

How Do We Serve Christ?

Sermon Notes for Nov 5, 2017 at Brentwood – Celebrating the Lord's Supper

Ps 43 (504) & Matthew 23:1-12 (903)



**The greatest among you will be your servant.
(Matt 23:11)**

Provocative Ponderings that Call Forth Our Potential in Christ

- It's a pretty clear teaching – offered to his closest friends near the end of his time with us in human flesh, full, as John's gospel says, of grace and truth – if you want to follow me, to work with me in and for the Commonwealth of God, with a focus on doing justice, being kind, and walking humbly with our God, then live a life of service – not a life of superiority, but a life of service - service to God by serving each other – three dimensions to that service, as I have thought through it this week – devotion, disruption, and delight – let's take a brief look at each one
- **Devotion** – it's important to begin with the devotion of God to the original intent for the cosmos, which includes intimate friendship with human beings as they tend the garden of creation – this divine devotion to us is the foundation of everything – and God's devoted resilience in calling us home to this kind of authenticity invites to contribute to this mission out of gratitude – that is the fundamental form of our devotion – gratitude for God's steadfast love – flow of Psalm 103 – deeply personal to communal to cosmic
- **Disruption** – look closely at the major figures of the Bible and you will always find God leading them into some kind of disruptive behaviour – Moses throughout the Exodus experience, not only with Egypt, but also with the Israelites as they migrate to the promised land – Elijah in his challenges to worshipping false gods during the reign of Ahab, who accused Elijah of being “a troubler of Israel” – these are the two figures who appear with Jesus at the Transfiguration – identifying him with this tradition of divine disruption – and, of course, Jesus and his disciples disrupt the abuses of imperial Rome and its puppet regimes under Herod and his sons – but it is disruption with a clear purpose – inaugurating and modeling the quality of relationships that God intends for all humanity – justice, kindness, and humility (Micah 6:8)
- **Delight** – another disrupter, the prophet Jeremiah, confronts the powers of his day with the message that God delights in steadfast love, justice, and right relations (Jeremiah 9:24) – the persistent and resilient love of God calls forth justice and right relations in all the earth – this kind of community is the one in which human beings are designed to flourish – anything less is fraught with suffering and misery – it brings dirges and laments to our lips – death dominates the landscape, as it does in so many places of our world – so, says God in the most lovingly insistent tones of voice, “Come home and delight in my abundance yet again, even if you have wasted it previously.” – as in the parable of the prodigal son – a disruptive delight – hard for the returning son to accept and even harder for the faithful son to stomach – but it's God's delight in God's intent – that the key to our service to God, to others, and to ourselves

*Notes for a sermon preached by Brian Fraser,
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So, what are we going to do with this ...

In a few minutes, we will celebrate yet again, as we do on the first Sunday of every month, the Lord's Supper – the most ancient tradition, along with Baptism, of the Christian community – a remembrance of everything God has done for us and the servant attitudes and behaviours through which our redemption was achieved – the menu is simple – bread and juice – it is richly symbolic – the body and blood of Jesus, God's Christ – the One through whom a new humanity is being formed – in a simple, but profound, way, we are being fed by God to serve in grateful and glad response to their grace and generosity – living that way in this world will disrupt your life and the lives of those in your circles of influence – but it is a devoted disruption that brings delight in the service of God and the whole of creation

Your Notes ...