2021 02 07 HOPE AND HEALING

Isaiah 40:21-31. Psalm 147:1-11,20c.

1 Corinthians 9:16-23. Mark 1:29-39

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Read Isaiah 40:21-31

Can you hear the shear incredible amazement in these words – **how can people not believe!**

“Do you not know? Have you not heard?

Has it not been declared to you from the beginning?

Have each of you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

It is He who is enthroned above the circle of the earth,”

How can the spirits of us humans, created in love by God, for God’s love to come to us and not see and rejoice in this!

“God loved us before we loved Him” [[1]](#footnote-1)

The Lord Jesus said that “**you must be born** again- from above before you can see **God's kingdom**!”.[[2]](#footnote-2)

The writings of Genesis bring us the truth that when we choose to ‘go it alone without God’ our spirits die “on the day that you eat of it – the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall surely die”[[3]](#footnote-3). Their connection with God – their spirit dried up - died - and their bodies began to die.

In coming to faith in Jesus our ‘connection’ to God is reborn new and eternal and our soul can prosper.

A person who does not believe can glory at a sunset or the be amazed at the organisation of a bee colony but cannot see them as an expression of Gods being. It is when we turn to God and respond to Holy Spirits presence bringing Jesus to us[[4]](#footnote-4) that we experience the wonder, the amazement, the humbling of Gods presence. This wonder, and smile, is often experienced when we encounter a kindness, or the little thoughtfulness from other people.

**But let us go back a few hours in the Mark reading:**

Jesus cousin John was in prison, Jesus was in Galilee preaching the good news of God and this day he was walking along the shore of Lake Galilee. Fisherman were busy fishing and mending nets and boats and I guess the area was full of shouts and smells and children. Jesus calls four of these fishermen and they follow him – leaving their work behind them for their fathers and hired workers to finish.

When the Sabbath day came they went into the church and Jesus began to teach. What amazed people was that what he spoke was not just words but words that had authority behind them. Here was a carpenter form a little town and he was speaking the scriptures and explaining them with a power that was not backed by academic qualifications, or a big band but and inner reality that touched your being – a bit like the Isaiah reading “have they not heard, can they not see ..”

And then it happened – a man, I guess who had been sitting quietly/or maybe was agitated in the congregation springs, up and cries out “What do us You have to do with each other, Jesus the Nazarene? Have you come to destroy us? I know who You are – the Holy One of God!” …… and Jesus turned to the congregation and said ‘see – why don’t you know who I am even the demons know!!!’ NO HE DID NOT – Jesus wanted no part of the evil – as he showed in the 40 days starvation in the desert – he would have none of it – no compromise – “*be quiet, and come out of him!”*  and throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out of him.”

**???? (Question to congregation)**

**How would we feel react if that happened here – this morning?**

What did Jesus do that day after church – he was invited back to Simon and Andrews house for a meal. Consider the scene told to us in Mark 1:29-39: it is a homely scene, Simon/Peter and Andrew invite Jesus and James and John back to their home for a meal. It is a busy home with Simons wife, maybe their children and his wife’s’ mother filling the house with busyness and noise – when they reached the house they immediately told Jesus that Simons mother-in-law was sick in bed with a fever – what were they hoping – they had seen something in him and had followed him, heard him preach and seen his power over evil – perhaps they hoped just a little that he could heal her?

Jesus went to her, reached out and took her hand and raised her up – the fever gone. Now this lady was probably told by the family – now you sit here and we will bring you a drink – sensible advice – but she knew that she was healed and desired nothing more than to serve this one called Jesus. The obvious application/example for us is NOT that we should run around healed of a fever and find that we are spreading COVID-19 but that we know that when we repent and come to Jesus, receive forgiveness and become righteous in Gods sight. But to walk in Gods ways.

“Jesus became sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him”[[5]](#footnote-5) *you must accept both* – you cannot say I will just accept forgiveness and the righteousness will come when I get to heaven - no it is a package deal – we are forgiven and are clean and we live in the rightness of God. We have Gods Spirit in us to be our guide and friend and walking companion and we must choose to live to grow in living as Gods person – it is a yes or no proposition.

