

Be Like Him!

Have you ever met someone who just left you in awe? I mean, they were so great and so wonderful that you were left shaking your head and saying, "There's nobody else like that!" Well, those kinds of meetings are rare, but they do happen occasionally, even with me. Back in 1997 when I was working as an Inside Sales Account Representative for Trans World Airlines, one of the accounts I had was with Cardinal Travel of Hazelwood, MO. Dal Maxvill, President of the company, and Joe Hoerner, Vice-President founded this agency. Not only were Dal Maxvill and Joe Hoerner business partners, they were also former teammates who had played on the Cardinals' World Series teams back in 1967 and 1968, and Maxvill had been the Cardinals' General Manager from 1985 until 1994.

Many times while working as an Account Rep I had spoken to Joe Hoerner on the phone, helping resolve problems that had arisen with his clients who were flying on TWA, or helping him with preferred seat assignments or giving out complimentary passes into the Ambassador Club at the airport. Later on after Joe was tragically killed on October 4, 1996 when he was pinned between a tractor fender and a tree trunk while tilling a friend's field, Dal Maxvill's sister, Pat, took over Joe's position, and I got to know her, too. Both Joe and Pat had always been very cordial and grateful for the help I had been able to provide for them and their clients, and one day out of the blue I received a call from Pat asking if I would be able to come and join her and Dal for lunch as their guest to show me their appreciation. I told her I would be delighted to do so, and I asked her, "Where shall I meet you?" She said to me, "Dal and I will come by and pick you up at 11:30."

Imagine that! I was getting picked up and taken to lunch by Dal Maxvill, a baseball hero of mine when I was just 6 and 7 years old! When they arrived, I couldn't believe that I was sitting in the seat of the brand new Chevy Blazer being driven by Dal Maxvill, and that **he** was chauffeuring **me** to take me out for lunch! When he played baseball, Dal was a typical slick-fielding, no-hit shortstop of his era. When he retired, he held the National League career fielding record, sporting an amazing .973 mark. No one would ever accuse Dal of using steroids, though! The man hit only 6 home runs in his entire career, and I remember how impressed and amused he was that I remembered his one and only grand slam he hit, doing so at Montreal's Jarry Park on April 14, 1969. This was also the first grand slam hit in Canada by a Major League baseball player. Dal was a humble man, and the way he described it the wind was blowing out so hard that day that his grand slam would normally have been a routine popup, a "can of corn," as he called it, that should have been caught by the first baseman, but a strong gust of wind kept carrying the ball until it just cleared the wall. Even though Dal's hitting stats were minimal, he was still one of my favorite childhood baseball heroes. When I was with Dal and his sister that day, I found myself transported back into time, transformed into a 6 year old in 1967 again, watching the Cardinals beat

the Red Sox and future Hall of Fame member, Carl Yastrzemski. I was getting to meet one of my childhood heroes! There was nobody like him!

The Bible records for us the account of one such meeting that left a person in awe. In this passage, the Queen of Sheba stood in stunned amazement after her first encounter with King Solomon. After her meeting him initially, she went away saying, "There's nobody like him!" Many years later, when Jesus was ministering here on Earth, He mentioned this very event. He spoke of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba and He reminded His listeners that **He** was even greater than Solomon, (Matthew 12:42). If an earthly king left that queen astounded at his glory and greatness, just how much more so will King Jesus amaze those who meet Him?

I want to show you this morning that as great as Solomon was in his day, a greater than Solomon is here! I want to tell you today that there is nobody like Jesus! There are a few thoughts in this passage that I would like to draw out for you today.

The land of Sheba was located some 1,200 miles south of Israel. Most scholars believe it corresponds to modern day Yemen, while others believe it was Ethiopia. As she served in that country of Sheba, the sailors and merchants that passed through shared the word of the greatness of King Solomon. What their testimony said about him was this: There is nobody like him!

Sheba had heard of Solomon's great wealth. She had heard of the great riches that flowed into the Kingdom of Solomon. In 1 Kings 9:28 we learn that King Hiram had sent Solomon 16 tons of gold. According to the gold experts from Blanchard and Company, the current price of gold is \$1,102.80 per ounce. That means that 32,000 pounds of gold would be worth \$564,633,600.00. But that is not all. According to 1 Kings 10:14, Solomon also received **additionally each year** 25 tons of gold, and this figure does not include the revenue he received from traders, traveling merchants, Arabian kings and governors in the land. That means from the yearly tribute of gold **alone** Solomon was receiving annually \$882,240,000.00. And Solomon reigned as King of Israel for 40 years! He was, indeed, an extremely wealthy man. His wealth was greater than the imagination can comprehend!

Sheba had heard of Solomon's works. She had heard of the great kingdom he had built (1 Kings 5-9). She had heard of the Temple he had constructed for God. She had heard of the great palace he had built for himself. She had heard that he was a powerful king and she wanted to know more about this man!

