



followers of Jesus seeking to glorify God

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July 5 Devotional – Pastor Daron Blenkin

Jettaya will be back to start our zoom off with a moment for any small children that will be available watch.

The last devotional that I lead on June 21 we looked at two things regarding Jesus as the high priest: That we can approach the throne of grace with confidence to receive mercy and grace (Heb 4:16) and we are part of a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9). Today I hope we can be further encouraged in living out our faith as we continue to look at what Jesus has completed.

In Matthew 28 - The great commission it says...

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

As a Youth Pastor, a lot of my job can fall under verse 20 ‘teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.’ Teaching the students and walking alongside them as they grow in their faith. To see them claim their faith as their own, is extremely rewarding. But I don’t feel like I am always ‘going’ (verse 19). Instead sometimes I am waiting to see who will come or who will the students bring with them. I, like all of us, are commanded to go. I want to tell you one of the new ways this past year that I have been trying to go to the nations right here around me, on the streets.

I have had the opportunity in the last couple of months to go and help out at the Lethbridge Soup Kitchen. We have gone as a family to serve a long side other volunteers and employees in making and serving a meal to those who need it. Many who attend, live on the streets of Lethbridge. It has been rewarding in many ways: To serve alongside others and get to know them. To see someone with a practical need (like being hungry) and help meet it. It has also give chances for me to interact with people who need to hear about Jesus. Serving at the Lethbridge Soup Kitchen has also given my children a chance to see people who live a very different life than they do.

Part of the mission of the church, according to our confession of faith is that “Jesus teaches that disciples are to love God and neighbors by telling the good news and by doing acts of love and compassion.” (Article 7)

Now I know these last couple of months it has been difficult to go and show love to others and some of our routines for doing this were disrupted. **But how do you like to go and show love to others? Or even what do you dream of doing sometime?**

In Romans 5 it says...

9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him! **10** For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! **11** Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.



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And in 2 Corinthians 5...

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! **18** All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: **19** that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. **20** We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. **21** God made him who had no sin to be sin[b] for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

There are many different forms of reconciliation but here the role of reconciling people who far from God to God, well that's crazy. How do you get so far from God to want to come near Him?

Often, I have found that going on a short mission experience trip you get to do this. But I have always wrestled with doing this at home. Going and talking to people asking if they know about Jesus. Romans 10:14 *How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?*

I mean if someone would directly ask me a question about God or Jesus, I would answer. Or sometimes when I bring God up some ask a question. But to go up to a stranger and say would you like to know more about God!?!

I am always grateful for community and how God can use individuals in a community to shape or encourage others. I have a close friend this past year who was deeply burdened for those with addictions and the tension that is in our community regarding the safe injection site in Lethbridge. He was convicted that people need Jesus to heal from our biggest addiction - sin. He put out a public invite over social media 'Who wants to go share the gospel on the streets at the safe injection site?' I responded 'I'm in.'

I wish I could say I went with him every week but winter came - it's cold. My life is busy - I have children. My wife is important - Friday nights are important. Excuses are easy to come up with. But when covid came and after the first 6-8 weeks our numbers stayed low. So I started going out more regularly. Now to go out on Friday nights to share, has been extremely exciting. I am not that smooth with my answers or delivery of the gospel. But I always have a story to share with my family of how I saw Jesus go before me when I come home.

Over the years, I am always amazed at the stories I get to hear from others of how they are sharing God's love and truths with others. These stories encourage me. I want to encourage you to continue to dream and ask & pray how God wants to continue to use you today. Likely what God prompts you to do will not be the same thing He prompts me to do but we can support one other and encourage one another. You know, be a body of priests together.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. **10** Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.