parents and family. Not friends and neighbors. Those may be good and wonderful people. Don't get me wrong. But they are not our vision

for living. Jesus is our vision of a meaningful life. Jesus is our vision for how life should be lived.

Are you a visionary person? Do you have a vision for your future? Do you have a vision for your career? What you want to achieve? Do you have a vision for how you want your business to grow? Do you have a vision for your retirement?

Do you have a vision for your life? Do you have a path to follow? Do you have a direction to walk? Do you have a way to live? Do you have a vision for where you want to be and what you want to have done before you draw your final breath? Is Jesus a part of it?

Friends, if you are struggling with your purpose and meaning in life; if you are having a hard time having a vision for yourself for a month from now, a year from now, a decade from now, if you are desperately searching for some kind of guidance, turn to Jesus. Jesus is the real deal. He is the total package. Jesus is Moses and Paul and John and all that is good and holy rolled into one. If we embrace him, he will lead and teach and inspire us to eternity itself.

May Jesus be our vision, now and always, Amen.