

“We Hid Our Faces”

By RT Nusbaum

1984

We Hid Our Faces

“As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider. Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him.”

Isaiah 52:14–53:3

He was despised and we esteemed Him not. The bible goes on here to tell the cruel punishment that Jesus suffered on Calvary. I believe that the Lord may be talking to some of us. We may not be following the Lord the way we know we should. I believe He may be talking to the backslider, I believe He may be talking to the one that loves God, but the fire is not burning like it should. I believe He may be talking to the hypocrite this morning. I believe He may be talking to the one who is confused and doesn't really know the fulness of what God has.

I Am a Man of Unclean Lips

The prophet Isaiah sees a man he says whose visage, whose face, whose body was so marred, the original Hebrew says that He didn't even look human. He says, “Who hath believed this report?” He was speaking of the Son of God. He was speaking of the Son of God, years, hundred of years before Jesus came and died on Calvary. God supernaturally touched His eyes. And in the sixth chapter of Isaiah he cries out, even as the Apostle Paul, “Oh, wretched man that I am.” “I am a man of unclean lips. I have seen the Lord.” Even as Job said, “I have heard of you, I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear. I have heard of people, ministers that have talked about you. But now I see thee face to face and I abhor myself.”

Whom Shall I Send

You see God, yes, He wants you to be a success, He wants you to prosper, He wants many great things for you, but my friend, my brother, my sister, He can do nothing with a church that is self-centered, that is set on getting only things from God and not laying down their life for Him, giving themselves to Him. He saw that, Isaiah saw Him and the Lord said to him, “Who will go? Who will declare me? Who will declare what you've just seen? Who will go and whom shall I send?” We say, “Lord, send the preacher, send the few that are called.” But the Lord is calling His body. We are His children. We must know Him, we must have Him even as Jeremiah said, with it burning in our bones, this message. So that if they came tomorrow to destroy all Christians, you and I would stand. But the prophet says, “Who is going to believe the report? Who can understand this?”

Woman Saved Daughter From Fire

I remember a story from over fifty years ago, in the Midwestern states there was a young woman. She had a six month old baby and she was caring for the baby and she went outside to hang her clothes on the line and as she was hanging the clothes, she smelled smoke. And as she turned around she looked in the two-story house and smoke was pouring out the windows on all sides, and as she turned and looked, even as she looked the flames burst out all over in a tremendous pouring out of heat and flame. And she thought, "My baby!!!" She rushed into that house. The baby was upstairs and in bottom was filled smoke and as she made her way up the stairs the flames were already beginning to fly all around her. She ran into the room engulfed in flame and she grabbed her baby. She began to wrap it in all the blankets she could get. She turned and as she went the stairs were almost totally engulfed. They hadn't fallen yet, but they were totally engulfed in flames and the room that she was in and the hallway. She ran some thirty feet down and out. And as she went the flames covered her.

When I was in the Army, some seventeen years ago, I worked in the burn unit during the Vietnam War. These men would walk in the jungle and the enemy had flamethrowers and they would shoot them. And they would come back, and if you've ever seen a candle melt, that's what human flesh does. It just melts. And these men, their hair gone, their hair off their eyebrows. Their faces melted in, horrible, horrible. This woman was burned tremendously. And as she rushed out the neighbors rushed up and grabbed the baby, and the blankets were already in flames. They took the baby out and the baby wasn't harmed at all. They rushed that woman to the hospital and they were able to save her life. But her body was so burned that she didn't look human. She had to wear gloves on her hands, she had to wear a veil over her face. And she always had to wear long sleeves and long dresses. You could see the skinny legs that had been burned away. That woman was not married at the time, she had been divorced. Everything she had was in that house and she lost it all. Nobody would take that woman in, nobody would let her have a job. She was so ugly. And so she began to take in washing from the neighbors and she worked hard, and she scrubbed clothes, and she did the best she could because she wanted the best for that baby. That child began to grow and she had nothing for herself. They lived in a little shack, but she gave the best to that child, the best clothes, the best toys, all the right things. She wanted her to have them. She never told the child the story of what had happened to her because she was afraid what it would do, she didn't know.

