

A close-up photograph of a person wearing white, textured robes. They are holding a large, ornate wooden vessel with intricate carvings and a dark opening. A stream of water is pouring from the vessel into a shallow, dark metal tray resting on a brown, textured surface. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the textures of the robes and the wood.

St. Timothy Presbyterian Church

SERVING

Rev. In Kee Kim

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Sermons

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A New Teaching – With Authority

February 1, 2015

Mark 1:21-28

Jesus Taught

Today's story is a very unique and strange story. Jesus made it to the synagogue sanctuary. There was a man with an unclean spirit. Jesus drove that unclean spirit out of him. I'm not quite sure what Mark meant by the unclean spirit, because we don't use that term in modern days. We don't use that anymore. I don't know whether there is a psychiatric labelling for that or it's just a spiritually unclean spirit. Just generally they refer to this kind of situation, as unclean spirits, so it's not quite clear what that meant, he was going through. But even before he actually drove out the unclean spirit, the first thing Jesus did it. This was the first Ministry of Jesus Christ. As soon as he began the ministry, what he did was he went into the synagogue and taught. I think teaching is a very, a central core of Jesus' ministry.

So the first thing Jesus did was teaching and then people were astounded. That is what people said when they heard Jesus teach. They were astounded at his teaching for he taught them as one entity of authority and not as, the scribes. I meditated on that as one having the authority and not as the scribes. What does that mean? Teaching as a person who has the authority and not as scribes. When you read the Bible, we often labelled Jesus as the word of God. For example, Gospel John, which was the most developed theological book. John said, "Jesus is the word of God and that word of God became flesh. And that is Jesus Christ". So Jesus and the word of God are very intimately connected with each other. After Jesus' teaching they there were astounding that Jesus drove out the unclean spirit part of this man. I was thinking about what was the condition of that man with the unclean spirit. Was he lonely? Yes. Isolated? Probably. He was completely isolated from others. Experiencing the void of life. The emptiness. Maybe surrounded by the absurdity of life. Out of focus. Estrangement from reality. An endless struggle.

I think this is what this man with an unclean spirit experienced when he met Christ. But when you look at all these, as a matter of fact, these are what modern people often complain about. This is what modern people experience. So, I realized that this story is not about one individual. It's not an isolated instance about one individual. I think this is about human beings as a whole and both ancient and modern. That is a predicament that we human beings experience. When Jesus' word came to him. Something wonderful happened to this man. Mark said, "And the unclean spirit throwing it into convulsions and it cried with a loud voice, and came out of him". The unclean spirit came out of him. He was released from the power that controlled him, oppressed it and took the life out of him. You know, teaching, when you receive teaching what do you do? You accumulate knowledge and it becomes a power. You get educated, you learn about accounting and all that and you get so much experience and knowledge that you can really become powerful or a doctor or an engineer whatever. With that knowledge or teaching, you accumulate certain knowledge and you have power.

Taught so We can be Free

But in what ways was Jesus teaching different from the teachings that we know or teachings of scribes? I think Jesus teaching was not to accumulate. I think Jesus' teaching was to drive out what we don't need. That's the difference between Jesus teaching and the teaching of scribes. The scribes gather the knowledge about God, about the law, about everything, and maybe "Kevin (Made up name)", I'm an expert on the law", but Jesus teaching was not to accumulate these things, but drive out things that bind us, or enslave us. One is about taking out and the other is about adding on. Very different things being taught. Most of the teaching that you receive is adding on, but Jesus' teaching was to let go. Let go of the things that enslave us and bind us. That's Jesus' teaching. Jesus did not come to add more to this world. Jesus' teaching was not about adding more information about God. They said that Jesus' teaching was a new type of teaching, but Jesus never taught anything new. All he taught was already in the Old Testament. Love God. Love your neighbour. That's all in the Old Testament. So Jesus never taught new teaching or new information that way. Jesus Christ came to this world. Not to add more, but to drive out what bound the world.

Real teaching is not about adding more knowledge and more power because you already have lots of people who have knowledge, that is not teaching. Real teaching is about freeing us from things that enslave us. When you receive real teaching, then you have the empowerment to let go of the things that is leaving. Certain desire that you have, you can let go. So if you have a lot of greed and pride, when you received the right teaching, you can let go of those, especially religious pride. Jesus taught the Pharisees, said that they could never let go of their pride because they were so religiously absorbed into their own self-interest. But when the right teaching of Jesus Christ happens within us, then we have the power to drive out the darkness within us. People accumulating knowledge and they're very proud of how much they know. And yet nothing much changes in them. Maybe we know much more than what we used to. With help of the Internet, you could ask me anything. I can give you the information about how to use your phone or how to take pictures or any question you ask me? I will probably be able to answer your question. By the end of this service. A few strokes, you get the information. And yet, we human beings feel more isolated, more lonely, feel more abandoned. The emptiness is more severe than before. So the answer is not having more. The answer is to have, the right teaching of Jesus Christ so that we can be free from what enslaves us. From what drives us into darkness.

Reflection

So in your journey, I think the important thing is to remember that whatever teaching you have, don't try to put it in your brain. Meditate on the teaching so that you can be free. You have the power to be free from that enslavement. What is the thing that enslaves you right now? Is it your insecurity? Or is it your lack of confidence, or stubbornness, or hatred, anger and religious pride? What is that enslaves you pray that Jesus' teaching may free you from that enslaving you? When you read Mark, the word schizo comes out quite often. Schizo from the word schizophrenia divided. When Jesus was baptized.

Jesus' teaching us schizo, it divides us from the darkness. It drives out darkness within us. It makes us pure and clean. The word of God is living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword. It penetrates even to a dividing soul and spirit. Jesus sees very well how enslaved we are, and

Jesus came to tear apart holds this world and what enslaves this world. As Jesus tore apart the unclean spirit from the men. Jesus came to tear apart the darkness from us. You don't need to live in that darkness anymore. Jesus' teaching can help you, empower you to be free from the darkness, and live your life in the light. And that is the difference between Jesus and the teachings of scribes or teachings of this world. Nothing in the world can teach us to be free from the darkness. Jesus' teaching can free us from the darkness. May Gods work and the teachings of Jesus Christ truly transform you and help you. And that is the journey that we want to take this year. Trust in Gods word, and see what happens within you.

The Towel and the Cross

November 15, 2015

Mark 10:35-45

Paris

The world was shocked on Friday by the attacks in Paris killing 129 innocent people and many injured. They're going about their regular life, enjoying the concert, watching the soccer game and having dinner and drinks in restaurants and bars. They were totally unprepared for this kind of a violent act. Paris is a beautiful city. It is a beautiful city, but it is a really destroyed. Human spirit was destroyed. We were just there, 12 of us last year, in Paris. Same thing could happen to all of us. As Obama said, the attack was not just on people in Paris, but on humanity. Once again, we are forced to doubt whether there is any goodness left in humanity. Many of us lost faith in humanity. Now people will be more in fear. I read a New York Times and this guy went to see Aladdin show in the afternoon and he heard a sound and all of a sudden he was alarmed. We cannot even enjoy the show, safely, freely, we'll be always surrounded by the possibility of tragedy. Fear. Now people will be more self protective. Borders are being closed down.

Self-Serving Attitude

Is life all about self-serving? I wonder. Has humanity become so downgraded that the only thing that we care about is self serving and self protection? To serve ourselves, we don't care about others. As a matter of fact, we don't care about anything else, but ourselves? I realize that this is not something new. Many of us care only about ourselves. Was it like during Jesus' time. No. You look at today's scripture, we also see the self serving attitude of the disciples. Just before this passage, Jesus talked about how he will be delivered into the hands of leaders and he'll be persecuted and then he'll die in Jerusalem, but the disciples did not hear. All they cared about was themselves so they couldn't really hear Jesus. When you're so surrounded with yourself, you can't hear anything. James and John came to Jesus and said to him, teacher we want you to do for us, whatever we ask of you, look at this passage, very careful to reflect on it.

We want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.. The request itself is already self serving. How many people have this attitude towards God? God, I want you to do for me, whatever I asked you.

No Room For Christian Belief

God become simply someone I can use to get what I want. How different that is from Jesus' attitude, Jesus said, this is what I want. What do you want? That's what you. That's what Jesus prayed in the ceremony. He didn't say, God, just give what I want. ISIS calls this terrible act as what Allah wants. Not only in Paris, on Thursday, 30, some people died. Same Group, same massacre. Whatever happened in Lebanon or in Paris is act of God. Religious fanaticism. There is no room in Christian belief. We don't believe in this kind of religious fanaticism. Any kind of fanaticism, we reject. People are so self serving that they will use anything to do whatever they want. If it is necessary, they'll even use God. James and John asked Jesus grant us to sit one at your right hand and one at your left in your glory. That was what they ultimately wanted. The seat of glory. Another self serving attitude. I wonder these days, is there anybody who goes beyond self serving attitude? I mean, there are only two seats in glory on Jesus right in and left hand. If two brothers, if one family takes them, all of them, whatever other disciples. Where do they sit?

So the other disciples. What did they say? This is what they said. When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. I read from Facebook, Barbara put up a beautiful poem by Ernest Hemingway and there was a reply and this guy said "Fear brings anger. Anger brings hatred. Hatred brings suffering. How true. Self serving attitude will bring hatred, and anger, and suffering.

Self-Serving Culture

Do we have no choice but to be self serving? Our culture has become like that? Do we have no choice but to be self serving? I don't believe in that. I don't think life is all about our agendas being served, even at the cost of sacrificing others. I don't believe in that. I still believe in humanity. I still believe that there are people who serve others. Jesus taught us real ideology, not crooked ideology of self serving. We are not going to bow down to their fear tactics.

