

Sunday 24th May – What is in your hand?

Introduction

Over the last few weeks, we have been looking at adopting a heavenly perspective. So we have walked through some of the main points in the book of Ephesians and have looked to see our perspective raised and as a result our expectation of the possibilities that are ours in Christ.

Today I want to take a little side-step from the book of Ephesians and look at a couple of stories in the New Testament that will help us to apply what we were learning about last week.

Ephesians 3:20-21 - Paul describes God doing more than we can ask, think, or imagine according to His power that is at work within us.

This is key, this is a huge piece of revelation – God is going to do something amazing through the church in the power of the Holy Spirit.

We want to be able to take up our roles within this season to see the kingdom of God extend. To see the life of the Holy Spirit flow out from us.

Chapter 4 of Ephesians takes up the practical application of the heavenly perspective that Paul has been sharing insight into in the first 3 chapters. In Chapter 4, Paul shares a revelation of the church as the body of Christ. Paul obviously emphasises this unity, but there is another point. All of us playing all of our part in being Jesus' ambassadors in this world.

John 1:14 – the word became flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus is now being revealed in and through the life of the people of God. Through this one new man that we are looking at.

This is what we are going to look at. Some practical points about how we can walk in being

So I want to share three accounts, real stories that will help us understand.

Story 1:

I was travelling somewhere and due to meet someone. As I was nearing my destination, I felt the prompt of the Holy Spirit to give the person I was meeting who was taking me to where I was staying, the money in my wallet.

To my shame I allowed the business of my arrival and some nerves to stop me giving to the person. That evening I repented. The Lord spoke to me. What you missed out on is being involved in a flow of blessing from me to someone else. You see James I said it is far better to give than to receive.

I suddenly remembered in giving, I got to be involved in the God's work, and that's why it was more blessed to give than to receive. (Acts 20:35)

We know that if we sow, we shall reap, but the reaping is not just so that I get blessed, the reaping is seeing kingdom fruit.

Like the kingdom sower in the parable – let's just continue to sow the word, resurrection life and power, kindness etc in the Holy Spirit.

Story 2:

Matthew 14:13-21 – the feeding of the 5 thousand

Here we see Jesus followed by people wanting to hear him speak. Then they are hungry. He tells the disciples that they are to give them something to Eat. (verse 16). The disciples said that there was only a few loaves and fish, they thought it was insufficient for the enormity of the task in hand. Jesus said, 'bring them to me' and then prayed over it and the disciples then saw a miracle in their own hands as they delivered the bread and fish out to the thousands gathered. There were even 12 basket loads left over after everyone had eaten sufficiently.

This is amazing because Jesus involved the disciples in a miracle. He got them to see that the way they were to be involved was to give him what they had, and then let him use it in their own hands for multiplication.

What is in your hand today to be used by God?

It may seem ordinary to you, it may seem nothing to you, but God will still use it. In the hands of Jesus there is increase and power.

Jesus took a packed lunch and fed thousands with it.

God will use what you have in your hands. What do you have that God can use to extend his kingdom through you, to work a miracle?

Know that Matthew 6:33 is true that if we seek first **his Kingdom** he will give us everything we need.

God gives seed to the sower (2 Corinthians 9:10)

Story 3:

Acts 3:1-9 Peter and John meeting the man at the gate beautiful and bring healing to Him. Another miracle.

The Holy Spirit has been poured out and now the disciples are walking around with a freshness of mission and power.

What I want to point out here is that you have more than you think you do as a Christian.

Peter and John said that they did not have money for the beggar. They could not meet his immediate need, but they did have an answer within them, for they were filled with the Holy Spirit. They were able to see the power of God reach to this man. It was a miracle that shocked the world, it was a miracle that made an impact because this man was a permanent fixture of the temple. His age seems to preclude him in people's thinking from one who deserved to be a recipient of a miracle.

He had gone to the temple at the hour of prayer because there were many people there, it made economic sense to a beggar.

He was outside the temple, but it did not over-flow with resurrection life that was so needed so that his life could be restored.

What Peter and John did bring to him was of greater measure than silver and gold. He was now restored in body and able to work and enjoy life.

He also clung to Peter and John – the implication is that he too would become a disciple (although it does not specifically say so.)

Peter even goes onto preach about the restoration of all things through Jesus to the crowds that have witnessed this miracle. He links the restoration of all things to this miracle as if to say this is what it looks like in each life that meets me through you – there can be life from death.

As believers, full of the Holy Spirit we do have more than we think we do.

We can say with Peter, what I do have I give to you... in the name of Jesus...

Greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4)

- Peter and John were going about their ordinary routine - **interruptible**
- Peter and John had revelation of who they were and what God would have them say/do – **divine confidence**
- Peter and John took a step of faith – **boldness and obedience**
- Peter offered what they had to someone who needed to meet Jesus. - **Gave**

So 3 stories today to help us apply the truth that we are raised up to be a blessing. 3 applications that help us to walk into seeing the flow of blessing move from us to those around us:

1. Being a sower of the good things God has done in you and for you, involves you in God's work. That is a blessed situation
2. Bring what you have to Jesus and he will increase it. However small. Let Him use it for His glory
3. Know that what you have by the Holy Spirit is great – what you do have is of greater value than the world can offer

Challenge: take a step of faith today to be used by God in His kingdom advance.