Sheba had also heard of the great wisdom Solomon possessed (1 Kings 4:29-34). She had heard stories of his great intellect and that he could answer deep questions. This queen came to Solomon because she had problems that her power and her wealth could not solve. She came because there were questions

for which her so-called gods did not have the answers. She came because she needed help that only Solomon could provide!

Sheba had heard of Solomon's worship. Notice where the fame of Solomon was in the mind of this woman: ***"Now when the Queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to test him with hard questions"*** (1 Kings 10:1 [NKJV]). What impressed her more than his position, more than his power, more than his prosperity and more than his prestige, however, was Solomon's relationship with his God. When she learned that Solomon's God was the One responsible for Solomon's glory, she wanted to know more! She wanted to know about this connection he had with God. She was interested in meeting the God of Solomon!

We are not here to exalt Solomon today, but we are here to lift up the One Who is greater even than Solomon! Can I just remind you before we move deeper in the text that there is nobody like Him anywhere? He is all that Solomon was reputed to be, but 10,000 times infinity times infinity more!

I am going to say more about these things in just a minute, but let me say right now that there is nobody like Him in His wealth. Jesus can meet every need, whether it is physical, material or spiritual! The world and the fullness thereof are His because He created it! There is nobody like Him in His works. He has all power and He can move your mountains, He can quench your thirst and He can save your soul! There is nobody like Him in His wisdom. He holds all of the answers to all of your questions. In fact, He is the Answer to all of the riddles, problems and questions of life! They all rest and reside in Him. There is nobody like Him in His worship. He can bring you into the presence of the God of eternity and for eternity! He alone can give you the vital connection you need to God. He alone bridges the gap between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5!

There is nobody like Him in His reputation. When lost men hear about Jesus Christ, it piques their curiosity. It whets their appetites. It makes them want to come to know Him! Just like the Queen of Sheba, many lost souls get interested in Him because some of those who knew Him were talking about Him! By the way, everyone who knows Him should be talking about Him (Acts 1:8).

What we do not need is to try to win the world using the world, but we need to be Christ to the world and allow His glory to shine through us (Matthew 5:13-16; 1 Peter 2:11-12). Only the Bible being preached in truth and love through the power of the Spirit will bring true change in the lives of mankind (John 17:17; 1 Peter 2:1-3). Let me listen to a man or a woman of God who has been shut in with God, seeking His face, and has heard from Heaven through the Scriptures, and not some slick snake oil salesman posing as a man of God. I want the undiluted, unadulterated pure word of the gospel of Jesus Christ! In Acts 13:1-4, we have an example with the church at Antioch as a case in point of where the disciples sought God and He revealed His will to them. We need to hear from

Jesus because as Peter declared, only He has the words of eternal life (John 10:27; John 6:68). Let me know that the man of God stands upon the final authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17) and they are not going to bow to this world but to Christ alone (2 Timothy 4:1-6).

The most effective evangelists in the world are those who are like Christ. Jesus was counter-culture, and the way that we impact our modern culture is by shutting ourselves in the secret place with Christ (Matthew 6:6) and coming out with the glory of this new covenant shining through us (2 Corinthians 3:10-11). If we truly believe Acts 1:8 then let us stand on God and His word and go forth into the world, making an impact that exalts His honor far above our own. The world needs to see Jesus living inside of us, and that will draw them to the Savior.

When the Queen of Sheba arrived at Jerusalem, she was astounded at the greatness of Solomon's wealth. What she saw blew her mind. She saw his possessions, his great palace and his immense wealth. She also saw first hand his great generosity, for Solomon gave her tremendous wealth before she returned to her own country.

In 1 Kings 4:22-23, Sheba saw first-hand the massive amount of food required to feed those who ate from his table on a daily basis. She observed his people, and watched his servants as they ministered to him. She noticed how they sat enrapt in his presence, listening intently to the sound of his voice and the words he uttered. She noticed how others hastily carried out his wishes. She was amazed because they were actually happy to be his servants! Who had happy servants?

Sheba saw Solomon's piety. She watched Solomon as he entered the Temple of God. History notes that Solomon had a covered walkway connecting his palace with the House of God. She watched him worship and saw the sacrifices he made to His God and she stood amazed (1 Kings 8:63; 1 Kings 9:25).

