

Pastor's Blog No. 13 for Monday, March 25, 2023

Trials to Triumph (Reprise)

You might say I'm stuck on a topic, but Sunday's message, *Trials to Triumph*, was difficult to hold together. First my iPad once again acted up and kept losing connection with my Keynote Presentation. This was embarrassing for me and frustrating for the congregation. Secondly, I definitely had too much to say and also kept confusing it with another message I'm working on. Sometimes jars of clay have mouths of mud.

I have a pastor friend in Elkart, Indiana who sits down every week to reprise his message. Dave Lade pastors Bethel Assembly of God and each Wednesday he reprises what he preached on Sunday via a live video podcast. It's a synopsis of what he preached, but it also includes explanations and things he didn't get to in his original message. It's interesting watching as a preacher tries to explain what he said from the pulpit.

Let Me Make This Perfectly Clear

However, that's about how I was left feeling from Sunday's message. Although it may have been clear to some, I felt rushed through the message and took no time to illustrate or explain some of the points presented. Sometimes unqualified statements can add impact (and some did), but other times they can bring confusion.

The context of what I preached is Luke 19, leading up to the Triumphal Entry. Jesus spent the previous night in the home of Zacchaeus and radically changed his life. However the story doesn't end there. Before they retired for the night and made their journey to Jerusalem the next day, Jesus shared a parable with those who were with him in Zacchaeus' home..

The Bible even tells us why he did this:

*"While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable,
because he was near Jerusalem and **the people thought
that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once.**"*

Luke 19:11 (NIV)

People were drawing the wrong conclusion about what his arrival in Jerusalem would produce—immediate results! Nevertheless, Jesus wanted to lay out how the kingdom of God actually works and what our roles in it ought to be. The problem is, this parable is so far outside the modern gospel preached today in our country that it goes largely unattended.

I wish I could have camped there and made it a series instead of just one message. Oh, well. But the general impression I wanted to leave is most people believe when Jesus shows up suddenly

everything is going to be different. They expect all their problems to disappear and all their enemies to fall before them in a moment. Then to live a perfect life from then on.

In The Process of Time

This was what the parable Jesus shared is about. It's about the process of taking what God has given us through his Spirit and investing it for a return on the investment. This takes time—a lot of time. We want God to change things overnight, but he actually gives us the tools to change our own lives over the course of a lifetime.

However, most don't like that message nor the principles it teaches. They either want to cast blame for their problems on others or stick to their belief that they can't change. They act like the prison bars are too strong for even the Spirit of God to set them free.

No, you have been set free. *The Parable of the Minas* has one powerful statement that ought to cause us to press on into all that God has for us, rather than continue to excuse ourselves from the fight.

*"I tell you that to **everyone who has, more will be given,**
but as for the one who has nothing,
even what they have will be taken away."*

Luke 19:26 (NIV)

Interest on any investment takes time. Most people spend what they have as fast as they make it, so they have no idea how investment works and how you can produce wealth through it. Investment in the kingdom yields eternal rewards.

It even takes time for this truth to sink in, but once it does you'll probably rise up in anger and say, "What are we sitting here for? Let's get busy. We've got a fortune to make and a kingdom to build."

Until next Monday, may the Lord bless you! Pray for us!

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