

St. Paul's Dorking Small Groups. April 27th 2008

Witnessing with Jesus - in the Country John 1: 15-15

Word:Key points from Sunday's sermon



John sets out his Gospel as if it were a courtroom where witnesses are called to the stand to give testimony to Jesus as the Lamb of God the Messiah the Son of God the Saviour of the World. It is important to look at the fullness of their testimonials.

This week we see 5 would be disciples called up who attest to Jesus' identify with no doubt as to who he is. What is odd is where they find the long expected messiah and sought after rabbi. He is not in the temple, he did not come to the temple. It isn't surprising then that they ask to see where he is staying and receive the invitation to 'come and see'. They spend time with him and see over the course of time John's the gospel covers that he is always found with and amongst the people: the sinners and outcasts. It is because of this that Jesus finds himself in trouble with the authorities later on. We need to understand that this is extraordinary. The Messiah is promoting, engaging in relationships, and including in them those who are unclean and set outside the faith of the people of God. As Son of God he is intent on building relationship with people. How he knows them and knows their names.

The five: Andrew Simon-Peter, Nathaniel and Philip and another are the first stones of the building we call church, otherwise called the Bride of Christ and the Body of Christ. How Jesus lays those stones is highly significant. He does not lay them in the temple, the place of worship and but his day also full of religiosity. He lays them /leads them amongst the people.

Where is the heart of our ministry as 21st century church, as equal followers with those disciples? People who have seen the church body as an institution that has made them feel guilty and unacceptable have been drawn to Christ by the quiet and long standing love, care, companionship, Colleagueship of followers of Jesus who may have said very little but have been with them at work, in their neighbourhood, and what they have said has been timely. There are many of stories of people who have found Jesus through Christian men and women who have left the security of their formal ministries and home to go and live and work, to love and care amongst them. People who have opened up their homes to offer hospitality, company and care to those around them are 'being with Jesus in the country'. Away from the expected place to find a Christian. Read stories from the following link <http://www.biblesociety.org.uk/exploratory/articles/frost01.doc>. Mike Frost writes about the Missional church. We have three spaces in our lives. The first is occupied by family/home the second day Work/college/school the third is occupies by those we mix with outside the other two spaces. If we value worship over and above other aspects of ministry we may find a church full of people who fill their third pace with rehearsal for Sunday morning , others who fill it with meetings about the house keeping of the church. May be it is time to stop the meetings adn to fill our third space with time for those around us who need to know Jesus.



Witness:Questions to discuss

Reflection on being with God : Read from the list of names of God (distributed at VST), each member pick one name and in 5 minutes of quiet, ask God to draw near to you to show how he has been with you in this way. Share what you hear/see/think with rest of the group and then give thanks in prayer to God for who he is and for being with you .

From the passage

1. Trace any sense John gives of a growing conviction that Jesus is the one to follow.
2. What is the picture in these verses that John is giving :of Jesus; of what these men think of him;of what Jesus is doing ?
3. Recall the first time you 'met' Jesus. Recount what you thought, what /who did you think you had found ? How did you meet him ? Who, if any one, brought you to Jesus ?
4. It is not unusual to see the whole truth of Jesus' identity in one sweeping glance, (as these men did) and then spend years discovering that truth in ever greater depth. What have been the key factors for you to uncover and truly discover the truth you first saw in Jesus ?
5. IN what ways can the worshipping body of Christ be a barrier to un believers coming close to Jesus through them ?

6. How can **you** be amongst the people ? Analyse the diagram of the three spaces that make up how you use time in your daily living. How much of your time is spent in the third space ? What fills your third Space.? What could come out so that you can spend more time enjoying the company of those who do not yet know Jesus ?
7. How can you as a group pray together for the freedom to be amongst those who cannot are outside the worshipping body of Christ?



Highly Recommended reading ' **The shaping of Things to come :Innovation and Mission for the 21st century Church**' Mike Frost and Alan Hirsch

Names and Attributes of God

My advocate (Job 16:19)
Bread of life (John 6:35)
Comforter in sorrow (Jeremiah 8:18)
My confidence (Psalm 71:5)
Wonderful Counselor (Isaiah 9:6)
Defender of widows (Psalm 68:5)
My strong deliverer (Psalm 140:7)
Faithful and True (Revelation 19:11)
A consuming fire (Deuteronomy 4:24)
A sure foundation (Isaiah 28:16)
My friend (Job 16:20)
God Almighty (Genesis 17:1)
God of all comfort (2 Corinthians 1:3)
God who avenges me (Psalm 18:47)
God who saves me (Psalm 51:14)
Our guide (Psalm 48:14)
Head of the church (Ephesians 5:23)
Our help (Psalm 33:20)
My hiding place (Psalm 32:7)
A great high priest (Hebrews 4:14)
Holy One among you (Hosea 11:9)
My hope (Psalm 71:5)
Jealous (Exodus 34:14)
Righteous judge (2 Timothy 4:8)
King of kings (1 Timothy 6:15)
Our leader (2 Chronicles 13:12)
Your life (Colossians 3:4)
Light of life (John 8:12)
Lord of lords (1 Timothy 6:15)
Lord of the harvest (Matthew 9:38)
Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5)
The most holy (Daniel 9:24)
Our peace (Ephesians 2:14)
Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6)
My Redeemer (Psalm 19:14)
Refuge and strength (Psalm 46:1)
My salvation (Exodus 15:2)
My Savior (Psalm 42:5)
The good shepherd (John 10:11)
Sovereign Lord (Luke 2:29)
My stronghold (Psalm 18:2)
My support (2 Samuel 22:19)
Good teacher (Mark 10:17)