Our motive is essential – have we a heart a soul a mind – as troubled as they maybe sometimes – that is for Jesus. Is our spirit “born again” - eternally in Gods’ presence - eternity includes today!

Listen to the terrifying words of Jesus to some good Christians “no person can serve two masters;”[[6]](#footnote-6) then

‘not everyone who says to Me, “’Lord, Lord’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but only them who do the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ and the I will declare to them, “I never knew you; depart from me, what you did was unaouthorised.[[7]](#footnote-7)’”

***???? To congregation -*** *Hope – healing – faith- works- why are the same things acceptable from one person and from another is not?*

Motivation - note: in the verses “***WE” the*** *deeds results were real but the motivation was self.*

Like when the Lord sent out the seventy disciples, two by two, to tell the good news to the villages – they came back rejoicing that even the demons were subject to them – the Lord said “do not rejoice because the demons are subject to you but because your names are written in heaven”[[8]](#footnote-8). There is a clear distinction in focus.

These thoughts are heavy and can bring us into an introspective way of life that has no freedom or joy.

I believe that we need to guard against dulling our lives by subduing the natural joy that comes from a job well done. If our natural abilities are working together with the ’gifts’ that Gods Spirit brings into us, and the ‘fruit’; love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, long suffering, never giving up, we can say “thank you Lord I am … with that.”

If the character that the Spirit brings into us is growing in and showing in all areas of our lives we can be pleased and grateful and praise God in a job well done and this is not the sin of pride but the reality of growing in our walk in Jesus and feeling a … warmth and a smile.

Remember the parable/story that the Lord told:

 The boss went away and gave responsibilities to each of his workers and when he returned found that some had worked and used the resources to increase the business – they received praise! But the one who hide his ability and gifts and just plodded along and subdued the gifts and the ability because he was afraid was criticized and lost even what he had.

Why did he not rejoice and live in what he was given – Because he was afraid.[[9]](#footnote-9) Do we hold grudges, feel unappreciated, speak against others, what are we afraid of, where are we vulnerable.

This can happen in our lives if we do not recognise our personal strengths and weakness and work with Gods Presence to live a full life in the freedom of character that is meant to be part of our life in Christ.

My personal help has been in accepting and welcoming the reality of Psalm 139. God knows us absolutely, so why do we build defence walls inside ourselves, between our thoughts and actions and our inner motives and God. What are we afraid of in ourselves?

Read Psalm 139:1-12.

 “O Lord, You have searched me and known

 You know when I sit down and when I rise up;

 You understand my thoughts from afar

You scrutinize my journeying and my lying down

And are acquainted with all my ways.

 Even before a word is on my tongue,

Behold Lord you know what I am going to say.

You have enclosed me behind and before,

And laid your hand on me,

Such knowledge us two wonder for me;

It is too high; I cannot reach it.

Where can I go from Your Spirit?

Or where can I flee from Your Presence?

I find this a wonderful comfort and strength – that nothing, good or bad about me personally is hid from God.

Peters mother-in-law served from love and gratitude.

Multitudes of people came to the house that night and Jesus healed, cast out demons and talked – **he needed to renew** his strength and after some sleep he rose early in the morning – while it was still dark – went to a secluded place, and communed with God. When his friends found him – instead of going back and creating a side-show and receiving the genuine praise etc from yesterday’s blessings he went on to another village – “Let us go and preach there also; for that is what I came for.”[[10]](#footnote-10)

And so for us – each day, each moment, is a new moment in our walk with Gods Presence in us.

We can be happy when we serve the Lord in the gifts and character that God has given to us.

*Trust, healing, forgiven, made righteous, walking with Jesus walking in our neighbour’s shoes – where are we in our lives?*

1. 1 John 4:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. John3:3-8 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Genesis 2:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. John chapters 14-16 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Matthew 6:24 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Luke 10:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. V38. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)