She Was Ashamed

As that child grew older she got into High School and she began to be ashamed of her mother. She wouldn't bring her friends home, she wouldn't tell anybody about her mother. She wouldn't tell anybody about the poor condition she lived in. Her friends would talk and she would never mention it. And then when she got in college, they were all talking one day and one of the friends wondered, "Why does she never mention her family? We have gone over to all of our friends houses." So she secretly followed her home and saw that she went into this shack. She came to the door and knocked and her friend came to the door. She said, "I didn't know. I still love you." Her friend didn't know what to do, so she took her into her room and her room was as nice as it could be. Her mother had seen that she had beautiful furniture, though the rest of the house was a shack and her mother wore old clothes. And as they were talking, her mother had to pass through her room to get something. She came in and picked it up and went back out. And the friend of the girl said, "Who was that?" And the girl said, "That's the wash lady that comes in and cleans and does the dishes." And through the paper-thin walls the mother heard what her daughter said. And the friend left and the mother came in, she stood before

her daughter and took off the gloves. She said, "Daughter because I love you these hands are burned." And she undid her dress and dropped it down, so her daughter could see for the first time her marred body. She said, "I did this for you." She took the veil away, and the hat so she could see someone who didn't even look human. She said, "I did it all for you." The child fell down at her feet, and for the first time in her life she began to acknowledge her as her mother. But more importantly than that, she acknowledged her as her savior.

His Visage Was So Marred

The bible says, "We hid as it were our faces from Him." He looked at Jesus in the fifty-second chapter and said, "His visage is so marred", because Jesus when He hung on Calvary, He took all the sin of the whole world, and then He took all the sickness of the world. And if you've ever seen anybody whose been sick, my own father, it eats you alive, you look horrible, you look gaunt. He not only had the worst sickness, He had all of that sickness on Him, and all of the sin and He had never known sin. But the bible says, "He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us, that we might be the righteousness of God in Christ." He looked, all his life Isaiah had heard of the great Messiah that would come. He heard of the great white horse He would ride back on. He heard of the majesty of the Kingdom that He would set up. He heard of the great things that this Messiah would have, but all of the sudden God gives him a picture of a man hanging there, marred, despised, rejected, people spitting on Him, mocking Him. It says they ripped His beard, it says they slapped Him and said, "If you are the Son of God prophesy unto us, tell me who hit you." The bible says that was your sin and my sin. He took mocking and he said, "Who hath believed this report?" He said everybody talking about the Messiah, whose going to believe me when I tell them what He looks like?

They Did Not Recognize Him

As I read that yesterday I was reminded when Jesus rose from the dead, the glorified body of Jesus Christ and yet there was still something there. Because when Mary Magdalene saw Him from the corner of her eyes, she did not think that this was the mighty Son of God that was risen from the dead, she thought it was the gardener. I don't know how many gardeners you have seen, but most of them I've seen full time, their skin is broken and cracked from being in the sun. Their hands from digging in the dirt are gnarled. She saw something that wasn't beautiful, she thought He was the gardener, until He spoke and He said, "Mary, Mary" And regardless of what He looked like, she fell down and said, "My Lord and my God." And the Lord reminded me of Thomas who said, "Except I see the nail scars, except I see the wounded side, I won't believe." Jesus appeared in that room with the twelve, Thomas didn't have to shove his hand in there, he looked at Jesus, he saw something and he fell down on his face and said, "My Lord, and my God." When you see Jesus, you see your sin on Him. You see your sickness on Him. You see that there is no beauty that you should desire Him.

John Marveled, the Great Conqueror Was "a Little Lamb"

The bible says in the fifth chapter of Revelation and they're talking about opening the seal, opening the book and John says, "Who can open the book?" And they said, "Nobody in heaven and in earth can open the book!" And John began to weep, "Nobody can open the book! Nobody can understand the book, nobody can open it to give understanding." And it says that he wept. But one of the angels came over and said, "There is one who can. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah." And with that visual picture of words, he turned to see this great

conqueror, this great Lion of the tribe of Judah, and the bible says that he looked and he was amazed and wondered because on the throne he saw, the Greek rendering is “a little lamb as though it had been slain”. He didn't see one with a great sword and glittering gold. He saw the Lamb of God that took away the sin of the world. And it says he wondered and marveled. He marveled. We expect to see the great conqueror. Even in Revelation chapter seventeen when it speaks of this great conqueror returning on a white horse, and it says that He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, it says the Lamb of God.

