

Sermon Notes

Power of the Word Part 1

January 7th – 8th, 2023

- **Power from the Word**
 - The basic idea of this series...I'm just going to preach the life changing truths of God's Word.
- **This Week: The Greatest Commandment**
 - Let's start at the top. What is the Greatest Commandment?? Jesus tells us!!
- **Mark 12:28-34** (Mark was probably written for Gentiles, and more specifically Roman converts.)
 - Notice, Jesus answered with the top two. You really can't have one without the other.
 - Love God with all that you have. This is a heart command. No faking this.
 - If your heart is there, then the second will flow naturally. After all, God loves them!
 - I find **Mark 12:34** quite amazing. Jesus says "You are not far from the Kingdom of God."
 - Two people can be sitting shoulder to shoulder, but one is close and one is far.
 - We don't just want to be close, we want to enter in! **Hebrews 4:14-16**
- **Matthew 22:34-40** (Matthew was probably written for Jewish Believers near Israel.)
 - In this account Jesus is recorded as saying **Matthew 22:40**.
 - The entire system "hangs" on these two. That's a big statement. Very, very important!!
 - Begs an important question: What if this love is missing??
- What if love of God and love of your neighbor is missing?? In church? In society? In you?
 - I'm not just talking about opposition, but even simply a fading of love into the background?
 - Short answer: dead religion and transactional relationships with God and people.
- Problem: when people don't love God, but they want to figure out how to go to Heaven.
 - There is no good answer for this...except to get to know God and then get to love God.
 - Sign that you may not really love God: (you probably already know, but...)
 - Worship seems pointless or about you. Prayer, Bible reading, serving, giving, church...
- Reality: Loving God is easy. It is natural, what we were made for. Maybe unavoidable??
 - Unless something gets in-between you and God.
 - Like what?? These examples can mix together and are not exhaustive.
 - Bad Religion. Can't see Jesus through the church.
 - Boring and irrelevant/dead. Failure of heroes. Pointless rules and hassles.
 - Exploitation of people. Bad theology.
 - Sin. Your heart is pulled towards things that are against God.
 - Pride, greed, porn/lust, insecurity, fear, cowardice, selfishness, laziness, etc.
 - Misunderstandings. You believe something that isn't true.
 - Science and faith don't mix.
 - Can't be proud of your native culture and be a Christian.
 - Hardship. The pain and injustice of life makes believing in a Good God difficult. (Job)
- I want you to believe something: Nothing can separate you from the love of God. **Romans 8:31-39**.
 - **Romans 8:32**. We will be receiving Holy Communion in a few minutes...
 - **Romans 8:33-34**. God justifies. Who condemns?? The "no one" was added. There are condemners. People. The Devil. You?? Don't side with condemnation of yourself or others.
 - **Romans 8:37**. Doesn't matter what is between you and God, you are made to conquer that!!
 - **Romans 8:38-39**. Those things: bad religion, sin, misunderstandings, hardship, whatever, DO NOT have the power to separate you from the love of God. So, don't let them.
 - I think Romans 8 has two important aspects. God loves us no matter what we are going through, AND we can love God no matter what we are going through.
 - Jesus went through some stuff for you. He was not separated from the love of His Father.
 - Let's love God as we receive Holy Communion together.
- Get personal prayer by emailing prayer@goodhope.ag.