

Coach House Church BEACONS

GOD WANTS TO USE ME

31ST AUGUST 2020

The book of Romans in chapter 12 tells us to 'be honest in the evaluation of ourselves, measuring ourselves by the faith God has given us'

If you have listened to any of my previous beacons, you will know that this is a reference verse I use a lot, but this is because it is something I have to constantly remind myself of over and over again.

What am I doing and why am I doing it?

Am I acting in line with God's will for my life, or am I convincing myself that the things that I busy myself with, well, they must be God's will mustn't they?

My name is Andy and I have the pastoral role at the Coach House Church. One of my key objectives is to make sure that I am in a position to be able to respond to people, not just with my time, but also with the correct interventions and encouragements.

To do this, I have to be able to make sure that my spiritual health is all that it can be – otherwise my wisdom is likely to come from myself rather than the required words and actions of the holy Spirit acting through me.

Now I know that the God is quite capable of doing stuff without me, but this is rather the point of this short encouragement.

God wants to use me.

He doesn't particularly need me, but He does want to use me, and for that matter, you.

Church is such a wonderful concept when you think about it.

Now, before we go off on grumbles and gripes about what we like and don't like about the church as we see it, or the hurts or joys we have experienced in the churches we attend – or even the church we don't attend because of what we see and associate it with.

I am talking about Gods concept of church, not what we have made it.

God's view of 'church' has always been the same. In fact it is best described as a 'body of believers', in which case the church isn't something that was created during the time of the book of Acts, where we find the descriptive 'Ekklesia' from which we form the word church. Yes Ekklesia means a body of believers, or 'those who gathered together out of something else', but then this would be also true of Old Testament believers, whose faith in God was at such a level that, for instance, men of faith would leave their families and homeland and set off on a journey which they did not know the end of (in the case of Abraham) or spend 100 years building a boat, facing the ridicule of all the townsfolk around (in the case of Noah) . They proved themselves faithful to God and obedient to levels we would be hard pressed to attain – and they did it without the saving grace of Jesus. God chose to set people apart, in the Old Testament, The Israelites are known as 'Gods chosen people' in order that others would see and be drawn to their creator – you see God created all mankind, but He chose His people to reflect His character and to shine like beacons in a fallen, sinful world.

Fast forward a few thousand years, and the church today has the same responsibility.... It was as it has always been. The biggest difference for us, is that we can see how God provided Jesus to be everything that we are not, and in accepting the sacrifice of Jesus on our behalf, we are welcomed into Gods church – this great body of believers.

So why is church so beneficial to us?

Well for one, we have the benefit of seeing that the people who make up Gods church are a right mixed bag! But, we all have some things in common. None of us got in here by our own merit.

This acts as a deflator for big egos, a leveller for the articulate orator and a leg up for the most humble. Have a read of Matthew 5 and Jesus's words to his followers on the mount of Olives. It is known sometimes as the Beattitudes – which beautifully becomes Be Attitudes – the attitudes that we should have (but often do not!).

Now if all church folk had these attitudes, there wouldn't be much to complain about would there, and the beauty of gods concept would be there for all to see Sadly, we can get so caught up in doing the stuff we think makes church work, that we fail to see that we can be guilty of alienating people, rather than encouraging them.

Being honest with ourselves and evaluating ourselves, as we are urged to do, will show us that we cannot put ourselves or elevate ourselves beyond what we really are. Sin doesn't have levels and divisions of badness. Sin is anything which is disobedient to God, therefore scripture is correct when it tells us that ALL have sinned and fallen short of God's standard. It is what it is and we are all guilty – except that inclusion in Gods church, means that we have said sorry and have been welcomed in because of the provision God made in Jesus. Our acceptance of Jesus death and resurrection means that we are covered. We can't meet the standard – but Jesus did and we are, the bible tells us, hidden in Him.

I have been listening to the UCCF broadcasts this week from their online Forum week. It has been refreshing to see the care and love that the UCCF leadership team have for their workers. The theme this week has been how to look after each other in uncertain times.

One of the descriptions of how God chooses to use us, has struck a chord with me. We know that God doesn't need us to accomplish his purposes but we also have to accept that He chooses to use us. Now this may seem hard to grasp, but this illustration gives a clear understanding of how it works.

It is like a parent baking a cake, and allowing their child to help with the baking. Now they know what they are doing, they don't need the childs help, but, they want to encourage the child to help even though they know it will now take a

whole lot longer, will be a whole lot messier, because the satisfaction of seeing the child grow in experience and be part of the process is worth it.

Do you see how things works for us?

Yes, by involving us in God's work and processes, it may be messier and involve more time, but the end result is far more satisfactory.

We are involved in Kingdom life, that means we bring something of Gods kingdom of the future, into the present now. It is a shadow of what is to come, but it is a taste also of what God has in store for His creation.

This concept of involvement and fellowship does us good. The concept of church is a good thing.

When it fails, it is usually because we are failing in it. Failing to do the right things and probably being guilty of doing to much of what we think needs doing.

God accepts all of these risks with us. He knows what He is doing with us, and in all probability, it takes longer to get us to where we should be because we wander off the script.

As a leader, I sometimes feel that I need to be seen as resilient and strong, especially in the times that we find ourselves in now. I can be guilty of thinking that I need to be strong for people , that I can carry them because I am being resilient. Actually, God uses me in my weakness, and it is to Him that I have to point in order to not let my failings be your failings. God does the carrying - not me!

Let us resolve to get closer to God, to pray more, read more and live more for Him.

He wants to use you, He chooses to use you and when we allow this to happen – church is a great place to be, as it truly becomes a refuge, a place of safety and welcome, a place where the Glory of God is evident.



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