This is what Jesus taught us. The son of man came not to be served, but to serve. Jesus, the son of man did not come to be self serving, but to serve others and he said to give his life as a ransom for many. Even though it meant sacrifice for himself, he will serve. I hope that we don't bow down to their threat. Jesus' teachings are totally the opposite of self serving attitude. That is Christian attitude. Self serving attitude will bring about division, conflict, hatred and violence. Two disciple's self-serving attitude brought anger in ten other disciples St Paul saw the secret about peace and harmony and St Paul said, self serving attitude would never bring about peace and harmony. I guarantee your self serving attitude will never bring about peace and harmony, whether it's at home, or with friends, as a group, church, community or society or globally. Self serving attitude will not bring about peace and harmony. This is what Saint Paul said: For he is our peace, Jesus Christ is our peace in his flesh. He has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall. That is the hostility between us. Paul saw that it was possible only through self sacrificing cross and then in 15, he said. I paraphrased it, a part of it. Through the cross, he reconciled both groups to God by putting to death, that hostility, through the cross.

No Peace and Harmony

As long as the humanity repeats the self serving history, there will be no peace and harmony in this world. They will never be able to find John Lennon's imagination. Imagine all the people living life in peace. This is what Jesus taught us. You know that, among the gentiles, those whom they recognize, that their rulers lorded over them and their great ones are tyrants over them, but it is not among you. Everybody else may live like that but not you! It is not among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. Jesus taught us that self serving attitude is not what the human should live with. That is sin. That is pathetic sin. We are to serve one another, not just Christians, the human humanity, all human beings should serve one another. That is our life. That is how to save the humanity. That is how to save all of us. That is the secret of living in peace and harmony. Cross and towel are two powerful symbols of Christianity. The Cross represents self sacrifice, and the towel represents not self serving, but serving other people. At the last supper, after eating the meal,

Jesus wanted to wash the feet of the disciples and after that he dried them with the towel.

By doing that, Jesus showed the true discipleship. I hope that and I pray that and I have confidence that St Timothy will bring about surfing people. St Timothy will fight against self serving attitude,

and we'll be the servants of God. From small things, we need to practice that. I guarantee that your life will be much, much happier. When you remain as self serving attitude, your life will become more and more and more miserable. But when you start adopting the self serving, then you'll life will become happier and happier and happier. I guarantee that. This is a song, a beautiful song, and I hope that we can all sing together. I don't know, this may be a new song for you, but it's a very simple song, but the words are so beautiful.

A moment of prayer for the innocent lives taken away in Paris and in Lebanon, the family, friends. Let us really ask God to heal their broken hearts, and let us pray that we may not lose our courage. We may not bow down to the fear. Let us pray.

What is Your Message to the World?

May 22, 2016

John 10: 9-13

Weekly Reflection

It is great that, once a week we gather together like this and ask ourselves the fundamental question of life. We don't always do that. We will not be able to answer all the questions about the fundamental things of life, but at least once a week we need to reflect upon that and see where our lives are going. What is the purpose of my life? It's a very, very big question, but it is still very important for us to continuously ask this question. You will reflect on that when you come to church, but you will forget it too. You can hear it today and then tomorrow you will forget it. That's okay. That's a part of life—you understand, learn, and forget but forgetting doesn't mean that it disappears. It remains in you. When some critical moment of life comes, all of a sudden, all those things that are within you that you didn't even know were there will come out. So whatever you hear, whatever you understand, whatever you realize, it will not disappear. You may forget it in your consciousness, but it will always be there in your heart. When the right time comes, you'll be surprised and think 'I didn't know that I have this insight, or this understanding, or this attitude'. It is great that once a week at least, we come to church and reflect on the fundamental questions of life.

Life's Calling

Sunflowers move towards the sun. That's natural. You don't have to tell them to do so. Similarly, roots of the tree by the river reach out to where the water is. Automatically roots will go down to the stream of water. Salmon make an incredible upstream journey to spawn, to lay eggs in the same places that they were hatched. These are natural things. Those who want to be actors and actresses dream to move to Hollywood. They hope that some day they will be picked someday someone will recognize their talents and ability. Our life is like that. Whatever we desire, we move towards. Sometimes we realize there is strong force that a guides us, moves us and leads us to a certain direction. That's what our life is like. I'll call that life's calling. It calls you to certain things in life. Life's calling does not have to be

your job or career. For some people it is, but it doesn't have to be. A job is a job to some people, it does not necessarily define their life's calling. But to some people, life's calling so strong they even give up their old job and then change it to live out their life's calling.

I think that's quite courageous to give up all your things and do whatever life calls you to do. We all have life's calling and our life moves towards that. Think about it. Why are you doing certain things? Why are you attracted to certain things? Why is your life moving towards a certain direction? I believe that there is a life's calling. Oprah Winfrey said, "there's no greater gift you can give or receive than to honor your calling, it is why you're born and how you become truly alive". She's not even a minister. She has wisdom. Yes, we may live our life's calling. That's where we are the most happy. Then how do we find life's calling? I've realized that it's not just one decision that you're making, sometimes when we do that you make a mistake. I think it's a process, a slow process. Little by little you realize things about your life's calling, rather than willfully deciding that 'I make this decision, I'm going to live like this'. That's not life's calling. That's your decision, but life's calling is much bigger than your decision. There may be a series of events that may have awakened you. There may be one or two instances that made you seriously think about what you want to do with the rest of your life.

Maybe sometimes you experience or discovered a very strong force that forces, guides and leads you in a certain direction. For me, it was a book that finally, I mean before the book there were lots of other things that happened, but in the end it was a book that finally convinced me to go into ministry. So everybody has a different experience of finding life's calling. Ask yourself a big question: why do you live? Why do you exist? Why did I come to this world? Was I just a product of my parents' decision and will? Is it as simple as that? Or was I just born with no meaning attached to it? I was born and because I was born, I just live?

Your Life's Calling

Jesus was very clear about why he came to this world. I think that's the difference between great people and mediocre people. Mediocre people don't know why they came to the world, but all the great people know clearly why they came to the world, why they live. That's what I discovered.

Jesus said this, “I came that they may have life and have it abundantly”. That was why Jesus Christ came. He came to this world so that we, not him, may have life and have it abundantly. What a noble thing to say. He was only a 30 year old young man. How could a young man have such a noble idea about life. He came so the other people may have life abundantly. I respect that. That is awesome to have that kind of idea about life.

The other day I was thinking about what my message is to the world. What is my message to the world? You all have a message to the world, whether you verbally articulate it or not, through your life, you’re living out your message. You show what you want to speak and what you want to say to the world. This is what life is all about. Your message to the world reflects what your philosophy of life is and also that will point to the direction of your life. Depending on what message you have to share with the world. I can see your philosophy and I can see where your life is heading to.

Jesus’ message to the world was ‘live life abundantly’. That was Jesus’ message to the world. What was Paul’s message to the world? It was that you must live your life always joyfully. Rejoice your life always. That was Paul’s message to the world. What was Bobby McFerrin’s message? Don’t worry. Be Happy. That was his message to the world. That’s a good message. Nelson Mandela’s message was that everyone is equal and can have their say, and he lived and died for that message. Martin Luther King Jr’s message was that one day all people will be judged not by the colour of their skin, but by the content of their character. That was his message to the world. The message of Mother Teresa was that, your life is supposed to take care of weak, vulnerable, poor children. That’s the right thing to do. Take care of the poor children around you. All these people had messages to the world and they tried to live out that message. That his life’s calling.

A Good Message

I hope, my friends, that our message to the world may not be as follows: Be selfish. Life is meaningless, and the future is hopeless. Don’t think too much. Just live. Do whatever you want. Pain is useless. Suffering only destroys us. All people are bad. I hope that that is not our message to the world, but sometimes, unfortunately we deliver these toxic messages

unintentionally through our behaviour, through our actions, through the words that we speak and through the attitudes we have. Yes, I know life is hard. Living almost 60 years, I know that much. Life is hard and life can be quite gloomy sometimes. There is so much suffering in our lives and in the world. Just last week, all 66 members of Egypt Air, thought they were going to work. They all got killed. All 66 people. And we were very saddened by the news of the aboriginal young people committing suicide, one after another. A mass suicide. Why? Young people are supposed to live with excitement and for a bright future. But they felt so helpless and hopeless and they killed themselves. Why? And we just prayed his afternoon about a Bangladesh. So many people lost their homes and families. Life can be gloomy.

The world needs the message of hope, courage, strength and belief. And who will speak the message to the world? You. That's why the world needs you. The world needs your message. You are the prophet. Each one of you is the prophet. In every situation. We go there and we speak the message of hope, a message of love. You're called to deliver that message. My friends, our life's calling is to help people around us. It is simple as that. What's more difficult? What more is there? Our life's calling is to help people around us. Just as there are many different messages, there may be different ways of doing it. It may be as simple as to help people around you. When people fall, help them get up. If people are discouraged, be with them and encourage them. Life's calling is to help people around us.

Live the Life of a Shepherd

Ultimately, we want people to live abundant life. That was Jesus' message. As Jesus was a shepherd, you are also a shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. Jesus said, that is a good life to emulate. These days, so many people live with 'hired hands' mentality or 'thieves' mentality. They steal, kill and possess things from the world. "What profit can I get from this world?" That's all they think about. They don't think about taking care of the world. They are not good shepherds to the world. They are hired hands to the world. They only think about the profit they can get from this world rather than how they can make this world abundant. How can I make the lives of these people abundant? Doesn't matter who they are, Christians or non Christians. We must ask "how can I help

humanity live abundantly?” Sometimes as a good shepherd, you may even have to sacrifice what you have to do that. I think that’s a noble life. That’s the highest ethics and morality and that’s a good life. This is what I realized: when you have the mentality of a hired hands, the message does not come. That’s what I realized. If you have that attitude, the message doesn’t come. What is my message to the world? I’m not sure. What is my life’s calling? I don’t know.