John the Baptist – Behold the Lamb of God

John the Baptist caught a picture of this. As he began to baptize God says there's one that's coming that is greater. There is one that's coming that is greater. You are going to see Him. You will know Him. I'll let you know who He is. And when he saw Him, he said, “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” How does He take away the sin of the world? Does He just “whoosh” and it's gone? Does He just snap His fingers? He didn't just point and say, “Sin be gone.” The spotless, son of God became a Lamb and bore your sin and mine. Bore your sickness. So that Thomas when he saw even the Lamb as though it had been slain, instead of being horrified, he said, “My Lord, and my God.” He identified with Him. He said, “Thank God for the nail scars because that represents the putting away of my sin. Thank God for the marring because He bore my sickness.” The bible said it pleased the Father that He should bruise Him right there in Isaiah fifty-three. It pleased Him because He was the only one spotless and He was the only one who could redeem us. We get our minds on the great things, and certainly there are great things, but my friends through-out all eternity Jesus will bear those nail scars.

Love Slaves Bore the Scars

In the Old Testament they had a law that if you became a servant, if you became a servant and you were sold into servant hood, you, your wife and if you had children under that servant hood, that there came a time after seven years. And if you didn't get let go, they would take you to the doorpost and if you said, “No I don't want to go free. I love my master. I love my wife.” Because if you went free your wife would have to stay and your children. “I love my master, I love my wife. I love my children, I want to stay a love servant.” They would take you to the doorpost and they would get an awl and pierce your ear. And show that every time somebody saw those scars, they knew that you were a servant. A slave and yet the slaves that had that mark were love slaves. They loved their master. The slaves that had that mark were love slaves. They loved their master even as Jesus said, “I have a commandment of my Father. I can lay down my life or I can take it and go. I don't have to die, I don't have to bear your sin. I can leave. I have that right. But Father I love you and I love these people. And I love these children.” And so they took Him and they nailed Him to that cross. I can see years later, sitting before an open flame, the husband calls his wife over. They are sitting around the fireplace, he has been serving his master for many years. And the wife crawls up in his lap and as she sits there talking, she touches the ear. She sees the scars and she weeps. She says, “You could have left me, you could have been free and left me. You could have been gone, but you suffered for me and you bear the marks in your body. And you stayed.” And as I picture that I picture another picture, thousands from years from now. I see a throne, I see a multitude. And I see us looking at those scars and I see us throughout all eternity saying, “Jesus you could have left us. You didn't have to die. But you loved us. You loved us. You died for us and you redeemed us into the family of God.

The Lifeguard – You Can't Save Someone While They're Trying to Save Themselves

The bible says that we hid as it were our faces from Him. That is a glorious picture, but today there are Christians all over this nation that hide their face from the reality of what Jesus did. They only want all the blessings. They don't want to live any kind of commitment for Him. He gave everything and they just pray, "God bless me. God help me" I just read last night there are people suffering right now. As I read this, it said they were in California. Everyone was on the beach and they were having a good time and playing. Then all of the sudden a scream went out in the water, an eighteen year old boy was drowning. The mother began to scream, "Somebody save him". And the lifeguard was immediately at her side. Then he just folded his arms and a hush went over the crowd. And they said, "My God, why won't he save him?" And the father who was fifty or sixty years old, knew he couldn't get out there in time, he didn't know how to save him. He said, "My God won't you save my son!" And he said, "You can't save somebody that is trying to save themselves. You have to wait till they wear down." And he stood there flail and fight until finally he began to wear down, and instantly the lifeguard was in the water. And he was too strong to drown him and the other guy and he carried him back to shore and saved him.

Somebody's Slipping!

My friends God is dealing with people today who are fighting, trying to be your own savior and you have not recognized what Jesus has done. And the spirit of the Lord said, "You will know if you ask." If you will seek with all your heart, He promises He will be found of you. All provision is made for your needs. But we're going to have to come face to face not with an altar call where somebody lays hands on you and you're slain in the Spirit. That is wonderful, we'll never stop that, that is God. Not just healing, not just "God get me a better job, do this or this." We are going to have to come face to face with the Lamb of God. We are going to have to see Him so marred. We are going to have to see that was my sin, that was my sickness and that will motivate you to live the kind of life you need to live. Instead of a haphazard, lukewarm, slipshod kind of life. When we live that way we blame everything and everybody. "The church didn't give me enough money. This brother, this sister didn't do this or that." We haven't had those problems here, but I can tell you the devil and the old flesh knows that they're here. By the grace of God, and the power of love we have not had those problems. But God put this message here for a reason. Somebody is slipping, somewhere, somehow. Now we are either going to serve Jesus or we're not.

