

Sermon Notes – Sunday 13th October

‘The early church community – surrendered to Christ’

Luke, the author of Acts, provides a snapshot of what the early church looked like. The empowering presence of the Holy Spirit brought joy, miracles, boldness and fruitfulness in witness, worship and unity.

Read Acts 2:42-47 and Acts 4:32-37

- What was so distinctive about their life together that they ‘enjoyed the favour of all the people’ (Acts 2:47)

Read Luke 9:23,24.

- In a culture that pursues an attitude of ‘entitlement’ (‘..because you’re worth it’ is one such advertising strap line), how radical is the teaching of Jesus?

What we see of the early church suggests that compelled by the resurrection of Jesus and empowered by the Holy Spirit they were able to hold loose to possessions (2:45, 4:32) in order to give themselves to a different way of living.

- What is Jesus calling you to surrender to him as part of ‘taking up your cross and following him’?

Each one of us is called to run our own race. Therefore, what we are called to surrender to Jesus will be different for each of us. For some it might mean freedom (imprisoned for being a Christian), for some it might mean accepting limitations of health or finance (called to serve God amongst the poor in a hostile environment), for some it might mean surrendering a desire for sexual intimacy in pursuit of purity. Whatever the cost of discipleship might mean for us individually, God has given the church to be a place where deep, trusting, life enhancing friendships can flourish that can provide us with the support and encouragement we need to be faithful to Christ.

- How can we deepen our friendships with one another so as to be ‘church’ more effectively? How might you deepen your commitment to those in your Life Group? (e.g. shared meals? Prayer triplets?)

Psalms 68:6 ‘God sets the lonely in families’.

- Who might you know either within or outside the church who might appreciate receiving a token of your love (a call, a card, a cake etc)?

‘Let’s not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another’ Hebrews 10:25

‘Be generous with encouragement. It is verbal sunshine. It costs nothing, it warms hearts and enriches lives’

Pray together that our church may be like the ‘Acts 2’ church, fully surrendered and an effective witness to the love of Jesus.

Sermon Notes – Sunday 13th October

‘The early church community – surrendered to Christ’

Luke, the author of Acts, provides a snapshot of what the early church looked like. The empowering presence of the Holy Spirit brought joy, miracles, boldness and fruitfulness in witness, worship and unity.

Read Acts 2:42-47 and Acts 4:32-37

- What was so distinctive about their life together that they ‘enjoyed the favour of all the people’ (Acts 2:47)

Read Luke 9:23,24.

- In a culture that pursues an attitude of ‘entitlement’ (‘..because you’re worth it’ is one such advertising strap line), how radical is the teaching of Jesus?

What we see of the early church suggests that compelled by the resurrection of Jesus and empowered by the Holy Spirit they were able to hold loose to possessions (2:45, 4:32) in order to give themselves to a different way of living.

- What is Jesus calling you to surrender to him as part of ‘taking up your cross and following him’?

Each one of us is called to run our own race. Therefore, what we are called to surrender to Jesus will be different for each of us. For some it might mean freedom (imprisoned for being a Christian), for some it might mean accepting limitations of health or finance (called to serve God amongst the poor in a hostile environment), for some it might mean surrendering a desire for sexual intimacy in pursuit of purity. Whatever the cost of discipleship might mean for us individually, God has given the church to be a place where deep, trusting, life enhancing friendships can flourish that can provide us with the support and encouragement we need to be faithful to Christ.

- How can we deepen our friendships with one another so as to be ‘church’ more effectively? How might you deepen your commitment to those in your Life Group? (e.g. shared meals? Prayer triplets?)

Psalms 68:6 ‘God sets the lonely in families’.

- Who might you know either within or outside the church who might appreciate receiving a token of your love (a call, a card, a cake etc)?

‘Let’s not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another’ Hebrews 10:25

‘Be generous with encouragement. It is verbal sunshine. It costs nothing, it warms hearts and enriches lives’

Pray together that our church may be like the ‘Acts 2’ church, fully surrendered and an effective witness to the love of Jesus.

Methodist Covenant Prayer (of surrender)

I am no longer my own but yours.
Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will;
put me to doing, put me to suffering;
let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,
exalted for you, or brought low for you;
let me be full, let me be empty,
let me have all things, let me have nothing:
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal.
And now, glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours. And the covenant now made on earth, let
it be ratified in heaven. **Amen.**

Methodist Covenant Prayer (of surrender)

I am no longer my own but yours.
Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will;
put me to doing, put me to suffering;
let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,
exalted for you, or brought low for you;
let me be full, let me be empty,
let me have all things, let me have nothing:
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal.
And now, glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours. And the covenant now made on earth, let
it be ratified in heaven. **Amen.**