But amazingly when we live a life of a shepherd, all the blessings come to us. We experience the abundance of life. When we live a life of good a shepherd. We realized that life is full, not empty. Life is meaningful, life’s joyful. It’s always full, not empty. That’s that was God’s message to Abraham, right from the beginning of Genesis. God called Abraham and said, “I will make of you a great nation and I’ll bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing”. God gave you blessing so that you may be a blessing to other people around you. So you are a prophet, you are a good shepherd and you are a blessing. Don’t ever forget that. I hope that all of you may be a blessing to others and that you discover a message for your life.

It is God

May 29, 2016

Hosea 2:7-8

We just finished the first part of our Hosea study. I enjoyed the study. It's very different from the New Testament study. The language is very extreme, but behind the language I see a beautiful picture of the truth about God. I think Hosea captured the message very clearly and very emotionally. Hosea's message is simply verse 8.

She shall pursue her lovers, but not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them. Then she shall say, "I will go and return to my first husband, for it was better with me then than now." She did not know that it was I who gave her the grain, the wine, and the oil, and who lavished upon her silver and gold that they used for Baal.

Main Message of Hosea

This is the main message of Hosea. It is God who lavished upon Israelites, but the Israelites did not know that it was God, and they went to Baal and they gave gold and silver to Baal for a blessing.

God Gave us Abundance

My friends, it is God who has provided all we need and beyond. God lavished upon us all the good things that we enjoy in life. Not just the material things, the totality of life. I was thinking, would God be able to give more than what he gave? Is there any more things to give on God's part? And I realized that there's nothing more he could give. He gave all the abundance.

When I was young, I could only imagine going to heaven. I could not imagine beyond this. You can eat whatever you want, there are all kinds of abundance, all kinds of things that you enjoy. That's what heaven was like when I was young. So God has provided all good things for us, but it's not just material things. We have to remember, God did not just give you material things. God gave you peace, God gave you happiness. God gave you good friends, good family and good people who will always there for you. Life is not just material. Life is more than a lot of things, and God gave

all of us all good things. In that sense, life is a gift from God. Yes, life is a gift from God. He provided all good things, so I believe that says that life is a gift from God.

Peace Through Chaos

Last week and the week before were tough for me because I had two retreats back to back and I had two funerals back to back. First I had a funeral on Thursday night, and then a funeral on Saturday, a Friday morning funeral, a Friday evening funeral, Saturday morning. Too many funerals. Too many reflections on death. It was tough. But you know what? In the midst of a very busy and hectic schedule, I had peace of mind. Where did that peace come from? I don't know. I could very well be frustrated and stressed out. I didn't even try to make myself feel good, but peace was there. So I sit down, I'm stressed out, I'm frustrated and all that, but where did that peace come from? I realized that life is like that. That's what life is. When you face hardships, difficulties, and problems in life, life has it's own way of finding peace. That's what I realized. Life moves into that direction. Life knows how to find peace and happiness on it's own. I don't have to even try anything, life just moves towards that. That's what I realized about life. Because life is a gift from God, it is made to be that way.

Whether you're religious or not, you will find peace, comfort and assurance if you don't ruin it yourself by being angry and frustrated. We are often the culprit of our own unhappiness. We are the ones who block the way. We are the ones who don't let our lives find peace and comfort and assurance. We are the problem. If we just move ourselves outside of it, life will find it's way, but we are the ones who make ourselves frustrated, angry and stressed out. Life is a gift from God and it will know how to find it's own giftedness and its own peace and it's own happiness, and yet we are in the middle and we are making ourselves very unhappy. We are the problem.

The 7th, Most Important Day

About the nature of life, and our life force, I realized that God made our life that way. I thank God for that. For six days God created heaven and earth. The material things. First day, second day, third day, he created all of these things, mountains and oceans, and all material things. After he created all those material things for

six days on the seventh day, what did he do? He rested. Why? Was it because he was tired? Can God be tired? Since he worked so much for six days, on the 7th day he had to take a rest? I don't think so. He left the seventh day to rest and he let every creation on the seventh day rest. He created rest, and without peace there is no rest. Just because you physically rest, that doesn't mean that you're rested. If you don't have peace, then you don't have true rest. In other words, God gave peace on the seventh day.

Peace was built in God's creation from the beginning. The 7th day is more important than the six days. In six days, he created all the material things. On the seventh day he created the crucial thing that we need, which is rest, peace and all those things that make us happy.

When you look at the scripture of Genesis, God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it because on it, God rested from all the work that he had done in creation. God not only created all the trees, flowers, oceans, mountains, rivers, animals and human beings, on the seventh day, God blessed them. In other words, he added blessing to the materials. So what you get is not just materials. What you get is blessed materials. You have all the materials, but don't have joy. What good is it? God not only gave materials, but blessed materials. The happiness with it, the joy with it so that you can have appreciation for the abundance you enjoy. That is what God wants.

God Gave Enough

Then how come people don't seem to be very happy with life when they have all the abundance they can get? You can't get any better. You can't get any more than this. If you want more than this, that's greed. Wake up. If you want more material than this, that's greed. We have more than enough. God gave enough.

The reason we human beings are not happy is because, Hosea saw it this way; verse 8, she did not know that it was I. That's a problem. (She is Israelites). She did not know that it was I who gave her the green, the wine and the oil, who lavished upon her silver and gold that they used for Baal. The problem is she did not know that it was God. The reason we cannot enjoy all the abundance and live with happiness is because we don't know

it is God who provided all these good things for us. She used silver and gold for Baal. That's an idol. She went to Baal thinking that Baal can give her true happiness. How true that is for us right now. When God gave all the abundance, we turned to something else and asked for blessing. Asked for happiness. We often forget that God is the source of all the blessings and all the good things that we enjoy. We try to create our own happiness. Try it. You can never. Our autonomy has become our own Baal. Our ability and capability have become our own Baal. But you don't realize that your self centeredness kills your soul and takes away the true joy you're supposed to experience. The more we try to create our own happiness, the more miserable we become, because the source of happiness is in God. It is God who created all that. It is God who gives all that.

Two Things Humans Have Done

There are two things human beings did. One, they have forgotten that it is God who has provided all the good things in our lives. Two, they have become self centered and self absorbed to create their own happiness. The result, we have become very unhappy and feel very empty. That's exactly what happened. That's what happened to people in history. That's what's happening to people right now, and that's what will happen to people in the future because that isn't how God made life.

Two Things Humans Must Do

If life is a gift, we need to do two things. One, be thankful to those who gave the gift. Be thankful to God who gave you the gift of life. Two, share the gift of life with others. Share. If it is a gift, share it. Don't take it all. Share it with others. Be thankful and share, those two things. Very simple. If life is a gift, then we always live with thankfulness that will drive away all our worries, anxieties, frustration, all that. Two, share it. By sharing it, you will experience the abundance of life. When you are thankful and you share your life, that's when you become the happiest. Life when it is shared shows it's best, and you start enjoying the beauty of life. If you remember these two things, your life will only get better.

A good life is not a good life because nothing bad happens. A good life is a good life because in the midst of all the bad things that happen in life, we will never lose hope and the beauty of life. That's when life becomes good.

Life is Beautiful

When I watch the movie, I'm sure most of you watched it, Life is Beautiful, I heard the message very clearly and strongly. This Jewish man who was about to be executed is so bright. He takes care of his son. He talks with him, he plays with him as though nothing bad will happen. He celebrates how beautiful life is, and the title of the movie is Life is Beautiful.

Life is good, not because nothing bad happens, but because in the midst of all the bad things that happened in your life, you never lose hope. You never lose perspective. You never lose the beauty of life.

We will only discover a deeper taste of life. As wine gets better. As it matures, you will taste the deeper taste of life as you get mature about life. Don't forget that life is good. And what is good you share. Don't forget the life is gift. Celebrate it, enjoy it, and don't ever forget that it is God who gave you all the good things in life. I want you to enjoy the maximum joy of life. That's what I want for everyone, to enjoy the maximum joy of life. Remember those two things, one, be thankful and two, share.

Life is a Choice

July 24, 2016

Joshua 24: 14-15

Freedom to Choose

As I said last week. It is just wonderful to gather together a once a week and look at our lives and reflect upon it instead of just living it, we want to understand our life I'm living and what am I doing with my life, so it is wonderful. Once a week we come together like this and then reflect on life itself. Today I like to think about the fact that life is a choice. Life is a choice. You don't live just because we are alive. We live because we choose to live. If I don't have children, if I don't have a choice in life, I don't think I can call that life is a slavery. If I don't have a choice and somebody else cannot make this choice for me, or my life is slavery. It's not my life, so life without choice, I don't call that life. God. wants us to be human beings, to have that choice right from the very beginning of creation, God made a forbidden tree in the garden of Eden and then God told Adam, don't take any fruit from this tree, and I was always wondering why God put that forbidden tree in the middle of the garden of Eden. If God did not put that tree, then we human beings would not have fallen into sin and we would not have suffered so much only if he did not put the forbidden tree in the garden of Eden. But the moment God said to Adam and Eve that this is the forbidden tree and you should not take any fruit from that tree, the moment he said that Adam and Eve got the choice. We human beings received the right to choose. In other words, God gave them the power to choose, the right to choose. When everything was permitted, it was good, but there was no choice, but the moment God gave them the forbidden tree, now they had a choice. Precious gifts, so in that sense, choice is a precious gift. God did not give the forbidden tree to tempt Adam and Eve or test them or restrict them. It was God's way of saying to Adam and Eve, now you have a choice, and what are you gonna do with that? Choice is God's greatest gift to humanity. Choice means freedom. And also choice means empowerment.

