

Sermon - 2nd Sunday of Easter 12 04 26

Mike

I am not going to be able to top Ros's sermon for last week so I am going low key, and then calling on someone else to add a different dimension to it.

But first, when I read through the bible readings set for today I highlighted some words and phrases that jumped out at me.

Did anyone else get any flashes of inspiration? Anything that immediately connected?

Mine were **Joy**, **Peace x 3**, **Glad x 2**,

It was these words identifying emotion that struck me as significant to me at present.

Over Holy week and Easter we go through a rollercoaster of emotions but they are often short lived. It is really difficult to hold on to the feelings, particularly the ones that raise our spirits.

And I understand that not all feelings and emotions can lead us to a high, to a good feeling. We do need the hard uncomfortable feelings as well so that we can experience the textures of feelings that are all a part of living.

Worshipping in church gives us all of these feelings if we fully take part in church life.

But after many years of worshipping week on week it is hard to maintain the feelings of JOY and GLADNESS and sometimes the PEACE that God can give us.

It is all too easy to become jaded and miss especially the joy of what it is to be a believer a follower of Jesus the Christ. How hard it is to maintain the excitement felt by those disciples and apostles, as each in their own way came to the realisation that Jesus was alive. From Mary Magdalene, Peter and John, the others in the room that first time Jesus appeared to them, then Thomas a week later and Saul / Paul years later and all believers ever since.

As I said earlier I am going to get someone else to give us some input on this aspect of wonder.

Rediscovering Wonder – Video by Rob Bell, a theologian, author, church pastor and as we see a film maker with a great style of speaking directly to us in understandable language.

May **we** be wide eyed in wonder and awe. **Amen**

Transcript of the video (beware there is no punctuation)



my three-year-old daughter recently burst through the front door of our house and she ran into the room that I was in and she's waving this new blue plastic shovel and her eyes are as wide as they can get and she's darting back and forth going Dad Dad Dad new blue shovel Dad Dad new blue shovel Dad new blue shovel you can just see all the gears in her mind spinning imagining all of the holes that we're going to dig together in the sand it's like she held in her hand an entryway into a whole new world of possibility and potential all of it

because now she has a new blue plastic shovel there is this Primal sense of wonder and awe in the face of a child when they're fully absorbed in the moment they're they're thrilled with this sense of anticipation just what kind of experiences are right around the corner it is something to behold this pure unbridled Joy life has a way of beating that wonder and awe out of us doesn't it you get betrayed you pour time and energy and money into something and then it blows up in your face it doesn't go the way that you thought it was supposed to to or you lose something or you lose someone and it's as if there's this ever so thin layer of hardness that begins to build around your heart and then you're burned again and it's like that layer gets a little harder and a little thicker and so you roll your eyes more

frequently and you're a bit more cynical and jaded and skeptical and you you you pull back you Retreat I mean why would I stick my neck out if I'm going to get shot at like that again and so ever so gradually with your arms folded over your chest you become one more

spectator I don't believe this is what God intends for us as it's written in the Psalms taste and see that God is good well taste is about the full engagement of our senses taste is about our belief that there's way more going on here than we first realized taste is about our flesh and BL blood encounters with the Divine in people and places and

events taste is about your awareness that God is as close and near as your breath Jesus invites us to this taste to experience the new thing that God is doing in the world and he says that to experience this you must become like a child now there's a distinction to be made here childlike is much different than childish childish is essentially a posture of the heart it is a hardness it is a refusal it is the resistance of

that which isn't thoroughly familiar childish is The Stomping of the foot the folding of the arms the cynical jaded there's nothing new here but childlike childlike is the ways in which you are open to the Wonder and awe that is around us every single moment of every single day now there is a great deal of misunderstanding especially in religious and Faith communities about the very nature of this taste and there are in these days all sorts of very very strange ongoing heated discussions about trying to get the words right as if

Jesus highest intention for us is that we would have correct doctrinal thinking if that's the case then Jesus would have said blessed are those who are more right than everybody else it's one thing to talk about it it's another thing to taste it's one thing to be right it's another thing to be overwhelmed I actually think this is why so many people you hear them using this cliché which is such a cliché that it's become very very true for so many people when they say I am spiritual but not religious I essentially think what

people people are saying is that the very institutions that were supposed to cultivate and nurture this wide-eyed sense of wonder about life in God's good world have failed at some very very profound level essentially becoming so caught up and so deeply deeply obsessed with defending and analyzing and holding everything up to this predetermined set of criteria that they at some deep deep deep level I lost the ability to be surprised to be filled with wonder and

awe it's interesting when Jesus talks about what we would say would be criteria or results or proof or whatever you want to call it what Jesus says is that his followers his people the ones who are open to the new thing that God is doing in the world the ones who have said yes to him and trust him he says you'll know them by their fruit and fruit comes because you have first tasted you have tasted of God's love joy peace and Grace and it transforms you from the inside out into a new kind of person this is the kind of fruit Jesus speaks of perhaps this is why when he speaks to his disciples he says those two words to them follow me it's as if he's calling each of us to return to that childlike like sense of wonder awe and anticipation he reaches deep down there through all those layers of hardness into our heart and says follow me he calls us and confronts us with this invitation to leave behind all of the reasons we have to be jaded and bitter and cynical because let's be honest

what you look for you will find in this world he calls us to leave behind find all of our reasons for folding our arms over our chest and becoming one more spectator and he says come follow me move beyond all that we all want to be successful but what we really want is Wonder and awe that's our real desire Jesus invites us to an experience to a taste of the full vibrant Dynamic electric life of God which he insists as a available to every single one of us right here right now so may you ReDiscover this childlike sense of Discovery and anticipation may you be open to the new thing that God is doing right here right now and may you be wide eyed and filled with wonder and awe

