

JUST WALK ACROSS THE ROOM

23RD JANUARY 2022

HillSide's Minister – Rev' Allan Booth

WEEK 4 – GRAND VISION LIVING (BIG PICTURE THINKING)

Blurb:

We need to re-focus... concentrate on what is most important to Jesus. What is that? Well people of course! We can learn to let other pursuits fall away and focus on finding the lost, restoring justice, and healing what is broken. In doing this we are reclaiming only what belongs to Jesus in the first place!"

John 14:16-27

¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be ^[a] in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹ Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them."

²² Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?"

²³ Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ²⁴ Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

²⁵ "All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Sermon

So now that we've learned that we must simply walk across the room, strike up an authentic conversation about Jesus, develop friendships and tell our story... what's next? We learn to live with grander vision, this is not exclusive to grandparents.... It is also not the same as big picture planning or blue-sky thinking, these buzzwords have snuck into board rooms and committee meetings around the world.

Grand Vision living is so much more; however, it is also a typical Jesus paradox. What's a Jesus paradox? When people think of a messiah we look for a super hero, when we think of a king our minds go to grandeur and power and when we think of trying to understand God we go all academic and use big words.... Jesus comes along and upsets all of that. He saves by offering himself as the only suitable ransom for everyone. He rules through love with the heart of a servant, and simply says if we know him then you know the father.

So Grand Vision Living then is to live focussed on the same priority that is nearest to the heart of God, as Jesus showed us. If we search the gospel, we find that Jesus' priority was... people. Grander vision living with a heart for people, living free of prejudice and acting in love toward everybody is beyond our ordinary human abilities.... And Jesus knows this.

Therefore, he did not leave us without help, and this is exceptionally good news! In John we read that the Holy Spirit enables us to love in the way that Jesus loves; it all comes down to love. What about those of us who are afraid to love? Be assured Jesus says do not let your hearts be troubled be not afraid and has promised us peace beyond understanding. It remains for us to pray that our story would be aligned to God's story, and that the Holy Spirit would soften the hearts and prepare the spirit of those to whom we cross the room.

Jesus crossed eternity to seek and to save the lost, and in practising radical inclusiveness restore the broken relationship between humanity and God thereby reclaiming what is already his!

Now just hold it right there... radical inclusiveness, what is this hippy nonsense?

Well as a hippy would say let me break that down for you brothers and sisters.....this is a little of what radical inclusiveness means... it begins with a shift in priority from my needs to the needs of others. Includes a Kennedy spiritual shift from what can God do for me, to what am I able to do for God. A character shift from selfishness to selflessness, understanding that every human is a child of the living God and therefore worthy of redemption. That means we need to get rid of our prejudices toward any kind of other people and learn to love like Jesus does. In fact, a grander vision of living means leaning toward the outcast, the rejected, the lonely and the lost. Jesus doesn't say anything about the just plain obnoxious though.... However, our attitude toward others should always reflect the love that Jesus has placed in our hearts. Remember always that Jesus was often found in the company of so-called undesirables. Yet he did not judge nor present himself as superior or better than them in anyway. Neither should we!

Once we have walked across the room and opened up a way for someone to come to salvation, by showing what a difference a relationship with Jesus has made for us... the hardest part is to then leave it all in the hands of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit. This is true and yet to be disproven: Everyone has to make a choice, no one meets Jesus by accident, or drifts into the Kingdom, our part is to just walk across the room and allow someone else the opportunity to discover their own relationship with Jesus...