

Sermons at All Saints, Luxembourg

Preached by Rev Geoff Read at Church on the Lawn , Sunday 25th August 2024

Text: Luke 12:54-56

Introduce

One of the ways that Jesus taught was to take things of everyday life and use them to point to what God is doing in the world, His Kingdom

Some of these were parables, stories, others were sayings

Can you think of an example

Get into groups and with what you have with you or see around you, think of one of the parables or sayings of Jesus

Why do you think He did this?

Our reading today is an outdoor story – it's one of a series of stories and sayings about being ready, not just hearing what Jesus says but putting it into action in our lives

Gospel reading: Luke 12:54-56

Jesus also said to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, 'It is going to rain,' and so it happens. 55 And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, 'There will be scorching heat,' and it happens. 56 You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?"

Sermon

Are there sayings in your mother tongue about what the weather will be tomorrow, forecasting?

Red sky at night ...

Red sky in the morning ...

Etc

Weather forecasting is all about predicting what will happen in the future based on what has happened lots of times before in the past

Today for weather forecasting we use our smart phones apps, TVs or the internet

In the time of Jesus in the Holy land and still today in many parts of the world, people use their eyes

In Israel a cloud from the west is from the sea, bringing rain

A wind from the south is from the desert

But whether its with an app or with our eyes we ask the question so we can plan and act

Holiday in north Germany – farmers working through the night to get in the crops

Why? Because they had read the forecast of coming heavy rain

In our reading Jesus takes sayings about weather as the starting point for his teaching

It's important to pause and be aware of why He talks about this.

He is talking to the crowds – those who are curious, attracted but not yet committed to be his followers of disciples

They like Jesus, His stories, the way He challenges the authorities,

They like His miracles of healing

They like the bread and fish He provides, lots of it

But on this occasion as He teaches, Jesus throws in a shocking word: let's read together, have a look at v56

56 You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?

Hypocrites

Now what or who is a hypocrite – someone who knows something but doesn't act on it

Why do you not know how to interpret the present time?

That “present time” wasn't just what was on the news at that time – Roman General does this, local man in Nazareth wins the lottery

The clue lies in the word Jesus uses for “the present time”

In grk there are two words for time: chronos and Kairos

Chronos is just time that ticks along

Kairos is a moment, when something happens

A God moment

And it's that words that Jesus uses here

And the Now He means is His presence among them

The unprecedented, unique moment of Jesus

The One who is Son of God – fully God and fully human

There had never been anything like that before in history

Forecasting, interpreting is based on what has happened before to understand or predict what is happening or will happen

So you could say, how could people interpret that, understand Who Jesus is if it's never happened before

But here's the thing

Throughout the story of the Old Testament God has been saying again and again: I will come to you, I will be with you

He's been saying it again and again, revealing it through His prophets

Its written in His written Word, He has been revealing it in the Scriptures

In other words: the coming of Messiah is central to his hearers story

That was the present or Kairos moment Jesus meant

The Lord is here: **His Spirit is with us**

But then it was the Lord is here: He is with us!

Why do you not know how to interpret the present time?

I wonder why that was, why the crowd could not understand Jesus as Messiah, as Emmanuel, God with us?

Pause

We live each day as Chronos,

But being a follower of Jesus means desiring, expecting, being open to encountering Jesus Now, in the Kairos moment

Yes, there are those big Kairos, God moments, when we see the whole big picture

We have prayed, God has acted, we are thrilled at the outcome – a prayer is answered, God provides, a person is healed

We are discovering at All Saints the importance of being open to that, expecting it

And we are also starting to discover and recognise that our lives are full of lots of mini-Kairos moments

Moments of encounter with God in the midst of our stories, in the midst of tiredness or worry



I was speaking the other day to the person who was meant to come with the ReSource team to our Sanctuary Day in June, but could not because his wife is dying of brain cancer

She is now in a hospice and has been there for five weeks and they are just waiting

He has visited each day, spent the day there

I asked him: how can I pray for you?

His reply was ...

It's like being on one of those roller coasters where rather than sit you hang

I feel myself held by God

Please pray for peace and resilience for each day

These are the mini-Kairio moments, the each day “Nows”, that are about Who rather than What
About relationship rather than outcomes

A growing awareness of a dimension through which we are gently drawn into the More of knowing
and being known by our loving heavenly Father

When Jesus said to the crowd then: “Hypocrites”

It’s not to condemn

It’s to confront. It’s to invite

To say: wake up. See that

The Lord is here: **His Spirit is with us**