When the Queen of Sheba saw all the riches of King Solomon, she was totally flabbergasted! She said, "There's nobody like him!" But, I want to remind you that there is a greater than Solomon among us today! Let me just remind you that there is nobody like Him in His possessions. Listen to what God tells Job in Job 41:11 [NKJV]: ***"Who has preceded Me, that I should pay him? Everything under Heaven is Mine."*** He owns it all and He can take care of His people! There are no shortages with Him! There is nobody like Him in His provisions. Not only does He have it all, but He is willing to share it all with those who feed from His table (Psalm 37:25). The Apostle Paul tells us in Philippians 4:19 [NKJV], ***"And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."*** Solomon had enough at his table to feed those who ate there, maybe as many as several hundred daily. The Lord Jesus has enough to give all of His children their ***"daily bread"***! Not just the physical necessity of food, but also the spiritual food that we need so desperately as well.

There is nobody like Him in His people (Titus 2:14; Ephesians 2:10). His people love Him and want to be around Him to hear His word and to do His bidding. Those who know Him and love Him *want* to serve Him! There is nobody like Him in His piety (Hebrews 7:26; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:22). Solomon was a man of faith, but the Lord Jesus **is** the focus of faith! He is infinitely holy and righteous! Solomon was a man who offered sacrifices to God, but what makes Jesus so wonderful is that He offered **Himself** as an acceptable sacrifice to God for all of humanity! He gave His life on the cross to redeem all those who will place their faith in Him (1 Peter 1:18-19). Jesus promises to share His righteousness with those who come to Him for salvation (Romans 4:24). He will take away the debt of sin from your account and replace it with His own righteous, which is the only way to enter into the presence of God (John 14:6). Paul writes in Philippians 3:8-9 [NKJV], **8. *But indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9. and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;***

Paul also tells us in Galatians 3:27 that when we are baptized into Christ we put on Christ. This means we are raised in Christ at baptism (Romans 6:3-4). And because we are His, Paul tells us to **2. *Set your mind on things above, not on things on the Earth.*** (Now listen to this.) **3. *For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*** (Colossians 2:2-3 [NKJV]) You died! **You died!** When you trusted in Christ, you died and you entered into His death. And now your life is hid with Him in God, and when He returns to glory you are going to be glorified with Him. What an unbelievable passage! Now, that is true and that is what it says, so why do you live according to the old nature instead of the new nature? Maybe you have heard the illustration that the old nature, the old self, and the new self, two natures going on inside a Christian, are like a good dog and a bad dog inside fighting each other. Whichever dog we feed the most is going to win. Okay? Listen to what Paul says in Colossians 3:9-10 [NKJV]: **9. *Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, 10. and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him Who created him.*** If we feed the old nature, that is why we know some Christians who do not look like Christians, because they are feeding the old nature instead of the new. But, if we feed the new nature by God's Spirit, we are going to be renewed more and more into the image of Christ, and that is what verse 10 says. You have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. We are growing more and more into the image of Christ as we walk with God.

So how does God do it? How does God help me to grow spiritually? How does He shape my heart into Christ's heart? Well, there are many ways. He does it through the discipline of studying His Scripture. He does it through our diligent prayer. There are all kinds of ways that can be shaped so that we will grow more

and more like Christ. But, the best way is to see that God is already working on this is found in Romans 8:28 [NKJV]. This is one of the most powerful verses of Scripture. ***“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”***

I think the Apostle Paul understood the value of a role model. As we have seen in Philippians 2, Paul has been encouraging the church to have humility in order to maintain unity. In our passage today, Paul is essentially saying to the Philippians, “You must look to Christ to learn humility.” In order to have humility, you must be like Christ. Jesus Christ is the supreme model of humility.

Philippians 2:5-8 says, ***5. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6. Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7. but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.***

When the Queen of Sheba had heard about Solomon, she did not believe it until she had seen it for herself. What she saw when she came to Solomon left her dumbfounded! She just had to step back and say, “There is nobody like him!” Her trip to Jerusalem led her to some personal conclusions. Solomon was more blessed and wealthier than even she had heard, and she got more from him than she gave him.

Solomon was wiser even than Sheba had heard. He was able to discern and answer every last one of her riddles. He was simply much more wonderful than she had been led to believe, and she concluded that she had not even heard the half of his glory and greatness! Regarding Solomon’s servants, Sheba noticed and commented on the happy nature of his servants! Would the same be said of those of us who are servants of Christ? Do others view us as happy servants, or “gloomy Guses”?

Regarding Solomon’s Savior, Sheba commented on the greatness of his Lord! She bragged on His goodness and she bragged on His love. She was convinced that there was nobody like Solomon and nobody like His God!

Just as was the case with Sheba and Solomon, every person who has ever heard about Jesus Christ and has responded by coming to Him for salvation can echo everything the Queen of Sheba discovered, and then some. He will always give you back far more than you give up (Matthew 19:29)! He will reveal to you the answers to the riddles and problems of life. He will always prove to be far more glorious than anyone could ever articulate! He will leave you flabbergasted, astounded and amazed! You will have to say, “There is nobody like Him!” Everybody who told me about Jesus fell far short of the reality. He was far better than they said! The half has never been told!