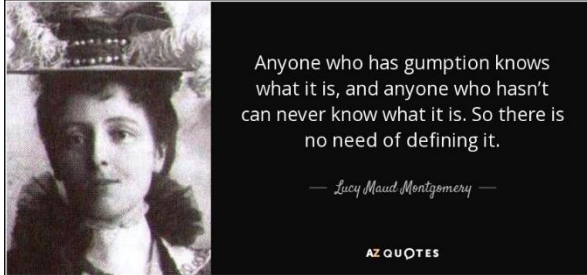


Grace, Gratitude, and Gumption

A Sermon with Gordon Presbyterian Church, Burnaby, BC
Sun, Jan 22, 2017 – Collaborating Churches Pulpit Exchange



Ps 103 and Hebrews 10:22-23

**Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name
(Ps 40:11b)**

Inspiring Ponderings

- Let me tell you a bit about the person who first taught me about gumption – I called her ‘Nana’ – my mother’s mother – emigrated from Scotland in the late-1880s to farm just northwest of Toronto – husband died of a heart attack when he was 40 – left with two small girls to raise on her own – one of her favourite words was “gumption” – points to spirited initiative and resourcefulness – intelligence infused with high energy – earliest uses found in Scottish dialects in the late 1700s – as I continue to try and put the dynamics of the Christian faith into words, this idea of ‘gumption’ keeps coming back to me – the deeper we appreciate how firmly grasped we are by God’s grace and the more broadly we recognize our gratitude for that grace, the more we are free to live with gumption – with the resilience and resourcefulness that comes from being friends with God in Jesus Christ through the continuing work of the Holy Spirit
- This is the resilience and resourcefulness to provoke love and good works in all of our circles of influence – Hebrews is more of a sermon than a letter – it urges its hearers to hold onto the hope of the Gospel with boldness and to let their lives be shaped by the love they have received as a gift – then they will be the agents of the good works that bless God’s beloved creation – then they will be faithful within the Abrahamic covenant – God promising without condition to be our God so we can bless the creation – the best discipline for living this life is to imitate Christ in obedience, faith, hope, love, and endurance – a powerful message to a community experiencing persecution and suffering, likely in the 70s and 80s of the Common Era – this is not a community that enjoys large numbers, or respect, or even acceptance in its society – but it is the community that God has befriended and adopted in Jesus Christ to witness to and work for the completion of the Commonwealth of God inaugurated in Jesus Christ that will fulfill all of God’s promises to creation – to be with God in that witness and work takes gumption.

At this point in our ponderings, then ...

We are nourished to flourish in this God-given gumption, then, as we gather for worship, learning, and fellowship and as we disperse for service wherever God leads us - that mission is what we are trying to strengthen in this new initiative we’re calling the Collaborating Churches of New West and Burnaby – may God bless our collaborations

Notes for a sermon preached by Brian Fraser,
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