

“Faith? . . . or Figuring it Out?”

When a nine year old boy came home from Sunday School, his mother asked him what he had learned that day.

“Well,” said the boy, “our teacher told us about how God sent Moses behind the enemy lines to rescue the Israelites from the Egyptians. He brought them to the Red Sea, and then Moses ordered the engineers to build a pontoon bridge. After all the people crossed over, they looked back and saw the Egyptian tanks coming. Quick as a flash Moses grabbed his cell phone and asked the Air Force to send cruise missiles to blow up the bridge and save the Israelites.”

“Bobby!” exclaimed the mother. “Is that really the way the teacher told the story?”

“Well, not exactly,” Bobby admitted. “But if I told it her way you’d never believe it.”

From God’s creating the universe and all that is in it in six days (cf. Genesis 1:1-2:3) . . . to parting the Red Sea so His people could walk across on dry ground (cf. Exodus 14:21-31) . . . to Jesus ascending into heaven in a cloud (cf. Acts 1:9-11) . . . to His being physically present amongst His people with His body and blood in divine services all over the world at the same time (cf. Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 10:16) . . . one cannot help but marvel at the miraculous ways in which the Lord works!

However, there is still that tendency to want to understand how it happened, to figure out how He did it—kind of like trying to discover how the magician performed the illusion. There is the temptation to study the Bible like a textbook, to dissect it in an effort to figure it all out, not realizing that the devil strives to get a foothold in the midst of such study to explain away the miracles. He, and my own sinful nature, constantly tempt me to take control of God rather trust God.

When you encounter God’s Word by faith—that is, trusting in Him and His atoning work for the forgiveness

of your sins in Jesus—you get to bask in the miracles! While my sinful human nature says, “How could God create the universe in 6 days?”, the Holy Spirit steps in with faith that says, “*Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways!*” (cf. Romans 11:33) I may even wonder what took God so long to create everything! While your sinful nature is tempted to say, “The cross is a foolish way to save people” your faith says, “Thank You Jesus for willingly taking all my sin upon Yourself so I get to live eternally with You!”

While encountering the proclamation of God’s Word and Will to your heart as you read the Scriptures, remember the words of Isaiah 55:6-7 → *Seek the LORD while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near; let the wicked forsake His way, and the unrighteous man His thoughts; let Him return to the LORD, that He may have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.* Even the fact that He will abundantly pardon in His grace, His undeserved favor, is a mystery. Why? Yahweh continues in verses 8-9: *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.* Thank God that He forgives on the basis of His ways in Jesus rather than our frail human ways!

Thus, when you study God’s Word by faith, the Holy Spirit enlightens you with His gifts of forgiveness, new life and the conviction that *with man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.* (cf. Matthew 19:26) You hear it *recount all of the wonderful deeds* of our Lord and Savior (cf. Psalm 9:1) in the context of His dealing with us sinners and don’t have to figure it out so it makes sense to you. Rather, you get to *grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ* and give Him *the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.* (cf. 2 Peter 3:18)

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