The Choice is Taken Away

People who can make choice, they are empower. People can make choice. They are free to do so. You know your children grow with your love under your care. They enjoy your care and protection, but as they get older they get rebellious. Even my little grandson, he gets rebellious. He wants to do everything on his own so we can't even go to a restaurant anymore because when we go to a restaurant, he yells and he wants a spoon. He cannot even use it very well, but he wanted for himself. And so, they will rebel and so when they get to the high school level, the rebellion comes to a climax. Why do they do that? is it because they don't agree with you or because they don't trust you? It is because they're claiming their right. They are claiming their right to choose. They want to make choice for themselves. They're claiming they're basic human right. Not that they'll do better because they have a choice. Now, sometimes they do worse. Sometimes they make the wrong choices, but the important thing is that they are making choices for themselves. Life is not just about not making mistakes and being always safe and successful. Life is about finding your authentic life and we doubt making a choice. How can you find your own authentic life that is worth calling is all about God called each and every one very uniquely to find that unique life for yourself. You have to learn to choose and without that choice, you cannot find that unique life. You're just living a life of somebody else. You're just imitating somebody else. Life, not your life, and to live my life, I have to know that I have the power and freedom to choose the life that I want to live.

It will take time to figure that out though. It's not that easy. Taking away choice is taking away our basic human dignity. Taking away choice is the worst thing that you can do to a person. We all know the inspiring story of Malala Yousafzai probably. Saw this picture around you in the bookstore or everywhere. And she said, when the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful. A very inspiring story of a person. She was born in 1997, so that makes her 17 or 19 already. Yeah, in 1997 in Swat valley, Pakistan. So valleys, like as they are called the Switzerland of Pakistan, she was born in a beautiful village and she loves to study. She loved to ride. She always a release was striving for good education. And in 2009 she wrote a blog on BBC. Anything anonymously she wrote a blog on BBC and she became famous but nobody knew who she was. And then soon her identity was revealed. So in 2011, she was a nominee for international

children's peace prize. So we should receive this great prize in 2011, but in 2012, uh, I mean she wrote about life under Taliban and in 2012 Taliban, some members of Taliban came and shot her into her head and then the bullet went through and then a kill some nerves and all that. And by the time she was a famous and somehow she was taken to the hospital in Pakistan, a major city, but soon she was taken to London, England. And she survived miraculously. And in 2014 as the youngest person, she received a Nobel prize peace prize. She said, "I didn't want my future to be imprisoned in my four walls and just cooking and giving birth." She wanted to get an education and just because of the fact that she wanted an education and the girl, her choice was taken away by the Taliban and she didn't just sit there and let her choice taken away. She fought for that choice knowing that it was dangerous for her to do that and many people around her told her not to do that, but she did that because, without that choice, her life was not life. She fought for basic human dignity. My friend's life without choice is not life, but choice does not come easily. Choice has cost formula. It was her life. That was the cost she had to risk pe. She said, "I am stronger than fear." She's only 19 years old.

Making a Difficult Choice

That's what Jesus taught us Jesus came to show us that you are stronger than fear. The disciples followed Jesus for yes, they were with Jesus. They did not realize that there were stronger than fear, but as time went along, they started realizing that they were stronger than fear and ultimately they embraced even the fear of death and they understood that truth. I am stronger than fear. My friend to Jesus Cross was the choice. The cross wasn't as something imposed upon him. Cross was a deliberate choice of Jesus Christ. He could avoid it. He didn't have to take the cross. He could go around, but Jesus could not throw away the right to choose. Jesus lived out the power to choose even though that meant death. The power to choose was greater than the fear of death. Ultimately, the choice that Jesus man bade led Jesus to go beyond death, even though he had he chose cross risking his life and he died, but ultimately the choice led Jesus to go beyond death to resurrection. That's kind of resurrection, I believe. I don't believe in the resurrection. You just live and you die and you go to heaven. I believe in the resurrection that comes as a result of choice. I'm looking at

Jesus' life. When I read it, when I reflect on Jesus' life, this thing comes to me. I don't know whether or not it comes to you but he was completely free to choose. I don't have that kind of freedom. Jesus lived with that freedom to choose.

He made most difficult choice. Every situation he had that freedom. Maybe that's why Jesus said, "you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free." And he really knew the truth and that's why he was free to choose in the most difficult situation. That's why I respect Jesus. That's why I believe in Jesus. He showed what your life is all about. Every morning I get up and say to myself, this date is given to me. I choose to live God, help me choose life over death, courage over fear, love over hate, treat truth over safety or success. That's why what I pray in the morning,

God has given all of you the wonderful gift, the gift of choice. Don't let the world take away that gift from you. Don't let your fear take away that precious gift from you. Don't live a single moment of your life without making choice. My high school friends ahead of you. You have so many important decisions that you have to make, whether you like it or not, you have to make those important decisions. Learn to choose every single moment of your life. Learn to choose. Don't live other people's choice. Live the life you choose. Don't live out other people's choice and later, don't blame them. Oh, he wasn't my choice. It wasn't my parent's choice. Coil wasn't my torso and my friends did it. No, don't do that. Make your choice and don't blame anybody else. May God help you as you make choice in the beginning, you'll make lots of mistakes. That's all right, but over the years you will learn how to choose wisely. In today's passage, Joshua explaining the history of his ancestors asked people to choose whom to serve. This is what he said. Now, if you're unwilling to serve the Lord to this day whom you will serve, whether the gods of your ancestors survived in the region beyond river or the gods of the Amorites in whose land are living, but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord. In other words, we'll choose to serve the Lord. He chose to serve God. Choose to serve God. That was Jesus' choice. He said to Satan, don't send me. I chose to serve God and God alone. Don't just come to church. Choose to come to church. Don't just believe in God. Choose to believe in God. May God empower you and help you as you make choice for the Lord, for the truth, for the compassion. Let us sync together. I have decided that's our

Life is a Choice

choice to follow Jesus Very Old Gospel Song, a very meaningful phrase. I had decided, I've chosen to follow, with Jesus behind me. Go with me.

Being a Gift to Each Other

December 25, 2016

Isaiah 9:6a

Matthew 2:1-12

What Is The Christmas Season About?

You know, when the Christmas season comes, you don't want to go to a shopping center because it's way too busy. But this year somehow Christmas came so suddenly, I didn't even realize it was Christmas. So the other day I went to Indigo without realizing it was Christmas time and I went in there, oh my goodness, so many people. And there was a lineup that's all around the big, huge store, there was a lineup all around the wall. I just went to get a small book without realizing it was Christmas time. I didn't come for Christmas gifts, I just came for the book. There were so many people, but there were so many people also working there so it didn't take too much time.

Gifts. That's what we do during Christmas season. 20 percent of total sales are done during Christmas time. People are busy buying gifts even though it is true there that Christmas has been overly commercialized, but I still believe that a gift is what summarizes what Christmas is all about. Christmas is about gifts. Christmas is to celebrate God's gift of Jesus to the world.

In the Isaiah passage we read today, he said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." A son is given as a gift. The wise man story also picked up the theme of a gift. They saw the birth of Jesus as the gift to the world. So they came with their gifts in response to the gift of God for the world. God gave us the most gracious and precious gift. You can say that God gave God's self for the world. There is nothing more precious than giving yourself. That is probably the most precious gift that you can give, or you can receive. Yourself. And God gave God's self to us and for the world. God was the one who initiated the gift giving.

God's Gift

In Jacob Story's, Jacob had a problem with his brother Esau because he stole something from him and he had to run away from home. He was a mama's boy, he stayed home all other times. But this time he had to be all by himself when running away. So he was very lonely. He was never alone. He was lonely at night all by himself, he was kind of sad and lonely and all that. And that's when God appeared to him, and this is what God says to Jacob, "I am with you. I am with you and will keep you wherever you go. I will not leave you. I am with you." God gave Jacob the gift of God's presence.

"I am with you and I will be with you." God presence, we call it what? Emmanuel, we call it Emmanuel. When Jesus Christ came, Matthew described it in this way; "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and they shall name him Emmanuel," because that means God is with us. And also when Jesus left us when he left of world, the last word that he said in Matthew, the last word Jesus said to us was this, "And remember I am with you always to the end of the age." He came as God being with us and he left us with God being with us. He came as Emmanuel and he left as Emmanuel. God gave himself to us as a gift. The gift of Emmanuel is the most precious gift.

By giving us his self, God's self, God taught us how we are to live our life. As God was a gift to us, God wants us to be a gift to each other. Being a gift to each other is the most precious gift that you can give to each other. Let us recognize that people around you are gifts from God for you. They're not there to pull you down. They're not there to attack you and destroy you. The people around you are there as gifts from God, but sometimes we forget. The people around me are gifts. Sometimes we think that they are enemies, they are threats. We don't look at them as God's gift to us. Today is a wonderful Christmas, so we say 'Merry Christmas', and maybe we can say "Thank you for being gift." Why don't you go around and look around, say thank you for being a gift.

You Are All Gifts

All of you are gifts, that's our Merry Christmas. You are my gift, you are not my threat. You are my gift! But Herod didn't think that way. Herod didn't see the birth of Jesus as a gift to the world. Herod saw the gift, the birth of Jesus as a threat. Even though Jesus' kingship was very, very different

from what Herod thought, Herod did not understand Jesus' kingship. So he thought that this king may take away my kingship, so he looked at Jesus, the birth of Jesus as the threat, not as a gift. When you see another person as a threat, then what comes next? Fear. Fear comes. "Oh, that person might harm me, destroy me." The fear comes. When fear came to Herod, he killed innocent children. So many people, so many innocent children, he killed. Violence comes as a result of fear.

