



THE CHURCH AT ELLERSLIE
SUNDAY SERMON NOTES

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THE MARVEL OF THE MUNDANE

A Study in God's Method for Showcasing Power

A Two Part Series



SESSION ONE:

The Unremarkable

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SESSION ONE

THE UNREMARKABLE

The Question

Eric, do you believe the Church at Ellerslie is functioning in a full-scale Biblical pattern of Truth, Love, Obedience, Holiness, and Holy-Spirit Power?

My Answer

Um, no.

The Follow-up Question

Well, Eric, what do you plan on doing about this awful discrepancy?

My Answer

I'm going to preach this message.

A Father and a Child

Hudson,

This command I leave with you. Take all of my future books, sermons, teachings, radio interviews, and international speaking engagements, and fulfill these projects in the same way that you know I would have fulfilled them. If you love me, obey this command.

Love,

Your Daddy

The Commission Is Clear

But, a father does not overlook the preparation

Hudson,

To fulfill this high calling I have left you with a Helper. Right now you are ten years old and unready for this challenge. But, if you heed my Helper's voice and obey Him in all matters, He will groom you to carry weights that currently you can't carry. Prove faithful in these small, mundane exercises of your soul, and you will be prepared to do things that will demonstrate the supernatural power of Jehovah.

Love,

Your Daddy

Growth is as Growth is

It is marked by stages, gradients, and degrees

Introducing the Mundane

the unexciting, the uninteresting, the uneventful, the unvarying, the unremarkable, the routine, the ordinary, the everyday

The Mundane

The Thoroughfare for God's Greatest Work

Understanding the Nature of His Working

It's in and through the mundane that God reveals His power. It's a purposeful limitation. Many of us feel the necessity to prove God in the glamorous, when God has chosen the humble means through which to reveal His glory.

His Marvelous Arrival

Almighty God, the big, the inexpressible, the vast, the sovereign

- chooses a young girl
- chooses a carpenter of Nazareth

- chooses to be born a baby
- chooses to be born in adversity
- chooses to be laid in a feeding trough
- chooses to be witnessed by lowly shepherds

What a strange way to do Heaven's work!

His Marvelous Victory

Almighty God, the big, the inexpressible, the vast, the sovereign

- chooses to come to this earth as a man. He could have come as a Consuming Fire or a Roaring Tsunami. But He chose to come as a Servant unto all.
- He didn't conquer sin and death the way we would have envisioned. He didn't crush the head of the Serpent in the manner that humanity would choose.
- He chose the avenue of betrayal, scourging, mockery, and abandonment as His means of working.
- He chose the way of the lowly.
- He chose to identify with the criminal, not to identify with the popular.
- He chose silence. He chose meekness. He chose death, even death on a cross.

What a strange way to do Heaven's work!

But, is it Really a Strange Way?

Or is it THE WAY

The Itch for the Wow

We so want the big thing that we forsake the small things

God Works Through the Small

But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty . . .

1 Corinthians 1:27

Don't Miss Jesus While Looking for the Wow

The Scribes and Pharisees were looking for the Wow of the Messiah and ended up being the ringleaders in killing the very Messiah they were waiting for.

The Seven Principles of Heaven's Work (the work of Jesus, the work of Grace)

1. It's humble in its method
2. It's often understated in its manner
3. It's easy to be overlooked
4. It's always in agreement with His nature (without sin and guile)
5. It's often silent in its moment of greatest triumph
6. It's often dismissed, mocked, and diminished by those looking for a "Wow" - a different, more glittering Messiah
7. Yet, nonetheless, it's obvious to the God-awakened observer that truly this was the work of God

The Return of Power

It hinges on our readiness to let the mundane aspects of life declare His Glory

- We want to raise dead men to life, but are we first willing to take every thought captive to the will of Christ Jesus?
- We want to throw mountains into the midst of the sea, but are we first willing to love our brother the way Christ loves our brother?
- We want to walk on water, but are we first willing to forgive our father for his unkind actions?

The Kingdom of Heaven is Like This . . .

*First prove faithful with a little and
then I will entrust you with more*

OR

*First exercise my grace in the mundane aspects of your life
and then even greater grace will be supplied*

How God Makes the Mundane Marvelous

Consider His Wonders?

- To Make a Helper for Adam?
- To Reveal Himself to Moses?
- To Part a Red Sea?
- To Knock out a Giant?
- To Feed Five Thousand?
- To Heal the Man Sick with the Palsy?
- To Heal the Blind Man?

God Uses The Mundane

- A Rib
- A Bush
- Winds
- A Smooth Stone
- Fishes and Loaves
- Four Men
- Spittle and Dirt

The Revelation of His Glory

- The Word of God in Text (men carried along by the Holy Spirit)
- The Word of God in Person (Mary's womb)
- The Word of God in and through the Church (our humble bodies, our humble lips, our humble lives)

God Uses Mundane Tools

And, um, we are those mundane tools

We are His chosen tools by which He accomplishes His work in this world . . .

- To speak the Truth
- To teach the Bible
- To preach the Gospel
- To live out and showcase the power of Redemptive Grace
- To pray until the breaking of day
- And to be His hands and feet unto the orphans, widows, poor, lost, and dying

Could He Do it Without Mundane Tools?

Of Course. But, in His manifold wisdom, He has seen fit to showcase His glory through weak and foolish things. Our God has chosen to do this. Why must we argue? He knows what He is doing.

For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

The Tools of Jehovah

- Mundane Tools (us)
- Mundane Circumstances

So, What About the Wow?

SESSION TWO

THE WOW

So, What About the Wow?

When the Church is the Church . . .

Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

Luke 10:19

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believes on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

John 14:12

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Mark 16:17-19

The Redeemed of the Lord

The water-walking, mountain-moving, storm-calming, body-transporting, bread-multiplying, dead-raising, treasure of Jehovah

David and the Wow

- Step One: Deep humility, life in the mundane work of grace
- Step Two: Deep humility, life in the mundane work of grace
- Step Three: Deep humility, life in the mundane work of grace
- Step Four, Five, Six, and Seven: Deep humility, life in the mundane work of grace
- Step Eight: The Wow

Hudson's Yearning . . .

If I really am the son of Eric Ludy, and it's true that I have the DNA for full and complete manhood, then . . .

I should be 6'1", I should be at least 170 pounds, I should be able to get married and have kids, I should be able to drive a car, I should be able to drive the riding lawn mower, I should be able to climb up on the roof and clear out the gutters, I should be able to get on a plane all by myself and fly around the world, I should be able to define my own schedule, I should be able to preach the sermon this upcoming Sunday, I should be able to take over at Ellerslie and run it.

The Yearning for Growth

If we really are the Church of Jesus Christ, then . . .

We should be greeting each other with a holy kiss, speaking in tongues, interpreting tongues, despising not prophecy, all coming to the service with a song, a hymn, or a spiritual song, functioning in the gifts of the Spirit, demonstrating the fruits of the Spirit, commanding lame people to walk, blind people to see, dead people to come forth from their graves, casting out demons, drinking poison unaffected, walking on water, commanding mountains to be thrown into the sea, multiplying fishes and loaves of bread and feeding thousands, calming winds and waves, and body transporting from here to there.

Normal Child Growth

- A six week old child can smile
- An eight week old child can sleep through the night
- A five to six month old child can begin to eat solids
- A six to twelve month old child can crawl
- A ten to twelve month old child can toddle
- A one year old child can talk in fragmented words
- A two year old child can talk in partial sentences

Stunted Child Growth

- A child born prematurely
- A child born with fetal alcohol syndrome
- A child shaken
- A child born without certain limbs
- A child born with mental retardation
- A child born with cerebral palsy
- A child born with Down's Syndrome

These Children Don't Fit the "Normal Child Growth" Chart

They are equally as valuable as a child without a stunting, but it is to be understood that such children will face certain developmental delays

The Developmentally Delayed

If a child is born with retardation, you do not panic when at six weeks he doesn't smile. You understand that his smile may emerge a bit later. He may not be crawling at the normal time, nor walking at the expected month. His delay does not show a lack of development, but merely a slower development.

We are the Developmentally Delayed

The Story of the Modern Believer

Many of us have only known abuses of power. Our constructs of the Holy Spirit are warped. Our notion of "tongues" is deranged, fleshly, artificial, and awkward. The idea of "hearing the voice of God" is untempered and unchecked, and we are unable to discern between the voice of God, the voice of the Flesh, and the voice of the Devil. The concept of Divine Healing is scary and weird to some of us, while to others it is embraced blindly without full understanding or restraint of Scripture. The ideas of "signs and wonders" have split the Body of Christ and we are "Stunted Children" that have suffered because of it. We have those who run after the "power" and accept counterfeit and fleshly substitutes to the real thing, and those who deny that power was ever intended by God to even be given to the Church.

Would you blame us if we were a little gun-shy on these issues?

So, How Do We Become an Empowered Church Once Again?

We Must Prove Faithful with Little

Then we will be entrusted with more!

We Must Live Large in the Mundane Moments

- When no one is looking
- When no one will ever know
- When no one can applaud us
- When it doesn't seem very impressive or grand
- When the "Wow" seems so very far away
- We must live large in such moments, as if the entire world hinged on our obedience in that singular moment

Growth is as Growth is

It is marked by stages, gradients, and degrees

God is Proving us on the Lion and the Bear

We are often staring ahead wanting to tackle Goliath

A Change in Perspective

In God's Economy, The "Mundane" is actually "Marvelous"

Normative

That which is normal. That which is always. That which is the everyday.

- It is normative to boat across water and not walk across water.
- It is normative to feed one person with a few loaves and fishes and not five thousand people
- It is normative that when people die, they, um, just die
- It is normative to travel from here to there and not be body transported from here to there

- It is normal to hike over mountains and not pick them up and throw them into the midst of the sea

The Normal Christian

- One who, when he needs to cross water, whether in a boat or walking on it, sings songs of praise the entire time, rapturously in love with his Redeemer.
- One who, when it comes to eating, shows the honorable behavior of heaven in his eating, whether he is simply eating a meal, giving his meal away, or praying over the meal to see it multiplied to feed five thousand.
- One utterly convinced that Jesus is the resurrection and the life and that Death has no sting for those clothed in Christ Jesus. He shrugs his shoulders at death, for his vision is far beyond this temporal vapor - he is caught up in a life that is eternal, not merely measured by the stretch of time this mortal body can last.
- One who goes from here to there with the love of Jesus radiating from his face, the Gospel emanating from his life, and the mercies of Jehovah gushing from his soul. Whether he is “body transported” or he needs to walk every inch of the territory between here and there in the hot baking sun - no matter, for every inch between here and there will see and know Jesus better if he needs to pass through it.
- One who is not intimidated by mountains. One convinced that mountains won’t stop his forward progression. And whether that be due to the buoying grace that God supplies for the mountain climb, or the mighty power of grace that picks up the mountain and heaves it into the sea, the Normal Christian walks forward knowing he will surely make it.

The Ellerslie Church and the Wow

- Step One: Deep humility, life in the mundane work of grace
- Step Two: Deep humility, life in the mundane work of grace
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