

HOMILY 15TH NOVEMBER 2020

DOING SOMETHING POSITIVE FOR CHRIST

Gospel Reading - Matthew 25. 14-30

As you study Matthew's Gospel, you come to see that Jesus' Ministry had a prophetic side to it- "prophetic" meaning speaking into the future.

We have an example of this in our Gospel Reading where, for me, Jesus sets out what is going to happen to humanity as it now is at the end of what we call "time". He is saying too that actions have eternal consequences.

Jesus often speaks in a prophetic way by using a parable. A parable is often called an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.

In the Gospel, we learn of three servants who have been told by their Master to look after and grow some of the King's monies while he is away and then what happens to them when they return.

Two of the servants grow the money the King had given them. But the third man has done nothing with the money that was entrusted to him other than burying it. And because he had done this, we are told that the money will go to others who will make proper use of it. The man who buried the money had not proved worthy of his Master's calling.

As far as I can see, the parable is teaching us is that in what we call "time" we always have to be ready to do something for the Risen Christ. As we might say today, doing nothing for Christ is not an option even in the midst of a pandemic. The parable reminds me of one of President Kennedy's famous sayings, " Think not what our country can do for you, but what you can do for our country".

On our faith journeys, we can adapt this saying to read- - Think not what our faith journey can do for us, but what we can do for it.

Perhaps John Wesley had similar thoughts when he wrote this Prayer:

"O Lord, let us not live to be useless, for Christ's sake. Amen".

So we are all to play our parts in continuing to give birth to the Kingdom Jesus taught of and lived out in his life and resurrection.

Many theologians have used much ink interpreting this parable.

Michael Green says this

“When we act faithfully under the responsibilities the Master has entrusted to us, our capacities will grow. If we do nothing with them, our ability to respond and be useful will diminish to vanishing point”.

“Both the five talent man and the two talent man made full and responsible use of what had been entrusted to them. Both received the identical commendation when the master returned: ‘Well done good and faithful Servant! You have been faithful with a few things. I will put you in charges of many things. Come and share your Master’s happiness.’ Both found their opportunities doubled. It is not the quantity of talents that matters, it is how we use them. If we deploy them responsibly, we have the Master’s commendation and his renewed and enlarged commission. It is those who will not try who are condemned”.

Perhaps all that I have been trying to say can be seen in this true story a former neighbour of mine told me.

When my former neighbour left school, he began his working life in a shop and he was told by his boss. “ Nothing is going to happen here unless you sell something” In saying this he meant that the success or failure of the shop depended on all its shop workers doing their utmost to successfully sell the stock on shop’s shelves. So in the same way we are to do all we can to do something positive for Christ. This is a life long challenge and commitment .

Today at our Annual Church Meeting, we review the ups and downs of the past 12 months. But whatever the next 12 months holds in store for us, our overriding target will always be one of continually following Christ.

Amen

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