That's what we do. When we start looking at each other as a threat, then fear comes. When fear comes, we become violent. That's what we see in the world. Violence all around us because we don't look at each other as a gift, we look at each other as a threat. We have to ask ourselves, how do we see each other? How do we see other people, as a gift or as a threat? Do you see people who are different from you, just because because of the fact that they are different from you, are they enemies? Sometimes we look at different people as enemies. People who are so different from us, racially or whatever reason, when they're different, we see them as a threat or enemy, not as a gift. Just because they are different, they're enemies.

This world makes it so hard and even seemingly impossible to each see each other gifts. I'm so sad that this world has become that way. It is so hard to see each other as gifts, but it is very understandable. It is very understandable. I understand that very well. It is very understandable why people are so scared of each other. I mean, when a stranger just drives a trailer truck into the market killing 12 people like in Germany just the other day, how can you see the stranger as a gift?! The moment we experience that, the moment we hear that, we see a stranger as a threat, not as a gift. It is very understandable, so we have no choice but to build higher walls against each other because we are scared. We build strong walls against each other because we are scared. It is understandable, but is it the best way to live? It may protect us, but does that give us a fulfilling life? Is that the kind of humanity we want to nurture, establish and build? What kind of humanity do we want to build, do we want to uphold? That's not the way we human beings are supposed to live. Seeing each other as a threat, seeing each other as danger, seeing each other as enemies. That's not the way you're born to live. That's not God's will. God gave us Jesus as the gift so that we may also be the gift to each other, by having the real broken relationships healed and restored. Jesus came to open our eyes so that

through our eyes we may see other people in a new way. At least that was how Paul saw the birth of Jesus. This is what Paul said, “For He is our peace, Jesus Christ. For he is our peace, in his flesh, he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall.” That is the hostility between us. Jesus came to break down the wall, and now we are building the wall against each other.

This Christmas...

This Christmas will be meaningful if we experience our broken relationships being healed. Maybe there are some people that you need to forgive, or maybe you need to let go of bad feelings towards somebody, and he or she may not even recognize that you have a bad feeling. If you have a grudge against somebody, maybe during this Christmas season you can let go and be free from that grudge, bad feeling and animosity. That was what Jesus came to do. Jesus even said, “Love your enemy.”

We have to learn to see each other as a gift from God. It is hard, but it’s the most beautiful thing we can do. And if you can do it, they will have the most beautiful life we were meant to live. I want to tell you lastly, the very, very important message to you. Maybe somebody who gives you a difficult time, who gives you a hard time – maybe that person is God’s gift to you. Not only the people who do well, who do good things, people who give you hard times. Maybe they are God’s gift for you. Maybe your spouse is God’s gift to you, giving you a hard time. That’s a message.

What makes us happy at Christmas? It’s a gift, but the most beautiful gift, I believe, is people. People around you, that’s the most beautiful gift. Cherish them. When you start seeing other people as your gift, you will become very, very happy. I guarantee. When your eyes change and you start seeing other people, “You are my gift!” Then you’ll be very happy.

After KSM service, some people were going out, and said “you are my gifts,” they told me. Your family, your friends, your coworkers, even of noxious people around you. They’re all gifts from God.

Merry Christmas.

More than Enough

May 28, 2017

2 Corinthians 12:1-10

John 1: 12-16

Are we Really Living Abundant Lives?

Today I would like to talk about what it means to live a life that is full, abundance life. I do believe that a life has got to be abundant. I mean Jesus Christ came to give us abundant lives. Our life should be full of joy, full of laughter, full of life and full of everything. The life it's got to be abundant. Life has got to be full, and that was his purpose. Today, John said, "from Jesus' fullness the grace upon grace came to us Jesus' fullness" and in John Chapter 10 he said, "I came so that they may have life and have it abundantly." Jesus came to give us the abundant life, but I don't think abundant life is just about having a lot. That's what I thought before. If you have a lot, then you're abundant I thought. If you have a lot of degrees, if you have a lot of money, if you have a lot of everything, then your life is abundant and I realized how wrong that is. I don't think an abundant life comes from having a lot. I think we should be awake from that illusion. Look at our lives. We have so much in the modern world, probably in history we never had this much. We have so much. We have abundance, and yet when I look around, can we say that people really appreciate their abundance? Do they really think that they are living an abundant life? Do people say that, "hey, I have enough. I'm content. I have enough." How many people really say that? Still, people say I don't have enough. I'm not enough. I mean we have abundance and yet we don't experience the abundance. It is a very strange phenomenon. You have a lot, and yet you don't feel abundant at all. We always live with the sense that we don't have enough.

Advertisements Tell us our Lives are Still Lacking Abundance

Some people say that is because of commercials, that we watch everyday. They always tell you that unless you have this thing, your life is not full, your life is not good enough. You have to have this. So even a commercial

on the gum, if you buy this gum and chew it, a lot of women will come to you, you know, abundance, whatever. They continuously say that you don't have enough, you are not enough until you have this thing. They create false cravings.

The More you Have, the More Thirsty you Become

Whatever the cause may be, I see that many people live with this dissatisfaction much more than ever before. People are not simply satisfied, it's like having a huge hole within you, deep, dark, huge empty hole, and you feel that that deep dark space and you can never fill it. That hole sucks up all the energy within you and you feel that it sucks the life out of you and it stares at you, but you don't know what to do with this deep dark space. What John said was very different from this modern life, from his fullness, we have all received grace upon grace. When you hear the expression grace upon grace, what image comes to your mind? To me, grace upon grace is an image of flowing, overflowing.

It is not the dark empty space that can never be filled up, but the life of abundance, life of overflowing, the image of grace upon grace is not the image of squeezing, life out of you. It is image of life overflowing from you. So abundance life is not possible by having more. It is not about having more. The more you have, the more thirsty you become. Did you realize that? The more you have, the more thirsty you become. That's what human beings are like.

Materialism is Flawed

So there is a flaw in materialism. Materialism tells you, tells you that if you have this, then you will be full, satisfied. That's not true. That's a lie. If you have this, your life will be full? No, that's what materialism says so there's a flaw in the materialism, so don't be fooled by the materialism in that way. If you have this, you want to have more, a bigger, better all the time. If you have the best phone right now, you have next year you are waiting for iPhone 7 or 8, 9 or 10, and as soon as 8 comes iPhone 7 doesn't look that great. You got to have an 8 or 9 or 10.

God's Grace Fills us up Abundantly

The abundant life is a sense that you have more than enough. If you have that sense, your life is abundant. If you ever sense that, “what I have is more than enough.” Think about the attitude of people who say that what I have is more than enough and also about the attitude of people who always say “never enough”, who’s more abundant? I believe that the former, the person who has the sense that I have more than enough. When you have that sense, then your life is abundant, but the sense that you have more than enough can never come by having more, then what do we do? Are we stuck? We cannot live abundant life? Because by having more you can never fill it. You can never have that sense. I do believe that is a work of the overflowing grace.

Only when grace comes into you and touches you, when grace overflows within you, then you have this new sense that what I have is more than enough. Grace always overflows. Grace always makes your life full, it gives you the sense that your life is more than enough. The only way that you can fill up that empty dark hole space is with grace of God. In exactly the same condition, when grace touches you, you realize that it’s all right. My life is more than enough. What I have is more than enough. I am more than enough.

Abundance is Sharing

St. Paul in today’s scripture that we read, he had a thorn in his flesh and he felt he felt that he’d be better off without this thorn, so he prayed three times as much as he could, but god didn’t think so God did not grant him what he wanted, but instead God gave this. “My grace is sufficient for you.” In other words, it’s enough. My grace is enough. He was exactly in the same position, St. Paul, externally, he still had a thorn in his flesh. Before he received that message or after he received the message, he was exactly the same. He had a thorn in his flesh, but this time he could say, “hmm, it’s all right. I have more than enough and I am more than enough.” He discovered the secret of the life of grace, so my friends. One more thing about grace, abundance and blessings. I said overflowing. It always overflows to other people. That is the nature of grace.

Abundant people always make other people abundant. You become abundant, not by having more. You become abundant by making other people abundant, instead of taking away the spotlight to yourself by giving

away the spotlight to other people you become abundant. By just enjoying what you have by sharing, not by having it, but by sharing it with others your life becomes abundant. And blessing, when God called Abraham, this is what he said. When God called Abraham God said to him, "I'll bless you so that you'll be a blessing to other people." That's what blessing is. That's what abundance is. That's what grace is.

True blessings don't stay where you are. They always overflow to others. Abundance in life is not in what you have. Only when you share what you have, you experience the abundance of life.

Generosity Begets Generosity

Some people went to women's gathering and some of you came to me and told me, my goodness, I live in a small well, I didn't know the world. There are so many noble holy people who are really working to live their lives for other people. They just give everything. They just give their whole life for other people and some people who took pictures and all that. They were blessed and they donated a \$2000, \$3,000 for the woman's gathering because they saw how God is working.

Abundance is in sharing. There's a church on Spadina and Harbord I told you. That Church owns the land. One generous person gave a donation and from the rent that church received millions of dollars and they do mission with that money. Generosity begets generosity.

