



DEVOTIONAL

Rejoice

28 June - 4 July 2010

gracepoint

www.gracepoint.co.za

Monday 28 June 2010

The God who seeks the lost

Scripture readings:

Luke 15 vs 1-10

Philippians 2 vs 5-8

The whole story of Scripture is one that speaks of God seeking His people and attempting to bring them back into relationship with Himself. The crux of the Gospel message is that Jesus came and died for our sins; that He gave up everything to come and find those who were lost and separated from God and to bring them back into the arms of the Father.

The parables in Luke 15 give us a glimpse of God's heart for the lost. He seeks each of His precious children with great passion and intensity. He pursues us, patiently and persistently, and He does whatever it takes to rescue us and bring us back to safety... back to Himself. His love for us is so great, His heart aches for us with such passion, that He would, and did, give everything, to find us... and when He does, there is rejoicing in heaven we cannot even comprehend.

May you know today that God delights in you. He loves you so much that He sent His Son to die for you so that you might never have to be lost and separated from Him again. He savours being your father and friend and He takes great joy in your life and His relationship with you. He is so glad that He created you. Let Him lavish His love on you as you rejoice in and all He has done for you.

Zephaniah 3 vs 17:

The LORD your God is mighty in your midst; He will save, He will rejoice over you with singing; He will quiet you with His love; He rejoices over you with joyful shout."

Lost and found

Scripture readings:

Luke 15 vs 11-32

Luke 19 vs 10

Psalms 139 vs 7-12

Psalms 40 vs 1-3

There are different ways of getting lost. Some have never known God's salvation and are lost in their own sin and ignorance – in the darkness of the world – but some who are lost have experienced God's grace... they have been in the light but have decided, by making one big decision or several little, barely noticeable ones, to wander away from the Good Shepherd and they now found themselves far from God with no idea how to get back.

Jesus said that He came to seek and save the lost. He came with the sole purpose of bringing those who are in darkness into light; of bringing those on the outside back in. His amazing grace ensures us that whether we have been in His arms before or not, we are always welcome there.

Some of us are like the younger son in the parable in Luke 15 who have turned our backs on God and are lost in our sin and selfishness. Others, are like the older son, who is consumed by his sense of righteousness and pride... and is also lost. But God's grace is sufficient for all of us. There is no pit too deep, no place too far, no situation too dark, no pride too strong, that God will not seek you out, find you and bring you home if you will just let Him.

He's seeking me... am I seeking Him?

Scripture readings:

Psalm 8 vs 17

Jeremiah 29 vs 13

Matthew 7 vs 7-8

God is not passive. He does not wait for us to go looking for Him. He is actively, purposefully, seeking and pursuing each one of us. This seeking does not cease when we come to know Jesus as our Saviour. In fact, that is just the beginning of the journey. God's love and grace chase after us every day of our lives. He is infinite and longs to show us more of Himself – His character, His nature and His all-consuming love. He is seeking us to give us more of His power and strength, to show us more of His miracles and goodness, to implant His dreams for our lives on our hearts, to transform us more and more into His likeness and to mould us into the people He intends for us to become.

The Scriptures make it clear that God longs for us to seek Him – to actively pursue Him with all that we are, and He promises that those who seek Him will not be disappointed. He is eagerly waiting to show us more, to take us deeper and to do above and beyond all we can ask or imagine. All He asks of us is a desire for Him and a willingness to step out and experience His glory.

God is continually seeking you. So, are you seeking Him?

Thursday 1 July 2010

The call to celebrate

Scripture readings:

Philippians 4 vs 4-8

1 Peter 2 vs 25

“Joy is the serious business of heaven.” – C.S. Lewis

God rejoices in us. The parables of the Lost Sheep, Lost Coin and Lost Son in Luke 15 all end with celebrations. There is deep joy and celebration in the heart of God when His beloved are brought home – when we accept His invitation to be rescued and to receive His love.

While there are great feasts and celebrations taking place in heaven in our honour, those who follow God here on earth sometimes tend to get so bogged down in daily life or become so serious that we don't take time to celebrate and to rejoice – despite the fact that those who know God have plenty about which to be thankful and celebratory.

We can rejoice in all that God has done for us: the amazing acts of grace and salvation and the little ways in which He delights and blesses us daily. We can rejoice in the new life and new chances He has given us and continues to provide for us every day. We can rejoice in the hope we have because we know that our tomorrows are all safely in His hands. We can celebrate because we know that no matter what may befall, He has given us the victory. We can rejoice in the certainty that He is the same; yesterday, today and forever, and that His love has sought us, saved us and will never let us go.

Friday 2 July 2010

Joy – no matter where I am

Scripture readings:

John 15 vs 9-12

Acts 16 vs 24-40

2 Samuel 6 vs 16-23

John 15 vs 11:

“I have told you these things so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.”

Jesus intended for those who follow Him to be identified by the joy. He is the only source of true joy and it is in Him alone that we can truly rejoice and celebrate. He longs to impart His joy to us and to cultivate it in us by His Holy Spirit (see Galatians 5 vs 22).

The joy Jesus gives is not circumstantial or fickle – it is steadfast and eternal and it cannot be dimmed by struggles of the world or shaken by the schemes and threats of the enemy. Paul and Silas knew this well when they sat – shackled – in a cold, dark prison cell singing praises to God. They understood and possessed the joy of their Saviour – joy that did not depend on their current situation. They knew what it meant to have true joy in the hope of Who God is and the certainty that He will not fail or disappoint us.

Today, may you find the joy of God deep inside and let it show. May you let go of all your inhibitions and fears and rejoice in God as David did when he danced before the ark. Do not let anyone hinder you from delighting yourself in the God Who gave everything for you and who is calling you to a great celebration of life and love – day by day and moment by moment.

Saturday 3 July 2010

Cultivating God's heart for the lost

Scripture readings:

Matthew 28 vs 18-20

2 Corinthians 2 vs 14-15

Are you contributing to the celebration in heaven by following Jesus' example and by obeying His command to go and seek the lost? The heart of God's mission and purpose in this world is to find those who are lost – to bring those in the darkness into the light and to bring hope to the desperate and hurting. He is the God who seeks those who need Him. Are you being a bearer of this message of grace? Are you extending His invitation of salvation to those who need it? What are you doing to bring the lost home?

We have been commissioned to tell people the Good News that Jesus has come to find and rescue us, but we are also called to share His message in subtle ways with the attitude of our hearts and the way we live our lives. If we have the joy of Jesus, it will be contagious and it cannot but make an impact on those around us. Do others look at you and see the joy and victory of your Saviour? Are people drawn to Christ by the life you are living and the joy that marks your existence, the hope that marks your living and the peace that permeates your heart?

May God use you today to extend His love and invitation to someone who is lost. May you help them to see that Jesus is seeking them, calling them and eagerly waiting to rescue them and bring them home.