

Horton Hears A Who
August 10, 2008
Pastor John Van Sloten
Sermon Notes

CLIP #1 – 2:50 – 5:25 Freeze after, Dr. Whoovy says,
“That’s their opinion of me and my work...”

“(1) As people of faith, we’ve all prob’ly all faced it;

Those questions from others,
“On *what* have you based it?”

We say we believe, in something unseen

“A still... still small voice”

Yes, that’s what we mean.”

PAUSE... I’m sure you’ve probly faced the questions yourself... from **others** or from **self**, “**Is there a world beyond ours?**”... “**Does this unseen reality we profess to believe in really exist?**” **LONG PAUSE...** and>> “**Is there a Who?**” **LONG PAUSE...**

Sometimes I even wonder about my faith... “**What do I believe?**” and “**Who are you God?**”... “Why this way of letting history play out?” “Why the pain and suffering?” “Why all the mystery?” **PAUSE...**

Are you really there?... LONG PAUSE...

I love this first animated take of HHW... (**Do you remember it? [HMV girl]**)... I love it b/c not only does it tell of an **elephants struggle** with what **he believes...** also make the point from the other direction! **[(2) WHO’s down in Whoville...”Other world out there!”**

“Phooey to Whoovy... old Whoovy’s a jerk” < Prophets got the same treatment... **PAUSE...** as did Jesus!”

Reading ‘HHW’ again this past week > took note of all the **different responses** to this crazy idea of **another world** existing on a small speck of dust... <**(3) Horton – of course – is an ‘early adopter’**... almost immediately **he has faith and believes... PAUSE...**

Jesus once said, “**(4) I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.**” Jesus in Mark 10:15, NIV **PAUSE.....**

But **(5) others in the story** were not as child-like... The uppity, **sour Kangaroo** – you know the type, a liberally minded, enlightened soul, a person who **knew how the world worked** – had no room for such an absurdity...

“**(6) I think you’re a fool!**” laughed the sour kangaroo. And the young kangaroo in her pouch said, “Me too!” You’re the biggest blame fool in the Jungle of Nool!” The unbelieving Kangaroo, Horton Hears a Who

Jesus – **talking to his disciples** but referring to the **enlightened Pharisees**, who also knew how world worked (how O’s world worked!) – once said, “**(7) The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, ‘though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand.’**” Luke 8:10, NIV

And many of those Pharisees **didn’t get it...** truth about **[KOG – realm within which will of O is reality]** < it’s already here... + didn’t get upsidedown msg. of Grace >> and they saw **Jesus as a fool...** even worse, they thought he was possessed... < sought to destroy him. **Destroy him and snuff out his radical message...**

Sort of what like the un-believers in HHW tried to do... they wanted to **destroy the source of his faith...** destroy that **little dust speck...** & **destroy Horton’s ridiculous belief...** **PAUSE...** So –as the story goes - they had the Wickersham brothers steal that ‘**dust-specked clover**’, “**(8) They snatched Horton’s clover! They carried it off to a black bottomed eagle named Vlad Vladikoff...**”

And Vlad Vladikoff flew far away, and dropped it into a huge patch of clover – **a hundred miles wide...**

PAUSE... This clover snatching scene reminded me of another, from a parable of X> Sower [(9-12)MT 13:3-9] When Jesus later explained it, he said > "(13) Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path" Jesus in Matthew 13:18, NIV

He goes on to describe other soil conditions... (14-16) MT 13:20-23... **PAUSE...** At first I connected Horton to the one whose seed was **snatched away** by the enemy... But then > realized H was much more an example of > "**seed that fell on good soil**"... >**Faith!**

The enemy did **indeed try to snatch it away...** but Horton wouldn't let go... **PAUSE...** he **knew what he had!... knew it was real...** was willing to do anything, **RISK** everything, to get it back... [**He traverses mountains trying to follow bird... HUGE FIELD!!!!**

(17-18) read BK... "I'll find it... to > three millionth flower"

"(19-20) God's kingdom is like a treasure hidden in a field for years and then accidentally found by a trespasser. The finder is ecstatic—what a find!—and proceeds to sell everything he owns to raise money and buy that field."

"(21) Or, God's kingdom is like a jewel merchant on the hunt for excellent pearls. Finding one that is flawless, he immediately sells everything and buys it. "<<**HORTON Knew what he HAD**

Horton's heart – for what he knew was true – is the **kind of heart** we're called to!... **PAUSE...** to the **ends of the earth** in order to find God's kingdom... to **possess it again...** to **have it back!** **LONG PAUSE...**

And then, just as Horton finds it again > enemy appears wanting to snatch it away again... "**boil that clover in beezlenut oil**"... (22) Yet > Horton seems willing to **risk his life in order "to hold onto that truth..."**

[**Animated SCENE... clover in roped trunk**]

And of course – we all know how it ends, **Kingdom is made known** – and eventually Horton is vindicated... he was telling truth... everyone came to believe it...

[**NOT preaching Universalism!**]

PAUSE... A whole world existing on a tiny speck of dust An entire '**other kingdom**' existing **right along side** reality as we know it... the **KOG...** around you, within you... its like a **parable...** like something as **tiny as a seed... or a speck of dust...** "(23) What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade." Jesus in Mark 4:30-32, NIV

I recall the sense of **urgency** I felt as a child when I first heard this story... "**Come on folks he's telling the truth... they are there, the Who's are there... they're real!... you've just got to believe it!... LONG PAUSE** God's kingdom does exist... **he is here, he is here, he is here...** right now... calling you to faith... to believe..."

Do **you feel the urgency of this..** do anything to possess it... regain your hold of it... **its hold of you?** Jesus surely **felt** this urgency... **feels** it toward you... all of his creation... "**I'm here... PAUSE... KOG is here!**"

[(24-25) FARRAR on X is already everywhere > p69]

[**JVS DREAM... like remembered/ imagined reality**]

>> **Q is how are we receiving it?...** What do you believe?... what is the condition of your soil?...

>> Are you receiving it in “**Fool of Nool**” **Hortonish** ways? - believing in this unseen, still small voice – or in the ways of the other jungle dwellers?... **(26) Are you childlike enough to believe** > in a **Kingdom of God that’s like a seed**... in a **Grace** that is so ridiculously unfair/backwards... in a **love beyond your world**?

"A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. He who has ears, let him hear."

18"Listen then to what the parable of the sower means:
19When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed **sown along the path.** 20

.....The one who received the seed that **fell on rocky places** is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. The one who received the seed that **fell among the thorns** is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life

and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. But the one who received the seed that **fell on good soil** is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."