Serving is Living

The other day I got a call from one of my ESM members and he told me: "Moxanim I'm applying to Moxies and then he asked me if I could be his reference. So I said: "sure, yeah, I'll be your reference" And then a few days later a manager from Moxies called me and he asked me about this guy and I said, "he's a really, really nice guy. He serves our church, is a good member of our church and he goes to Evangel Hall" and the manager asked, "what is the Evangel Hall?" "So, uh, that is, uh, every month we give hot food to the people in the street and then he goes to Teasdale, what is Teasdale? Teasdale is a food bank. We hand out food and, and we started talking. He said, "every year I take my children and during Christmas time I make sandwiches and go out and give out a of food to them." And he and I were talking about, "yeah, that's what life is supposed to be. That's what

human beings should live like.” And we’re still talking about that but we didn’t talk about this guy at all. We were just talking about what life should be and how we should live and all that. So I called her and said, did you get a job? “Yeah, I got the job.” Generosity begets generosity. Abundance does not come from having it, but from sharing it, serving is living. When you serve, you will live.

When you are selfish, you will die. Serving is living, every small cup of water that you gave to a stranger, God knows God knows, let us live a life of abundance.

Living with Urgency

November 19, 2017

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Living With Urgency

Today's scriptures taken from first Thessalonians five, one to eleven. Now concerning the times and the seasons. Brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night, and they say there is peace and security. Then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman and there will be no escape, but you beloved are not in darkness for that day to surprise you like a thief for all your children of light and children of the day. We are not of the night or of darkness, so then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober for those who sleep, sleep at night, and those were drunk, get drunk at night, but since we belonged to the day that is to be sober and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet, the hope of salvation for God has destined us not for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other as indeed you are doing. This is the word of the Lord.

Living with Urgency Versus without Urgency

The early Christians thought that Jesus was coming very soon. Of course, as you know, Jesus did not come as soon as they expected, they kind of lived with some mistaken expectation about the coming of Jesus, but there was one thing that all the early Christians had, they were alert and they lived with a sense of urgency. In the early Christian community. This sense of urgency was very important. Therefore, they all emphasized the importance of living with a sense of urgency. So even in their documentation, they made sure that the story about that will be there. So for example, a Jesus' parable about 10 bridesmaids; Jesus came, and five bridesmaids prepare the oil, but the other five did not prepare the oil. In

other words, the five were awake and alert, and they lived with a sense of urgency, but the other five did not do that.

Urgency in a Model Society

A lot of stories are in the Bible to show that living with a sense of urgency is very important. In that urgency, I believe that they were able to produce the masterpiece called the Bible. The Bible did not just come into existence in a normal mindset, in that very urgent mindset. They were able to produce the masterpiece called the New Testament. Living with a sense of urgency does that, it puts you in a totally different mindset. The person who lives with urgency, and the person who lives mindlessly, the quality of their mindset, the quality of their thinking are totally different. When you live with a sense of urgency, you can be creative, alert, purposeful, passionate and alive. That's what he does. People come alive when they have the sense of urgency, the modern society; I don't know why the modern society takes away this sense of urgency in people. I feel like we're all crazy, like we hear so many people get killed in Las Vegas and then all of a sudden we get this urgency. Wow. And the next day as though nothing happened and that's something that we look at, and then we walk away. Even when I look at myself, this is crazy. When two people are threatening each other with nuclear threats. Oh, I just hope that nothing bad happens and we just move on. There's no sense of urgency at all in modern life. I don't know why. Maybe our life is too structured and programmed, so we feel we have security and stability? Is that why?

Whatever the reason may be losing this sense of urgency is killing our soul! it's killing us. Is it because the world has become so big that we feel drowned in it? I can't do nothing about it, but I see some exceptional people who live with a sense of urgency. Even around us.

Urgency to Improve Life

The other day I read an article in the Rolling Stone magazine about Elon Musk. It was a very interesting article. It was a interview, and Elon's brother Kimbal, said about Elon in this way. He's able to see things more clearly in a way that no one else I know of can understand. His brother saw his brother, and he had this keen sense of seeing things that no other people can see. And Elon Musk said, climate change is the biggest threat that

humanity faces this century except for artificial intelligence. Elon Musk makes rockets, he created an electric car, and he is looking for planets for human beings to be able to inhabit- and I don't know, sounds like crazy. But somehow he's not comfortable with the way he just lives. He has this sense of urgency. We gotta do something about it. We cannot just move on. I mean, he has so much money, has so much power. He can live his life without worrying about anything, without sense of urgency. He can eat a steak every night if he wants. still has lots of money left. I mean, he could comfortably go on vacation all he wants if he just lives for himself. He didn't need to feel any sense of urgency. He could just live normal, but he lived with his sense of urgency to leave a better universe, better nature, better earth to the next generation. Is it because he's so smart and so powerful and so big? That, he could make some changes in the world. He can dare to think about making a dent in the universe or he is there make some changes in the war because he's so smart and so powerful? Maybe. It may be easier for him to have the sense of urgency because he's so powerful, that he can do something about it, something about his life and something about the world he lives in, but I don't think only smart and powerful people can live with a sense of urgency. I think a sense of urgency comes from a clear understanding of one's purpose.

Understanding Your Purpose

When you have clear understanding of your purpose, then you have sense of urgency. When you don't have any purpose, then nothing's urgent. Just life moves on, you can just live comfortably, but when you have something that you want to achieve while you are alive, then you get this sense of urgency. We won't be just satisfied with just making a living. When we have a purpose, peace and security will not be everything we want in life. My friends, that's a lie, that is a lie, peace and security is everything about life? that is a defeated mentality. That's people who lost their soul, they think like that. Peace and security is not everything about life. That was what Saint Paul said in today's scripture when they say there is peace and security, then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come up on a pregnant woman, and there'll be no escape.

Choosing to Create through Urgency

In Paul's time. Many people live with sense of security and peace; like Roman peace, Pax Romana. Well, everything is good and fine. Everything is peaceful, and you are secure. Paul was surrounded by that kind of mentality, but he saw something else. No, there's an urgency here, so peace and security versus urgency. Paul chose urgency and I agree with Paul. Paul is saying live with a sense of urgency, a sense of urgency is more important than living with a false sense of peace and security, living with a false sense of peace and security. We can create nothing. We can do nothing. When we live with a sense of urgency, we enter into a different realm of life. It is different consciousness, different realm of existence. When we have that sense of urgency, we enter into that. When artists produce a masterpiece, they are in a different level of consciousness, a different realm of existence. Your power and energy will come from within us. Everything comes alive within us. Every cell of our bodies, awakened with new vitality. We don't live falling asleep, we are urgent. I wonder where this sense of urgency comes from, mistaken expectation? "Oh, Jesus will come soon." Is that how they got the sense of urgency? Maybe partly. So I was reflecting on it. Where did these early Christians get that urgency? I reflected on it and read the Scripture and I found this scripture that is from acts, it is what luke said, but he was actually the quotation from the Joel prophet. He says "in the last days it will be, God declares that I'll pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.

Changing your Path from Reality to Dreams

When the spirit came upon them, something happened within them. All of a sudden they all became awakened and they got this sense of urgency, and in that state of mind they were able to prophesy. Young people could see visions and old people could dream dreams, something totally no one ever expected happened within them. They were able to see visions. They were able to dream dreams. Certainly Martin Luther King Jr., When everybody automatically assumed racial discrimination is reality of life that you must live by, he said no, and he with a sense of urgency, he wanted to change that. I think it's the movement of the spirit, it is I believe, the prompting of the spirit, that prompts you to live a better life. They all entered into a different realm of life, different dimension. Their life became a life of vision,

dream, and purpose. All the great people in the history saw the vision, had the dream and lived out the purpose they found. That was how they impacted the world. Living a lethargic life is not an only option. Don't believe in that lie, just because you have a house secured, job secured.

Live for Others

That's not the only option to live. That can never be your goal. We have to see bigger things in life. You have to find life. We are made. We are made not to be happy when you live only for yourself. That's how we are created to be. We can never be happy when we live for ourselves. Is it nature? We can only be happy when we live for other people and for God, who takes care of- who cares for the world, only then we can be happy. That is a noble purpose. Time we have, it's not gonna be there all the time. When we realized that time is limited, we cannot just waste our time. St. Paul said this; "Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. You already know it, for you yourself know very well that the day of the lord will come like a thief in the night." The other day I watched the news and this guy was making a bomb shelter, he built everything so that he could be saved from the nuclear war, and be able to securely live for many years.

Do Not Live with a Defeated Mentality

Being awake means this present moment is awake. There may not be tomorrow, tomorrow is tomorrow, but today, we have to be awake. You can do so much. You can do so much. You know, it saddens me when I see talented people waste their lives with defeated mentality. It saddens me. It makes me angry when they could do much better.

The other day I talked with a guy. He called me, he lives in San Francisco "Reverend, I want to give a donation or a gift scholarship in my father's name." He said "I'll give \$100,000 initially and every year \$12,000. I want to support theological students with that money." So I said "that's great. I'll help you use your money." And the other day a woman came to me, "I'll give a \$30,000 to help out the poor and needy during this Christmas season." at least there is some movement. As we come to God, God will awaken us as we humbly pray, the spirit will awaken us, then we can enter into a different realm of existence, not just victims of materialism. Your

horizon will be open, your eyes will be open, you can see the vision and you will dream dreams. I think that is what life is all about. I believe that was the power that broke through the darkness in the early christian history. I mean, it is just a miracle for me how Christianity survived that kind of persecution in the first 20, 30 or 50 years.

