

Small Group Notes.15.1.17

Reading: John 1:29-42

Welcome: What is your favourite hymn?

Sermon Outline.

When you come to church, what are you looking for? What do you want?

Time and space out of daily life? A thought provoking sermon, something to think about?

Good hymns? (Though opinions will differ on what this might mean!) Space to pray and be with God? Community? Or is it all of these or something else entirely?

We live in a 24 hour society, most things are available, when we want them.

This trend has not escaped the church. People shop around to find a church they like. Of course we all have our own preferences but we do need to be careful that we don't treat church like a shop, where we can come and get what we want, enjoy ourselves and leave again. .

What if Jesus asked you the same questions, Imagine he is standing asking you "What are you looking for?", "Why have you come to me, what do you want"

The big difference between church and any other organisation is that church is where we encounter Jesus. We can encounter God all around us, but when we come together for worship, we come specifically to encounter Jesus through the word, the communion and exploring our faith.

The reading speaks to us about the start of Jesus' ministry, when John points Him out as the Messiah, two disciples start to follow Him and Jesus asks them what they want. They can't answer, perhaps because they couldn't find the words. Maybe we would be the same but that's ok because He knows what our hearts are longing for. He invited them and he invites us with the words "Come and see"

The men spend time with Jesus and by the end of it, they know that they have found what they are looking for but what they hadn't realised was that Jesus was also looking for something. He was looking for disciples who would follow Him, serve God and live Gods will in their lives. Encountering Jesus for these men was life changing and gave their lives new purpose.

In the same way, coming to church on a Sunday isn't just about receiving and having a satisfying time. It's about allowing ourselves to be transformed so that we can give back to God by becoming His followers in the world .Meeting Jesus transformed Simon, he became a new person, Peter, who went on to become a great disciple. Loving and serving the Lord is at the heart of what we do. What we do inside the church should be about what we do outside too. If what happens in church makes no difference to the way we live our lives then we need to think seriously. We need to open our hearts to become the people that God calls us to be. The prayer for All Saints is that when we gather for worship, we will be transformed and all open our hearts and allow God to transform us and make us new people. May we all truly encounter the saving love of Jesus and be made His disciples, giving back to God and serving Him in the world, and inviting others to "come and see"

Questions of Application

1. What does going to church mean for you?
2. Why did you choose All Saints?
3. Which part or parts of a service do you enjoy and how does that help you "Go in peace to love and serve the Lord."?
4. How is being a follower of Jesus transforming you and making you a new person?