

Scripture

- 2 Kings 23:1-7
- 2 Timothy 1:1-14,
- John 2:13-19

Prayer:

Father, in the Word you have warned us many times about the need to be aware and to be ready (watchful), so Lord, we pray that with your help we remain alert to false teachings and ready to serve in various circumstances.

We are grateful, Lord, that we enjoy the freedoms of this country. But Father, help us to NOT be complacent ABOUT WHAT WE HAVE, NOR ABOUT THE NEEDS OF THOSE WHO STRUGGLE.

Bless us, Lord as we worship, and grant us wisdom, and strengthen us in Jesus' name,
Amen

Hymn *by S Baring-Gold*

1. Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war
With the cross of Jesus, marching on before!
Christ the royal master leads against the foe;
Forward into battle, see his banner go!

*Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus going on before*
2. Like a mighty army moves the church of god;
Brothers we are treading where the saints have trod
We are not divided; All one body we:
One in hope and doctrine, one in charity
3. Onward then, ye people, join our happy throng
Blend with us your voices in the triumph song
Glory laud, and honour, unto Christ the king
This through countless ages men and angels sing

Bible Readings and Message:

- 2 Kings 23:1—7

“The king called together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. He went up to the temple of the Lord with the people of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests and the prophets – all the people from the least to the greatest. He read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant, which had been found in the temple of the Lord. The king stood by the Pillar and renewed the covenant in the presence of

Not On My Watch

the Lord—to follow the Lord and keep his commands, statutes and decrees with all his heart and all his soul, thus confirming the words of the covenant written in this book. Then all the people pledged themselves to the covenant.”

Josiah, a king at 8 years of age, into a country dark from spiritual and moral decay.....

He ordered the high priest et al to remove from the temple all the items made for Baal, and Marduk. He burned all the Asherah poles and smashed idols just outside the Kidron valley
NOTE: This is ADJACENT TO CALVARY, and contains Gethsemane, a place Jesus knew well. So God has chosen this place of O.T. infamy as the site for the redemption of mankind—what a pushback, what a response to the epitome of evil (even human sacrifice was practiced here!)

King Josiah has long been a hero of mine, since Sunday school days at Birkenhead Methodist. Still a very young man (late teens or early 20's) when the book of the Law was discovered during temple renovations. No sooner did he read the book, when he realised just how far away from GOD JUDAH HAD DRIFTED. He was appalled.

What was happening? God's word had been lost, the seventh year public reading (Deuter 31:9) not been practiced.

- Why had this happened? Poor leadership, priestly ignorance, preoccupation with worldly events.
- God was locked out.

But Josiah said “Not on my watch!! No way!”

There are times I believe that, as Christians, and as church we need to stand up and be counted. Abortion, child exploitation, slavery etc. I am quite angry at times at the silence and inaction of church.

Jesus is very clear about taking a stand when called to do so by events encountered which are in

In our Bible Reading (John 2:14—19) we read of the temple courts where Jesus found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves. Others were sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle. He scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To those selling doves he said, “GET OUT OF HERE! STOP TURNING MY FATHER'S HOUSE INTO A MARKET!” (my emphasis).

Outraged by the state of the temple, our Lord took necessary action—not on my watch will God's house be defiled!

What Jesus found that day in God's house was a disgrace. Birkenhead church had a golden scroll above the pulpit which read “**Holiness unto the Lord**”—it was God's house, after all none of the Birkenhead lads who frequented that place would dare disrespect it. What our Lord found in Jerusalem that day was foul—business, noise, animal waste, etc IN HIS FATHERS HOUSE!! Righteous outrage is expressed. On sight of this he took action—those responsible were of the same cohort as in Josiah's time. Any wonder Jesus was wary of their leadership (Math 23).

Not On My Watch

- 2 Timothy 1: 6—8, 13—14.

“For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self discipline. So do not be ashamed of my testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God.”

Paul writes to (Pastor) Timothy, (1 Tim 1:3) in Ephesus, words of encouragement, love, and empowerment in Timothy’s challenging role as pastor of the Ephesian church. Timothy had quite a task to follow Paul and to stand up in the midst of Diana worship in the massive temple of Artemis(Acts 19:26—28) That temple was one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world. So Timothy had quite a spiritual battle.

Paul empowers Timothy to not be ashamed of the gospel. Do not be timid- guard the gospel with the Holy Spirit. In today’s world I believe there is a spiritual battle going on. Paul’s message to Timothy is, again, in the “ Not on my (your) watch” category.

Prayers for the world:

Father God, we are aware of many challenges to the truth of your Word, and the reign of your son, our Lord Jesus. We ask for spiritual strength as you promised us that we might be your soldiers in a challenging, and unbelieving world. So strength and peace, awareness and courage, Lord, be unto us, your “Little ones” in this place.

Amen

Hymn 37 by Isaac Watts 1674-- 1748

1. The Lord Jehovah reigns, His throne is built on high
The garments he assumes are light and majesty:
His glories shine with beams so bright no mortal eye can bear the sight.
2. The thunders of his hand keep the wide world in awe
His wrath and justice stand to guard hie holy law;
And where his love resolves to bless, His truth confirms and seals his grace.
3. And can this mighty king of glory condescend?
And will he write his name: My father and my friend
I love his name, I live his Word; join all my powers, and praise the Lord

Blessing:

Lord God,

May your Holy Spirit be a strength in and around your people. Bless us and grant us peace, strength and wisdom, Amen

*This service was prepared by Grant Jewell for HopeNet SA
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