Let Yourself Become 'Awake'

I mean, it's a small set. 12 people started, hundred people gathered together and prayed, and how could they break through that roman power and all that way of roman thinking, and become Christian. Christianity? That itself is a miracle. I believe that it is a power of those who are urgent, who felt urgency, I think it is the power of those who are totally awake. They had a different sense of living. We have to be alive. We have to awake. We have to come alive. Are there artists who can create masterpieces? Are they engineers? Are they a poet? You can come up with a tremendous piece once your whole week. You're very talented people, but talent itself is not good enough. Your brain is not good enough. You need power for your talents to become actualized like god. Anoint you. Let god take you to a higher level. Let us come out of our shelter and enjoy the freedom to be the best you can be for others sake, for God, and for the world.

Mary's Christmas Wish

December 27, 2017

Luke 1:46-55

About Mary

What you just read is Mary's Magnificat, Mary Song. When Mary was pregnant with Jesus, she sang that song. I think Mary was a very special person. I wonder how a young girl could have such maturity. I mean, maybe that's why God chose Mary to send Jesus Christ to us. A virgin getting pregnant. That was difficult news to accept even now, 2000 years later. But during that time, a virgin being pregnant was unacceptable. And Mary was shocked when she first heard that, but she was calm and handled the situation in a very mature way. Not only that, when you read today's scripture passage, what Mary's saying and what Mary said was just amazing. She understood exactly why Jesus came to this world. She had a great insight about the baby she was pregnant with.

Let us go back to the story of Angel Gabriel first coming to Mary telling her that you'll be pregnant. The Angel Gabriel was the one who first broke the news to a Mary. But the Angel Gabriel said a wonderful thing about the child that she was going to give birth to. And the Angel said that the child will be great. He'll be called the Son of the most high and God will give him the throne of David. He'll be the king of the kingdom. That will have no end. What a wonderful news. Let's say you're pregnant and then somehow in the dream angel came to you and then broke this news to you. You'll be so amazed. Wow. The baby that I will have will have this kind of character in the future.

The Good news

Just the other day, Joshua called me then said, "Dad, can I talk to you? Yeah, I got to go right now, but it takes one minute." "Okay. What is it?" So, he broke the news with me. I was so happy. He said they're going to have a daughter. "Yeah? Really, I get that. Other things can wait. Talk." So, we talked to for about two minutes.

I mean even that news made me so happy, but the kind of news, Mary got, it was just amazing news. But after hearing all that, you know, what was Mary's response? This was Mary's response. How can this be? Since I'm a virgin, she could not hear anything, Angel Gabriel Said. She only got shocked by the fact that she might be pregnant. That's the only thing that she could remember. It is totally understandable. At that moment she couldn't hear anything else, but as time went on, when she was calm when she thought about it, she started hearing. She remembered what Angel Gabriel said. Yeah, the Angel told me the baby that I would have would be a great person, but after this, she sang this song. When you hear Mary Song today, it is very different from what normal parents expect from their child. Normal parents will be very happy that their child will be powerful, famous, and great, but Mary was different. She wasn't concerned. She wasn't concerned about her child being great, powerful, and famous. She was able to see what this child would do for humanity. Even at that moment, she was thinking about the poor, powerless, voiceless, and this child would give them the power. Give them the voice. And most of our parents or when we pray for our children, we just pray that they will be healthy. They become great. They get a good job and all these things. We only pray for their wellbeing, but Mary wasn't concerned about him being great. Mary was concerned about what this child would do for the humanity, for the people who have no power. What a profound and amazing woman she was.

She was a little girl maybe 16 or 17 at most, and she had such a profound insight about Jesus. So, when you, your parents, and all the parents here, when you pray for your children, don't just pray for their wellbeing, pray for them to have an impact for the people who are less fortunate than them. Pray for your children to live their lives, to uplift the lowly, powerless, and voiceless. This is what humanity is all about.

That's why Mary was able to accept the death of Jesus, the death of her own son at the cross. She was there. She saw the tragic death on the cross of her son and she was able to digest it because she understood that he had to do it to bring up the lowly, the humble, and the hungry. So, she was able to accept that. Mary's Christmas wish was for the powerless to have power, the voiceless to have the voice and the poor and the hungry to be filled, but the rich and powerful she wished that they will be sent away

empty. Profound theology for a little girl only 16, 17 years old. Mary knew clearly the Christmas message. This is how we human beings should live. This is the value and morality we should uphold. This should be our lifestyle. We are living in a culture where we idolize the power, the fame, but Christian message or Christmas message is totally different the exact opposite. We need to be aware of this message always. We should always think about those around us who have less power than us, less privileged than us, and we should share the power that we have with those who don't have any.

Life of Sharing

That is the life of sharing. That is the spirit of this year's theme. Serving is living. My friends, we have so many blessings from God. Let us share our blessing with others. That is the spirit of Christmas, that kind of life that will have a positive impact on other people. You know we don't give not because we don't have money, we don't give, not because we don't have any, we don't give because we have no room to think about others. We are so wrapped around by our needs, but your needs are endless. At one point it's got to stop. You cannot wrap yourself around by your needs alone. There are people who have more needs than us. If we pay just a little attention to others around us, we can do so much for them. We will be able to see many opportunities to help them. Even at the store, if they ask for a donation, whether it's a Sick Children, whatever, give. Even if you gave five times, give again, just give. Don't think too much about it. You have enough.

Kahlil Gibran, one of my favorite poet, He said, "you give, but little when you give of your possessions, it is when you give of yourself that you truly give." That's the lesson Jesus taught us. He gave off himself, giving life starts from our heart. There must be a desire to live a life of giving in our heart before we actually live a life of giving. When we believe that that is the right thing to do, then we'll be able to share with the others. That our hearts will move, and our eyes will be able to see the opportunities and if we can live a life of sharing, and I believe that that is a meaningful life. You want to live a meaningful life. I believe that that is a meaningful life. As we live a life of giving, our life will be larger than ourselves. Your life will be larger than yourself. You will become a big person. Be a big person. That's

what's cool about giving life. Being a big person. Mary was a young girl, but she was a big person. She lived the life larger than herself. Jesus was a big person. He gave all of himself for us. That's why Angel Gabriel announced this way. He will be great, and Mary knew the meaning of being a great person.

Mary was not only a big person, but she was a blessed person and Mary's said this, "my soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely from now on, all generations will call me blessed." She was a blessed woman. When the lowly person starts living a life of giving day, they become precious people and blessed people. When we live a life of sharing our life becomes precious. You become a very precious person. I want to share a little quote from Winston Churchill to end my sermon. "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give." Profound.

This is the Christmas message.

Healing Through Worship

January 7, 2018

John 4:19-24

True Worship

We're going to build up the worship service as much as much as possible this year so that all of us can come and truly experience true worship. But also so God may be glorified. And during this retreat I'm going to talk about worship a lot, for two lectures we're going to do that. I hope that many of you can come without understanding what worship is. Giving true meaningful worship is hard if not impossible. So I hope that, I know you're busy, but take some time out and please come and start the new year with a prayer for heart, and also next week when we have the town hall meeting, please give us your feedback so that we can choreograph this worship service as meaningfully as possible for everyone who worships here at St. Timothy.

Today's the first Sunday of 2018. I pray that God's grace may be with you and with your families this year. God is good and God is faithful. God works beyond our imagination and God deserves our worship. And this year's theme is healing through worship. And then that is a passage that, that's John 4, 24. I don't know why there's no English one. That's strange. Is there an English one? I know, but there's no word in English. I mean, last year we had it right? Strange.. Anyway, that 4, 24 we're going to, we're ready today. So that is our theme passage. We had a KSM prayer retreat last Friday and Saturday we had a wonderful time together.

What happened was like a taste of heaven. We cried together and we laughed together and most of all we worshiped together in the most pure form, purist form. After they learned about worship, the way they gave worse was so beautiful. Friday we had a lecture and then next morning, Saturday morning, we had a worship together. It was one of the most beautiful worship that I experienced. They were really into worshipping God. We experienced that the worship brings healing, but worship is for God, not for us, not even for our benefits. Absolutely, worship is for God, for no one

else only God needs to be glorified and only God should be at the center of our worship. We all hide behind the shadow of the cross.

Worship is our Purpose

Worship is our purpose of life. Worship is the very reason for us to live. We live to worship God. That's Christian belief. We live to worship God. Our ultimate purpose is to glorify God and we glorify God through worship. And last year's theme was serving is living, and this year living is worship. That's what we want to practice this year. God delivered us from the bondage and made us free so that we may be able to worship. That's why the choir anthem was so beautiful. God lifts up our soul so that my spirit may be free when my spirit is free. Then with that freedom. We worship God.

Moses

When the Israelites were freed from the bondage of Egyptians, God sent Moses to deliver them from that oppression and bondage and made them free so that they could worship God. That was what Moses said. Let us hear, I'll be with you and this shall be the sign for you. Oh, sorry. Yeah, you read the scripture. Sorry. Yeah. Okay. Oh my goodness. This a phobia, man. Okay. This part, "I'll be with you and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you. When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain." The whole purpose of exodus was for them to worship God. Today we read the story of the Samaritan woman. We didn't read the whole story because I didn't want to focus on woman is herself. I want to focus on the meaning of worship that was revealed in the story. We all know the Samaritan woman very well.

She was a woman who had many problems among them, the greatest problem was that was the fact that she was completely alienated from people you know. It is a terrible experience to be completely alienated from people. That's why bullying is so hard to take. When you are completely alienated from people that is hard to bear, you become lonely, you become angry and sometimes sad and you feel so worthless and you believing that you are unlovable. She felt judged by the people all the time she lived with this deep wound. Hurt was there and Jesus came to her and she just knew

exactly what her problem was, and then write at that moment during conversation, Jesus completely brought her, out of the bondage and oppression of alienation. Jesus restored her. Jesus lifted up her soul, so that her spirit may be free, and Jesus made sure that she knew that you are a precious child. Precious daughter of God and you are lovable and you're worthy. Jesus wanted to make sure that she knew that when she experienced the salvation, the first thing she did was to go back to the village and met people who alienated her. That's amazing. I mean they're the reason she felt so worthless and unlovable, unloved, but when she was restored by Jesus, she went back to the people who alienated them. She was able to embrace them. In other words she had enough empowerment to be able to embrace them. She was healed. She was freed.

