

Sunday Service Sermons

07 November 2021

Stewardship

Do you like to think about stewardship?

You can lose people speaking about stewardship.

I have seen it happen.

However you might lose people speaking of sin also.

Stewardship, like sin, is ever with us.

We are not perfect.

We need saving.

Throughout the Bible, and especially in Psalms, there is a theme of Salvation.

The God who saves his people is the God of the Bible.

I just finished a good book about how we are Saints and how we should be living and believing as saints.

I plan on getting a couple copies and offering them to you all to read.

One of the main points of the book is that we are saved for.

We like to think that we are saved from and we are but we are saved from in order to be saved for.

For the Glory of God and our neighbor's good.

Not just words but a purpose for living.

Part of being God's person is realizing that all we are and all we have belongs to him to be used for his glory and honor.

That is how we become saints, to be in a position to be used for God's glory.

Today's Scripture fits right in with this theme.

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 1

Peter 2:9.

Full text: *1 Peter 2:1-10*

Some churches have a Stewardship emphasis once a year.

It is a time for members to commit to supporting the church and Tithing so they can be blessed.

We can make a commitment to God because God has already made a commitment to us.

The text for this morning is directed to a people who had been scattered by the persecution of the Roman Empire.

Peter gave encouragement and direction to believers who were living in exile.

These early Christians were living in fear for their lives.

They needed to know that God had made a commitment to them.

God has committed himself to his people.

These were people who belonged to God.

In the midst of the terror and loneliness of exile, it must have been a great encouragement to know they were "God's own people", they belonged to him.

It is also translated as a "peculiar people".

In Latin it refers to property.

It can be translated that they were people who belonged to God.

Once a small boy was found on a busy street, dirty and obviously lost.

A kind man stopped to see if he could help.

When he asked the boy who he belonged to, the little boy looked up with defiance and angry hurt

and replied, "I ain't nobody's nothing".

No Christian is "nobody's nothing".

We each are God's peculiar people, his property.

We belong to Him.

Some people do not belong to God.

"You are God's people," is to remind us that though some are God's people, others do not belong to him.

That does not mean that they were not created by God or that he does not love them.

It simply means that some are not willing to come to him.

God's love is not exclusive in regard to race, social status, or nationality, nothing that we cannot change keeps us from Jesus Christ, but some people are not willing to accept his love.

People may go to hell unsaved, but they can never go unloved.

We can all be God's people.

But we must be willing to respond to him.

God has committed himself to his people.

God did not send a substitute to do what he had to do himself.

If he had remained only God, he could not have touched us.

If he had been only a man he could not have saved us.

No substitute could take his place.

Nor did God send an angel to save his people.

These messengers of God move at his will to speak urgent words to his people, but they could not die for the redemption of humankind.

A president can send ambassadors to plead the cause of his country.

Though they often can be highly effective, if the president himself chooses to go, the whole world stands at attention.

Every romantic knows the story of Miles Standish's failure to win the hand of Priscilla.

He sent John Alden to plead for the beautiful woman's hand in marriage.

It is reported that she said, "Speak for yourself, John."

She gave her love to the one who came himself.

Is it any wonder, then, that when the God who gave himself asks for our commitment, he asks not for substitutes for ourselves but for our very selves?

God has committed himself to his people so they may declare.

Verse 9 clearly says that God has chosen us that we may declare the strong virtuous, or wonderful deeds of our Savior God.

God's action always has a purpose.

He does not save us simply to count us.

He calls us to be his people that we may share aloud the glory of his deeds done on our behalf and the radiance of the light that has penetrated our darkness.

We are to declare God's wonderful deeds.

The deeds we praise are:

God's creation of the world and all that is therein;

the deliverance of his people from bondage in Egypt; the establishment of the people from whom would come the light to the Gentiles;

the coming of Jesus, God's Son, our Savior, born to save his people from their sins;

the death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, who is our hope of eternal life;

the building of a new people, the church "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people"; and the anticipation of the final act when Christ will return to call his people to the fulfillment of the kingdom of God.

When the power of those mighty deeds surges through our hearts, we are able to witness to a cynical world with lips and lives that are eager expressions of the joy and victory that have claimed

us in Jesus Christ.

He has given us bold deeds to declare boldly.

We are to declare the radiance of God's marvelous light.

In the creation of the world, the darkness was shattered first by his words, "Let there be light."

Only later came the light from the sun, the moon, and the stars.

The biblical writers have a deep appreciation for the glory of the light that shines in our darkness.

It is seen throughout the Biblical account.

In the light of God's presence, we are not to be filled with pride or prejudice, but with humility and amazement.

No one can declare the glory of God's deeds or the radiance of his light if he or she is filled with the dark prejudice that cuts people off from God's grace.

A prejudice is a subtle pride that makes us draw circles around our own religious, racial, or economic groups.

We must never yield to its easy call to speak only to those who are like us.

God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

His commitment to us at Calvary is that all should believe.

And to all who believe he has given power to become the children of God.

Because God has committed himself fully to you, he can call you to commit your whole life to him, your tithes, abilities, and time.

He has held nothing back.

He gave himself wholly that you might be his people.

He now calls you to commit yourself to declare his wonderful deeds and marvelous light to a world in darkness.

He has come that you might go; he has loved you that you might love; he has given that you might give.

Our commitment day, therefore, is both our privilege and our responsibility.

The one question that remains is: Will we permit God's commitment to shape the nature of our commitment?

Will we love as Jesus loved?

Can we be 100% sold out to God?