



Sunday, Oct. 16, 2011: Character of Christian Citizen, Part 2

Scripture: Phil. 2:12-18

Speaker: Scott Masson

Sermon Notes:

1. Everything about Jesus' life challenges our modern notion of celebrity.
2. God transformed what the world only perceives as shame, weakness, folly, condemnation, sin, and death into glory, strength, wisdom, acquittal, righteousness, and life (cf. 1 Cor. 1 26-30).
3. All these have become ours when we are in Christ. (Rom. 8: 1-11). They are attained by the Spirit, not by the flesh.
4. Our life in Christ has implications for our minds, our spirits, and our behavior. Our life in Christ is even hidden from us (Colossians 3:1-4). We need to look to Him to see it.
5. The Holy Spirit indwells us, freeing us from the grip of sin; cleansing us from the pollution of sin; and alleviating the sense of guilt of sin.
6. We are a kingdom of priests, and every vocation can be pursued for the glory of God.
7. The cross is the ultimate expression of weakness (seen from the world's perspective), by which God redeems and renews His creation. As such it is our glory.
8. In every action, there are two parts: the intention to do it, and the power to do it; Paul attributes both to God alone (cf. v. 13).
9. It is the ultimate blow to false human pride to know that we can do nothing to please God apart from His grace, i.e. His effectual presence in our lives.
10. Even our desire to serve God is not our own: it is prompted by God. This does not deny us our humanity. In following Christ we find our true humanity.
11. Human responsibility is taught in Scripture as complimentary to God's sovereignty.
12. We find our true humanity in obeying God's commands and following Jesus' human example.
13. If our will and actions are guided by God, then even in our work and callings God is bringing these areas of endeavour under His reign.
14. We have no excuse for grumbling or questioning (verse 14).
15. God's strength is made perfect in our weakness. (2 Cor. 12:9). The affliction we suffer is not a contradiction of His love, it is a sign that we are His true children.
16. Humble circumstances are for our good and God's glory.
17. Paul knew that he was blessed even though he was a prisoner of Rome.
18. Unconfessed sin may lead to complaining as it makes us rebellious against the circumstances God brings into our lives.
19. We want to hold fast to the word of truth that we may rejoice in the fruit of God's work (verse 16).
20. The prosperity gospel is fraudulent, and it is utterly impotent to equip us for life in the real world.
21. The worst kind of trial is no trial; trials tell us that our faith is alive and that God is working on us.

Application Questions

1. How was Jesus' life the opposite of a celebrity, a) during His ministry and b) during the last week of His life?
2. Compare and contrast the concept of celebrity in our day with Paul's reference to "shining as stars" in Philippians 2:15.
3. How does God's operation confound human standards of success? See 1 Corinthians 1:27-30.
4. Read Philippians 2:12-13. How much does God leave to man, and how much is God's work?
5. Do we really believe that God's intentionality and power are at work in our lives, or do we hold onto false pride in ourselves?
6. Explore the purposes and power of God at work in the lives of Joseph and David.
7. Look back on your life and identify examples where God was guiding, empowering and working through you.
8. Why is the prosperity gospel fraudulent? What is the benefit of real world trial in our lives?