You say, "Brother don't talk that way you'll run off all the visitors." Go on! I'm serving Jesus with all my heart with everything I own, with everything. I am dead serious and I'm not fooling around. Satan's not fooling around. The world's not fooling around. But the Christians are fooling around. We hide as it were our face from Him. If it's three of us left, that's all it will be, that's all we need. If it's five of us. But when I said, "Jesus come into my heart", I meant it. I'll never back down. Everything I have is His. You see my sin? If you'll tell me about it, I'll repent about it with all my heart. I am open to the Lord. But I'll tell you where I'll take it. I'll take it to Calvary, and I'll see what Jesus did and I will genuinely repent. Not just say I'm sorry, I mean, "Jesus, I am sorry for what you look like because of my sin." Because we think we can sin so grace can abound. He says, "Obedience is better than sacrifice." He is that sacrifice, He is there for all of us. But He says, "I would rather have you obey so I did not have to carry all this sin." For every sin that we sin that's what He bore.

What's It Going to Take To Wake Up the Church

I don't know what it's going to take to wake the church up. But I think it's going to take the cross of Christ. I think we're going to have to quit trying to get a loan from God. We are going to have to give Him everything. Our time, our money. We are going to have to have our families living right. We're going to have to have husbands and wives dedicated to Jesus in your family. It's going to take a total commitment to Jesus. Those children, God's been dealing with me more about my own children. I want my children raised in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. I am doing the best that I can. I want to tell you something, I am not the kind of father that I need to be. My kids will laugh and say, "Dad, you're the best dad." I'm not the kind of father I want to be, but by the grace of God and your prayers I will be. I don't think we're the kind of church we need to be. I think we are kind of floating along. I know some of you are thinking, "Man, this is the hottest thing going in this town." Praise God! Don't ever cease to thank Him for that. But I think that He is wanting us to shift gears. I would love to see an outbreak of people falling on their face when they hit this place. Crying out for this city, for lost souls, for other churches who are struggling. The sacrifices of God are broken and a contrite heart. Until we are broken, we will never know true joy. Yes, we probably have one of the best worship services in Denton, but God is telling me, I don't believe there is a person here that doesn't know that it can go further. I believe the answer is not to shout louder during service, I believe the answer is to see Jesus. You won't have any problem worshipping when You see Him. The praise and adoration, and thanksgiving will be there.

Let's stand together. God is talking to somebody here today. He would not have had me totally change the message and just give me what to say if He had not wanted something big done here. Let's bow our heads.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, we have not been living the way we need to. We're still fooling around with alcohol, drugs, cigarettes. We're still watching soap opera and TV when we could be in the word. We are not praying like we ought to. Some of us have been playing church. We show up, we go home. Lord I ask you to deal with this church, that we would be the glorious church without spot or blemish that you are returning for. If God is dealing with you on a greater commitment level, I ask you to just slip your hand up quickly and put it down. I see your hands. Jesus will not be satisfied until He's got all of you. He will not be satisfied. Take the hand of the people next to you, and let's join hands in unity all over this place, and pray this prayer after me:

Group Prayer

Lord Jesus I give you my heart. I give you my body, I give you my mind. You genuinely are Lord. I am not what I ought to be. Make me what I need to be. If I'm not willing, make me willing. Open my heart as never before. Make this church the kind of church you want it to be. Convict everyone of us here and bring us into your glorious light in a way we have never experienced. I dedicate myself to my brothers and sisters and to your service. Give us wisdom Lord on the direction you want us to go. Make us alive in Jesus Christ. In Jesus name, amen.

I ask you today, I ask you to spend some time with the Lord. We have got a prayer room here, we have the front altars here if you need to spend a little time. You know what happens, we feel the pressure of the Holy Spirit. We get so busy we run out of here and we forget. But if you'll take a few moments, just a few moments to solidify this in you, it will change your life.

Father bless your people now as we go our way. Lord, we thank you for what you've done today. Lord we thank you for all the joyous, powerful services we have. But Lord we thank you for your intervention today. We love you Lord. We are going to do everything we can within our ability to crown you Lord over the city of Denton. In the name of Jesus, amen.