

Daily View

"But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today'" Hebrews 3:13

July 16, 2020

Mr. Ross

As I was boarding the Monorail at Disneyland in the summer of 1964, there was Mr. Ross, decked out in the futuristic uniform of a Monorail attendant, helping people onto the train. It was weird to see him like that.

Mr. Ross was my English teacher in my Junior year at LaQuinta high school. Of all my high school teachers, he was the most "distinguished" — a quiet, older man with short, white hair and a kind demeanor. He never demanded respect, yet all the kids respected him. It's hard to explain, but he seemed to dwell at a higher plane than other teachers.

Most of the staff at Disneyland were people in their 20s or early 30s. In the summer, though, they hired extra part-time help and it was a great summer job for teachers. But I never would have guessed that Mr. Ross needed a part-time job. I pictured him sitting at a desk in a large office in his nice home reading a good book. Helping people get on a Monorail train seemed out of character. I was kind of disappointed.

Looking back on it, I realized that I had put Mr. Ross on a pedestal he never asked nor expected to be put on. In the classroom, with his perfect, high-pitched voice, he was bigger than life. None of that came across in his ill fitting Monorail uniform. That made him a little too "human," just one of us.

That reminds me of how people viewed Jesus. Even without his miracles, there was something about him that demanded respect. He spoke as one who had authority, not as their scribes (Matthew 7:29). In the "classroom" of other cities, like Mr. Ross, Jesus was larger than life. But when he got back to his hometown, he was like Mr. Ross at Disneyland in his Monorail uniform — just a man. Listen to Mark's account in 6:1-6

He went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. And Jesus said to

them, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household." And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went about among the villages teaching.

Our impression of a person is formed largely by what we see and what we think we know about him. Seeing Mr. Ross at Disneyland made him "just like me." After all, a lot of high school kids got summer jobs at Disneyland, too.

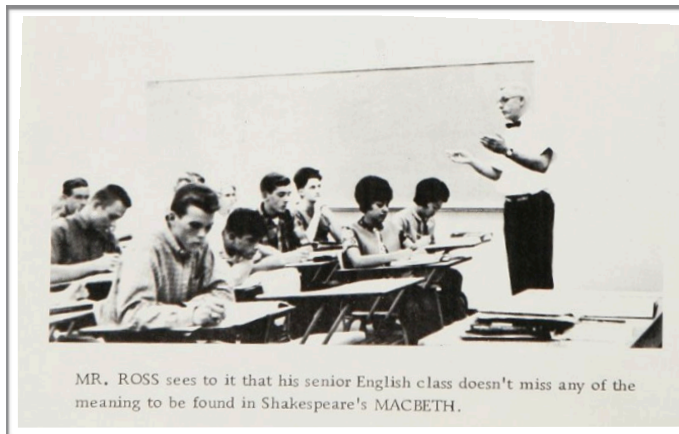
Similarly, the people in Nazareth couldn't get past the fact that Jesus, by all appearances, was "just like them." And, by all

appearances, he *was* just like them. What they missed was that Jesus was fully God, too (Colossians 2:9). But seeing the human side of Jesus is crucial. We don't understand Jesus if we view him as most pictures depict him: with celebrity looks and a glowing halo around his head. That's not the Jesus people saw in his time. Isaiah said, "he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him" (Isaiah 53:2). That's hard for us to believe, but we must:

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things... Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. ^{Hebrews 2:14, 17-18}

Today, I think of Mr. Ross, Monorail uniform notwithstanding, as the kind, distinguished man he was, doing his best to teach English to a bunch of hard-to-please 16-17 year olds.

A proper view of Jesus is that he lived life on earth in the flesh and taught eternal principles to hard-to-please people. Some "got it" and saw more than a mere man; they saw him for what he was: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).



MR. ROSS sees to it that his senior English class doesn't miss any of the meaning to be found in Shakespeare's MACBETH.

From my high school yearbook, Del Sol, 1965.