HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE REMEMBERED? By David Diestelkamp

It occurred to me how the guy must feel being known for the rest of human history as the “thief on the cross”—hanging naked on a cross; dying for your crimes as a robber; initially blaspheming and mocking Jesus; confessing Jesus as Lord; asking to be remembered by Jesus in His kingdom; given assurance by Jesus; praising God throughout eternity for His saving grace that is magnified in saving a “thief on the cross.” (Lk 23:39-43). God’s grace is amazing.

I wondered how it would feel to be known for the rest of human history as the “Ethiopian eunuch”—enduring the snickers of kids and adults who discover that a eunuch is a castrated man; unable to have sex; being marginalized by Jewish Law by being banned from the priesthood and assemblies (Le 21:20; De 23:1); given the promise of acceptance and an “everlasting name that will endure forever” by the prophets (Is 56:3-5 NIV); reading that same prophet Isaiah when the Spirit sends a preacher to guide, baptize, and give him the joy of salvation in the kingdom that eunuchs dreamed of and no eunuch had ever experienced before. God’s grace is amazing.

How would it be to have it recorded in Scripture for the rest of human history that you were the woman “caught in adultery”—religious leaders accusing you; public humiliation with the announcement you were caught in the very act; the Law’s death penalty being pronounced on you; Jesus telling your accusers, “He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first”; watching the accusers leave and Jesus saying, “Has no one condemned you… Neither do I … go and sin no more (Jn 8:1-11). God’s grace is amazing.

Imagine being known for the rest of human history for your disability, as is the “man who was paralyzed”—only able to lay on your bed; having to be carried around by others; you can’t get in to see Jesus, so others tear open someone’s roof to lower you into His presence; instead of healing you, Jesus says, “Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you”; the religious leaders are outraged and accuse Jesus of blaspheming; Jesus heals you to show He has “power on earth to forgiven sins”; at His direction you stand up, pick up what you were lying on, and go to your house, “glorifying God” (Mt 9:1-9; Mk 2:1-11; Lk 5:17-26). God’s grace is amazing!

What would it be like to be known for the rest of human history as the “woman in the city who was a sinner”—religious leaders disdaining you and not even willing to touch you; you’re a crier; you anoint the feet of Jesus and wipe them with your tears and hair, but the hateful words of those who are religious keep saying you’re a sinner and are the kind of woman who shouldn’t be allowed to even touch a prophet; Jesus sees the washing of His feet, the kisses, and anointing as expressions of love for Him; Jesus says, “’Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.’ Then He said to her, ‘Your sins are forgiven.’” “Then He said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you. Go in peace’” (Lk 7:36-50). God’s grace is amazing.

Criminals, eunuchs, adulterers, people with disabilities, and known sinners are remembered as criminals, eunuchs, adulterers, people with disabilities, and known sinners who were welcomed by Jesus and saved by grace. Until we are ready to be known as criminals, eunuchs, adulterers, people with disabilities, and sinners, we aren’t ready for grace. When we are in Christ and someone remembers us as criminals, eunuchs, adulterers, people with disabilities, and sinners, we don’t have to be ashamed, instead we have an amazing grace story to tell. “And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Co 6:11). That is how we want to be remembered. God’s grace is amazing!

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