



NEW YEAR SERMON

Sunday 27th December AM

INTRODUCTION

- We trust you had a wonderful Christmas
- The miracle of Christmas . . . that GOD so loved the world He sent His only Son
- Now we approach the end of one year . . . and we contemplate the start of a new one!
- Q. Where did the year go?
- Q. How did the year go? (spiritually)
 - Are pleased with your efforts?
 - Were you seeking GOD?

Did Matthew 6:33 typify your year . . . **But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you**

- Did your faith grow stronger?
- Did you develop some good habits?
- Did your priorities change toward things of the LORD?
- If you answered negatively to some . . . you're not alone!
- If you answered positively to some . . . good for you!
 - How often were you serving the LORD?

What does the Bible tell us about this . . . what does Christ expect of us in relation to this?

GOD USES ORDINARY PEOPLE to ACCOMPLISH HIS GREAT WORK!

GOD GIVES RESPONSIBILITY!

NOT IMMEDIATELY GIVEN THE KEYS TO THE KINGDOM

MUCH TO LEARN . . . MUCH TO DO . . . MANY EXPECTATIONS

To serve GOD and to His work we are going to need to also work on ourselves

- Humility
- A servant-like attitude
- Faithfulness
- Diligence
- Discipline
- Determination
- Joy

IN ADDITION . . . you will need the ability and skill . . . but YOU WONT have that immediately

Competence is gained through various ways

- Obedience . . . we move quicker when we are obedient to GOD
- Submission . . . we gain more when we are submitted to GOD
- Tutored . . . usually someone else is going to have to show the way
- Personal trials . . . sometimes our own person trials are our teacher
- Hard work . . . just plain hard work and taking on tasks you didn't want

You are going to have to start . . . at the bottom!

PARALLEL . . . YOU HAVE TO BE THAT LITTLE CHILD THAT BEGS THE PARENT TO DEATH TO LET THEM HELP!

- Have you ever tried WORKING when there is a 5 year old around!
 - Try changing the oil in the car!
 - Try painting the house!
 - Try chopping wood!
 - Try planting out seedlings!
- You may your special tactics to combat that . . .
 - I'm almost finished!
 - You'd be a big help if you just stand over there!
 - It would be really helpful if you just pick up the things I drop!
- But don't reject their enthusiasm
- Chances are . . . it will be short lived
- Yes . . . you will be doing most of it yourself
 - It is really you turning the spanner
 - It is really you moving the brush
 - It is really you carrying all the weight
- Yes . . . *you could have completed the work in half the time!*
- But don't complain . . . in fact give re-assurance
- And the child will proudly tell everyone "look what I did!"

THE BOTTOM LINE . . . THE CHILD IS BUILDING A WORK ETHIC

- Even if it seems a hindrance . . . slows you down
- Each little venture . . . is building CONFIDENCE

CONSIDER THAT FROM A SPIRITUAL POINT OF VIEW

- You can't tell me GOD couldn't do everything Himself . . . in fact
 - He could do it in a fraction of the time
 - He could do it with less grief
 - He could do it with more precision
- But from the very beginning, GOD has desired to give the work to His people

ADAM: GOD gave Adam responsibility to perform tasks for Him in the Garden of Eden

Genesis 2:15

¹⁵ Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it

- Adam had the an attention span problem
- He could not have been paying that much attention
- By the next chapter it is all unravelling

Genesis 3:22-23

²² Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"— ²³ therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken

Was Adam a failure?

- He just had to learn the way
- Consider young people . . . there is the Lord's will which they may choose to ignore . . . but that doesn't mean they cannot come back from there
- And as far as we know Adam and Eve continued on
- Fortunately Adam didn't have an ego problem . . . being cast out might have dented his ego
- One of the major reasons we don't put ourselves forward to work for GOD
 - a) We don't want to fail
 - b) The second is we doubt that we are going to be much help
- We figure that we might be more of a hindrance than a help!
- BUT GOD HAS BEEN DISHING OUT WORK TO THE FAITHFUL FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS . . . HE IS GOING TO FIND SOMEONE
 - There was an Ark to build (Noah)
 - There was an Egyptian king to serve(Joseph)
 - There was a nation that had to be rescued(Moses)
 - There was a Tabernacle to build(Bezalel)
 - There were giants to defeat and a people to unite(David)
 - There was a Temple to build(Solomon)
 - There were lions to tame and a Babylonian king to serve(Daniel)
 - There were city walls to rebuild(Nehemiah)
 - There were unpopular messages to share(all the prophets)

The Heart of the Matter: I am not a Daniel or a Joseph!
So I am not going to be able to do much

But we are commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ
continue to do the works He did!

John 14:12-14

¹² "I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. ¹³ You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. ¹⁴ Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!

These words are as perplexing as they are inspirational

1. They include every believer!

IOW . . . this is 'normal' Christianity

2. He expects us to do the same works He did

Don't think miracles!

It is unlikely anyone will be walking on water anytime soon

So what similar work can we do?

Note: Everything Christ did pointed the observer to GOD . . . since Jesus is GOD . . . it confirmed His deity . . . His power . . . His love . . . His compassion

IOW . . . we must produce works that point people to Jesus Christ

John 10:25 **The works that I do in My Father's name bear witness about Me**

a) Works that lead people to faith in GOD

Encourage . . . exhort . . . to build up

b) Works that display a trustworthiness in Christ

By example . . . others can see you have ultimate trust in GOD and Christ

c) Works that draw attention to the Glory of GOD

Giving instruction . . . teaching a lesson

d) Works that draw attention to the reality of a New Life in Him

Getting alongside and using own personal victories over sin

3. He expects us to be doing even greater works than He did!

Not 'more miraculous'

But it does imply greater works are possible . . . how is that possible?

Jesus sent us . . . the Holy Spirit . . . John 14:26

²⁶But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you.

- It will be the Holy Spirit convicting sinners to receive Christ
- It will be the Holy Spirit convicting believers to areas of need

The greatest ingredient at all that GOD is looking for . . . CHRISTLIKENESS

SO WHY DOES THE LORD NEED US?

Because we are 'Kingdom Partners'

- And as a parent does with a child . . . GOD welcomes us as partners in this work . . . no matter how poor our performance might be at the start
- Even if you think you are a hindrance
 - Provided your heart truly desires to please Him
 - Provided you're passionate about His work
 - Provided you stay connected to Him
- I think you've the job!

BUT YOU HAVE TO START SOMEWHERE

- Look around!
- The kitchen
- Cleaning
- Children's ministry
- THBC
- Music
- Visiting a rest home

All valid and valuable contributions

- Make 2016 a year to remember . . . that was the year that I really began to step up . . . I took more responsibility on that year than I ever had . . . I found more and more things to do for my LORD