



Series 1: Jesus, disability and discrimination

4 What Love Sees

By Craig Millward

So when Jesus encounters a man born blind, he sees the same person everyone else does, but chooses not to focus upon what makes him different, or to ponder on the reason for his blindness. None of us can do anything about our first impression when meeting a person for the first time. What counts is what we do next.

I think Jesus would say it is how we succeed in loving our neighbour.

To someone immersed in our culture, the demand that we love someone else seems bizarre, since it is commonly understood that love is nothing unless it is freely offered and springs from the emotions. But the way loving to command makes sense is to read it alongside some of the other teachings of Jesus.

If you give, you receive...

If you lose yourself, you'll find yourself...

Loving someone as an act of the will becomes natural when taking care of the person in front of us is more important than what my first impression seems to indicate I should do.

The process looks like that described in 1 John 4:7-12:

Love comes from God

Whoever does not love does not know God

When we love one another, God joins himself with us

This is how we are made perfect like him.

God kicks things off by commanding us to love because doing so doesn't make sense until we try it. In not allowing our first impression to be the first and last word we are opening the door to the second and subsequent impressions, and thus getting to know the person in front of us. It is then that God joins himself us and seeing through his eyes becomes a habit of a lifetime.

Discussion Questions

- Do you agree that the way our culture defines 'love' has weaknesses? if you do, what are they?
- Is love an emotion, an act, both or something else entirely?
- Can you be commanded to love someone who is different from you?