

SERMON NOTES

Sunday 1 October

sunnysidechurch

Stories Jesus Told:

Response and Responsibility

Bible passages: Philippians 2:1-13 and Matthew 21:23-32

Introduction

- Jesus exercised authority
- Challenged by the Leaders
- Juridical parable highlights importance of our response

Aspects of Authority

- From where did John's and Jesus' authority come?
- Leaders denied source of authority from God
- Parable draws on Jewish respect for authority of father and obedience of the child

Context for the listeners

- Different responses marking alternate responsibility
- Father requests help from children
- First son denies father, but later relents to go
 - Sinners who come to accept salvation
- Second son assents to father, but then declines to go.
 - "Whited sepulchres" who pay lip-service only.
- Leaders acknowledge first son did father's will.
- Condemned themselves: they like second son.
 - Obstinacy of leaders in rejecting Jesus and not allowing for change of mind

Context for us

- Is our faith hesitant but obedient? – like first son.
- Is our faith on the service but not realised? – second son.
- Imperative to be "doers of the word, not hearers only"
- Compare Matthew 7:26
 - Belief => Obedience => Belief

- Cycle of transforming our minds (Romans 12:2)

Context for our Community

- Struggles with temptation – seek support and encouragement.
- Challenging Issues which confront society – talk over implications of responding or doing nothing
- Helping a nominal believer fulfil their responsibilities
- Encourage a change of heart and mind where needed.
- Ensure we teach and follow the precepts of the bible, not of the secular world.

Implications for me?

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus", Phil 2:5

- It's alright (and often necessary!) to change our minds.
- Where have I said "yes" to God, but have not put it into effect?
- Where have I said "no" to God but unwillingly responded?
- Seek God's forgiveness on both counts

Conclusion

What message do we send to the world about God by our response to his call? Do we demonstrate that our faith is life-changing, or are we tempted to deny him when the conversation gets "personal"?

Some questions for discussion

1. What might God be calling us to do, either as individuals or as church, but we have yet to say "yes" in response?
2. How can I enliven my spiritual life so that my response in worship is vibrant and compelling.
3. If there were a third son in the story would he have learnt from his brothers and both assented to his father's request and went out to the vineyard?
4. Where are the Christian examples which encourage us.

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