

Westfield Sermon notes

Title: Have you had a mountain top experience?

Readings: 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9

Preacher: Geoff Ellis

Date: 26th February

This sermon can be found at: <http://www.westfieldurc.org/worship/sermons/>

Sermon Notes / Comments:

- This is my son the beloved, who I am well pleased. Listen to him
- God is going to make all God's prophecies come true through Jesus, God is so pleased with Jesus
- Jesus himself had to go through temptations before he could begin his ministry proper (Matthew 4).
- Lent is a time of personal re-examining and rethinking the depth of our own faith.
- When we depend on God we will be blessed.
- We need tools, we need teaching so we can be salt and light
- The same Spirit that filled Jesus can be available to fill us today!
- Jesus said, "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven has come near"!
- This (*the Kingdom of Heaven*) is at the heart of the Gospel!
- The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) shows us how much we need to depend on God as members of his Kingdom. Especially the opening verses.
- People recognised Jesus for the first time; who he was and realised he had something to say that would change their lives.
- Jesus was putting markers down, showing who he was, even though Easter had not happened.
- Lent is a time for us to be alert to what Jesus was saying and how could he change us over these weeks before Easter and what implementations that would be. We know what comes next!
- The rest of Matthew's Gospel talks about parables teaching about what the Kingdom of Heaven is like; What it can mean about bringing Justice and fair play to outcasts, to the lonely, to the homeless etc. What does it mean for them to be welcomed.
- Finally, when Jesus is arrested and put on a charge it is because he is accused of being the King of the Jews, but not the King that was expected

– not the King that Pilot thought would bring a national uprising, he was a king in a very different way.

- We have a chance to think, what does it mean for Jesus to say the Kingdom of Heaven is among us. This is my son, I am well pleased – listen to what he says.
- We may not be eye witnesses like Peter, James and John but we are Witnesses.
- The Servant who is King makes the Kingdom of Heaven come as he dies on the Cross!
- He seeks to breathe his breath into us now so that we can operate and live as he did, here the Kingdom of Heaven coming on earth is linked to the power of the Holy Spirit and those that hear him should not keep quite.

Questions / thoughts and areas for discussion

- Please read the Bible Readings. Any thoughts?
- What were the two (possibly three) Bible stories that Geoff talked about happening on Mount Sinai? Answers:
- What is the last mountain you climbed?
- Read Psalm 121. How does that make you feel?
- When did you last sense God in your presence? Why not share it with another person?
- Have you been anywhere, which is a 'thin place'?
- On the other side have you ever (like Jesus) had a time of wilderness? Did that time help you in your faith?
- Do we truly want to be filled with that same Spirit that Jesus was filled with? If so how? If not Why not?
- We are now entering the season of Lent. How can we use this time to draw near(er) to God?
- How can each of us be *Salt and Light* to the community of Wyke? Of Bradford?
- What does it mean to be an outcast and lonely in Wyke/ Bradford? Who do you think are the outcast and lonely in our society?
- What are we going to do over the weeks and months ahead that will help people around us see that the Kingdom has come?

Please note these are Mark's thoughts etc on the sermon and may not be the Preacher's!