

Eaglehawk Uniting Church

Sunday 11th August 2013

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READY; SET; GO

First Reading: Isaiah 1: 1, 10-20

Second Reading: Luke 12: 32-40

Might be wondering what this (title) has to do with what we touched on in the children's address - talk about treasures??

So let's briefly consider Treasures - Luke 12 v 33 & 34.

Look up the definition of 'treasure' in your dictionary- ironically, in my dictionary between 'treason' and 'treat'.

Look at what those passages - what's it saying???

We have a choice --

go all out for money and possessions;

or work for God and spiritual things.

Last week's reading about the rich man who built bigger sheds for the bumper harvest, and then died - what use was his wealth at that point?

So the 'treasure' is what we DO - the treasures of God are our acts of compassion and kindness.

So, in light of that, let's get back to the title of today's message - Ready, Set, GO ..

READY ..

If I ask "Are you Ready?" - what's your answer?? (ready for WHAT??)

Usually depends on the context:

- athletics running track out near La Trobe Uni with hand in the air holding a pistol?
- out in the meeting room and a table set with food?
- in the carpark with shovels, garden forks, and secateurs?
- asked you to gather in the foyer with brooms, mops, dusters, hammers, paintbrushes?

So what does God say about being ready?

Luke reading v 35 - goes on to give examples - ready for the master to return, ready to open the door, ready for the burglar, ready for whatever might happen.

Also if we also look back earlier in that chapter - v 2-3 - don't try to fool others - you'll be found out - we can't pretend for very long without being found out. Then 23-24 - don't spend all our

time worrying about things that are often out of our control - be content that God will look out for us. Song (The Bible tells me so) - Don't worry about tomorrow, just be real good today... The Lord is right beside you, He'll guide you all the way...

I would frequently tell my kids - be ready to take any opportunity that is available, because they don't often come around twice. We need to be able to identify the opportunities, pick-up on the cues, and be ready ...

SET ..

So how do we know when we're prepared enough and are on the 'starting blocks'?

What we need to do to be ready for God:

Belief

- God as creator; the Gospel of Truth; Jesus as Messiah
(Hebrews 11: 1 - other lectionary reading that wasn't read this morning)

Training

- know what we are looking for; - gain the skills we need - that takes time
(Isaiah 1: 16-17)

Listening

- prayer - what God wants us to be doing; to others - the needs of our community - church and general; proper listening, not what has been tradition
(back in the Isaiah reading - v 11 -13)

Paradox and Contradiction

- reference book - ReJesus - chapter 6 - "3.. 2.. 1.. Engage".

Difficult for us as logical human beings to be ready for something that we're not able to tangibly focus on - something that either might or might not happen.

My logical brain wants to have a step by step approach, a cause and effect, a map of events to get from 'A' to 'B', but that's not necessarily the way God works.

Ever sat down at the computer to look check your emails, then opened a link to a webpage, found another interesting link, and then 3 hours later eventually got back to the rest of the emails?? Probably haven't done all that you might have wanted from the original task, but you are likely to have found many other interesting things and ideas.

To keep a true course in life we need to focus on Jesus - need to allow the Bible to act as a gateway to the Kingdom of Christ. We are demanded by God to have much more than an objective understanding of the truth, but rather to apply a subjective personal and active truth - in short - our beliefs should change our behaviors and these behaviors reflect that what we really believe is true.

GO ..

We may have a False Start / be slow off the blocks / get cold feet and pull out.

Or - get going even if we need to readjust ourselves along the way - change shoes, take off or add clothes, learn new skills, review our priorities, adjust our pace.

Again from the book 'ReJesus' there is a diagram that I found useful to try and describe how we 'Go'.

Hebraic Ways of Knowing:

Feeling: Engagement with Jesus must move us beyond being spectators - it evokes loyalty and commitment;

Acting: When we respond to God in actions done in His name, we meet Jesus in a new and fresh way;

Thinking: The right belief is an essential element of any discipleship in the way of Jesus.

But we often get the balance wrong, or have a bias toward one way of knowing.

If the right feeling has been evoked leading to well intentioned actions, but without the appropriate knowledge of what to do;

If we do the right thing (acting), but we do it without compassion or good intent;

If we 'know' what is right, it can be a theoretical and philosophical stance, almost remote from any emotion, and often not the corresponding action.

When all three are balanced, the common overlapping area in the centre is when we are far less likely to stray off track than when we favour one over the others, and it becomes the focus of our living.

IN CONCLUSION ..

If we look back to the beginning of the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 26-27): it begins with a question to Jesus 'what must I do to have eternal life? The reply is given with a question 'what is the law?'

Love God - all your heart, and soul, and strength, and mind; and then we can truly love our neighbour in work and deed.

But of course it's not that simple:

- We get tired and it seems too hard;
- We're too busy to stop and take a breath let alone a drink of water;
- We caught up in the rush and hurry of the world;

We needing to be refreshed - to spend time with our Lord - Jesus - to refresh and renew us - just like the Woman at the well - to receive on a daily basis, the Living Water of Christ.

Resources

Alexander, P & D. (2009). *The Lion Handbook to the Bible. 4th edition*. Oxford: Wilkinson House.

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Krebs W.A. et al (editors) (1986). *Collins Australian Pocket Dictionary of the English Language*. William Collins Sons & Co, Sydney.

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