That's why she was able to go back and meet those people, but before she went back to the village, there is one question. She asked, I wonder why she asked that question. During the conversation, she was going back and forth. She didn't say much, but one at one point, something was happening within her and the one question rose from her consciousness. You know what that question was? This was the question, our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem. Her question was where should I worship mountain or in Jerusalem? In other words, what is the best way to worship? That question rose from her conscious, from the depth of her soul. This question came up, what is the best way to worship? Something happened during her conversation with Jesus? She was experiencing the freedom and when she experienced the freedom, the desire to worship arose from within her heart. That's what it does. That's what happens when you experience the freedom, the desire to worship arises from within. Where should I worship? she asked. Mountain or Jerusalem? That was important to her. Jesus' response was this, Jesus said to her "woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the father, neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem, but the hour is coming and is now here. When the true worshipers will worship the father in spirit and in truth, for the father seeks the such as those to worship him." God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. That's what it is.

God is Spirit

God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. The important thing about worship is not where you worship.

The important thing about worship is where is your heart? Where is your heart in the worship? You worship with your heart. You don't worship in the sanctuary. You worship in your heart because worship is not physical activity. You all the physical activity, but that is self is not worship. Worship. You can only worship from the heart in heart. When you have God in your heart, then you can worship God in spirit and truth. Worship is not about what you do, worship is about your spirit meeting God's spirit. That's what worship is. Our Spirit meets God spirit. The place of worship is not the sanctuary. The place of worship is your heart. God looks for those who worship God.

The father seeks such as these to worship him. God is calling us to worship God and you all responded to that calling, some of your friends, even some of your family members might not have responded to that calling, leaving them behind at home. We came to worship because God called us to worship him. Let us worship God from the depth of our heart. What we need in worship is inspiration. Not Emotion. Emotion is at the surface, but inspiration comes from the depth of your soul. What we need is inspiration, not emotion. This year, I hope that we all learn what it means to worship God and through your worship I pray that we all so experience healing and restoration. When you give true worship to God, wonderful things will happen in your lives.

Welcoming Others

July 15, 2018

Matthew 10:40-42

Hospitality

Hospitality. That's a beautiful word, and hospitality is a very important aspect of living as a human. Being hospitable makes other people feel welcome, appreciated, valued and loved. That's what we human beings should do. We should make other people feel welcomed, appreciated and valued. You have no right to make other people feel miserable. You have no right to make other people feel small. We have all the responsibility to make other people feel important, to make other people big, great, valued. That's what we are called to do, that's what human beings should do, whoever we meet, whether they're strangers or family members or friends, we should always make other people feel welcomed, accepted, loved, and valued.

That's the kind of culture that I grew up with when I was back in Korea. The whole village, the whole town was like family. I could go to anybody's house and ask for food if I'm hungry. And then my friend's parents, I'm like their son, they always provide something to eat. Korean culture is like that, anybody comes under your roof, you never send them away hungry. You always provide something to eat. I don't know these days whether it's like that in Korea or not. They live in condos and all that. But when I grew up, that was the culture that I lived in. And I thought it was just a Korean culture that I grew up with. But when I went to Africa they were exactly the same, they treated me like a precious person, the king, the most important person in the world, they tribute me with such a high respect. That's what human beings are supposed to do to each other. And I thought it was just Korean culture or African culture, but it's a biblical culture.

Treat Everyone as if They Were an Angel

When Abraham had three strangers and they were about to just pass by Abraham never let them go without feeding them. So, Abraham got lambs and they had a feast. And then later he realized that they were angels, not just strangers, but there were angels. And this is what the Hebrew writer

said, “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers for by doing that, some have entertained angels without knowing it.” You entertain a stranger like an angel. That’s what we should do. Whoever we meet, we should really treat them like angels, welcoming strangers or somebody should be our basic human character and helping each other’s needs is basic humanity. That’s why we support the refugee program very strongly. And we invited an Afghanistan family. I mean, last time we also invited a Syrian family. Our church sponsored these people to welcome the stranger to welcome people. And right now, they’re living are very well in this country, Canada.

During my vacation I went to Boston to visit my grandson, he’s a two-year-old. And when I got there, they had a big party for the second birthday of Charlie and the whole week they prepared all kinds of food, Kalbi, Chinese, skewers and crab legs and all that, you name it. They prepared so much, and they decorated the Hawaiian kind of the theme of Moana. So, they had a Hawaiian theme and decorated the whole house. And then they said because we’re very busy preparing for this, can you welcome the people? So, I was there to welcome all the people who came, and I was talking with a neighbour, he came from Jamaica and I realized that he has 11 siblings, and he was talking about his life. And then one of his sisters, she was a dentist and she quit just like Simon and then became a minister. And we were talking and while watching them be hospitable to the people I felt good, that’s what we should do.

I’m going to Madagascar in October and when I went to Madagascar, they’re all poor. No one is rich there. So, when I went to South Africa, some people are rich, some people are poor, but in Madagascar everybody is poor. But even with their limited resources, they really treated me with huge hospitality. They treated me with the best that they could. And I felt so welcomed and loved.

Serving

I once had a car accident while I was an intern moderator for Kitchener Waterloo church. You know Sunday afternoons, I’m very tired because it’s after service and all that. I get tired and I had a meeting in Waterloo, but it’s an hour away. When I was driving, I started falling asleep on the 401. I really pinched myself, I sang loud and then yelled and did all kinds of

things. I tried to wake myself up and I barely made it and I was going off to highway 8 to go to Waterloo and – “finally I got here” and I fell asleep on highway 8 and by the time I woke up I was on the paved shoulder. I tried to control my car. It was winter, and I couldn’t control my car and it went into the ditch, luckily there was lots of snow in the ditch. So, I survived. That’s how I’m speaking to you now. But while I was there waiting for a tow truck for about an hour, almost every car stopped by just to see if I’m, okay. And later it kind of became you know a nuisance. And every time I came out and said, “I’m okay.” So, I just came out and told everyone, “I’m okay. Just pass.” Right, but at the time, I feel proud to be Canadian. They care when somebody is in trouble, they don’t just pass by, they care, they stop doing whatever they are doing, to see how I’m doing. That’s what hospitality is, that’s what human being should do to each other.

Once I took the eldest Korean in our church, I went to Niagara Falls and we’re under the roof. And then there were about four groups there. And I looked around all four groups. They were cooking their own thing and then there was a Korean group from another church and there is an Afghanistan group and then there were people from Brock University, geological society or something like that. And then while I was there, I was prompted by the spirit, somehow to go and visit them. They’re your neighbours, go visit them. So, you know, I’m kind of an introvert. I don’t really like talking to strangers and all that. It takes extra energy for me to do that. I was sitting there and I’m just comfortable with my group just eating kalbi and all this stuff, but the spirit kind of prompted me to go and talk to them. So, I went to this group and this person started talking to me and he started crying. He said his wife just passed away one month ago and he was so sad, and he was talking about his whole life and I was listening to him.

And then after saying bye, I went to the Afghanistan group, one of them said that he had 80 members of his family. One family was bigger than our whole group. When I went there, he brought his wife, his brother in law, sister in law, he introduced to everyone from his family. And I said to myself, this is what human life is supposed to be about. We are not strangers to each other. We are all brothers and sisters in Christ. Hospitality, when new people come to our church, I hope that we can welcome them with love and appreciation. We should make them feel at home, comfortable.

Hospitality is a serving attitude. You serve other people's needs, that should be at the bottom of all human life, not just Christian life, all human life. We need to serve each other's needs. Jesus taught us that. He said, I did not come to be served. I came to serve, that's what Jesus did, and he showed us what life we should live through his parable, the Good Samaritan parable. Somebody was in trouble and this person stopped doing everything and he went down to help that person. That's what human life should be like. Jesus came to this world with a spirit of hospitality, but this world accepted him with hostility. They did not accept him. They treated him with hostility. He came with hospitality, but people treated him with hostility. This is what John said. "He came to what was his own and his own people did not accept him." Lack of hospitality is a symptom of the darkness of sin. You don't have that spirit of hospitality, that means you have the darkness of sin.

Exercise the Life of Hospitality

In the world we live in, as Steve eloquently prayed, we see hostility rather than the hospitality. We need to turn hostility into hospitality. Being hospitable is not always easy because we have this fear within us and sometimes we reject other people, but we should turn our hearts into hospitality so that we may be able to welcome other people with love and care. We need to develop a new kind of leadership. The leadership of hospitality, the leadership of serving Jesus showed us that kind of leadership he knelt and washed the feet of the disciples. He served them. Unless you humble yourself, lower yourself and kneel, you cannot be hospitable to other people. You cannot serve other people.

I hope that we can build up that kind of spirit, are the people who are in trouble around you? Are there people who are in need around you? Are there people who are in pain around you? They are your brothers and sisters. You cannot just neglect them. You cannot just pass by them. You must stop doing whatever you were doing and then take care of their needs. Be with them, pray with them, show them that you care. That's what community is all about. That's what humanity is all about. We should build that kind of world, and then you will be the first people who do that. Even though the world does not have it, we Christians should exercise the life of hospitality. There are a lot of people around you who need your care. They

Welcoming Others

don't say it, they sometimes suffer silently. Let us look around, who is in need and let us be their friends.