

SERMON NOTES

SUNDAY 3.08.25

PREACHER: PS BEN TEEFY

Lighting the Lampstand

BECOMING CHRISTLIKE

BEING [HEART], THINKING [MIND] & DOING [BODY]
[A PERSONAL REFLECTION]

Conviction of a Disciple:

A mature disciple sees the Church as beautiful and essential, as God's primary means of bringing His kingdom to earth. The Church is not just something we attend or organise; it is who we are: a Spirit-lit people through whom Christ brings healing, belonging, and transformation.

OVERVIEW

The Church is not a social club or a series of programs. It is a lampstand lit by Christ to shine His glory in a dark, broken, and hurting world. Through healing and salvation in Christ, and the powerful work of the Spirit, the Church becomes a space of unexplainable transformation as we remain open to the Spirit's refining, empowering, and commissioning work.

ACTION

Step 1: In what ways do you sense the Spirit might be tending to your lampstand right now—trimming, clearing, refilling, or reigniting?

Step 2: Where have you witnessed the “unexplainable” beauty of Christ at work in the Church, through others or even in your own story?

Step 3: What changes would allow your life to burn brighter with Christ's love in your family, workplace, or neighbourhood?

THOUGHT

SCRIPTURE: Rev 1:9-20, Matt 5:14, Acts 2

Sometimes the best, most powerful stories are the ones you can't explain, but only bear witness to: An unbelieving father coming to salvation after his daughter's tragic death; A disabled young woman's broken body overwhelmed by the peace and stillness of Christ's love; Addicts walking free; Families healed... These moments can't be manufactured by a clever program, but when the Church, the hands and feet of Christ, become alive and alight in the Holy Spirit, they *can* become increasingly normal (and even expected).

In Revelation 1, John tells of a vision he has seen. In it, he calls the churches he writes to "lampstands" (Rev 1:9-20). For John's early readers, this is really powerful and important imagery. In the Temple, the lampstand represented God's light - the light that dispelled the dark and disordered places in creation. This is a profound and high calling for these new Christians. Now *they* were the ones commissioned to do this work - to be this "light of the world", as Jesus put it (Matt 5:14).

Also important was that in the Temple, this lampstand was cared for and maintained by the High Priest. But in John's vision, he describes Jesus as both the ultimate King and High Priest. So yes, John calls the Church the lampstand, but he says it's Jesus, and the continual work of the Spirit, that trims the wick, removes the ash, replenishes the oil, and sets it on fire with His own blazing love.

The point of this odd imagery? The Church isn't self-lit. We are dependent, constantly in need of His Spirit to burn in us again - this fire purifies and makes us holy. It clears away the stuff that gets in the way of us burning bright in our dark world. When we are lit by Christ, we shine - not with clever strategies and polished programs - but burning white hot with His glory and presence.

Also, in this upside-down Kingdom, the Church is full of broken people. People who all have their own story. And these stories, just like those found in Scripture, aren't glossy and polished testimonies, but represent real lives touched by the inexplicable beauty of Christ. That's what the Church is. It's not a list of ministries, but a ministering people; not an organisation with an outreach event, but a community that lives with hands outreaching. This lampstand that John speaks of is vital. It's where hope is kindled, burdens are lifted, and families walk out of darkness into light. It's where heaven and earth meet - where what's true of God's realm becomes true of ours as well.

We can too often think revival means fire falling from heaven. But sometimes it's just a church that makes room for someone who feels excluded and undone by life. Sometimes it's saying "yes" to that person in need when a "no" would be so much more convenient. Sometimes it's answering a call to pray, even when hope feels far away. Sometimes it's tears shed or smiles freely given. Sometimes it's being a really stubborn lampstand that just won't go out.

Jesus has finished his part. And through the pouring out of the Spirit (Acts 2), he has set his Church on fire. Our part now is allowing the Spirit to keep working within us - trimming the wicks, clearing away the debris that builds up around us, and filling us again so we, like Christ, can live lives poured out in service to the world.

DISCUSSION

[A GROUP REFLECTION]

1. Which part of the lampstand imagery most resonates with your current spiritual season—and why?
2. How can we, as the Church, become a ministering people who live with hands outreaching?
3. What simple, Spirit-led acts could our group commit to taking on this week to carry light into dark and overlooked places?

PRAYER

Jesus, thank you for walking among your Church with your tender, yet transforming power. We ask you to do whatever is needed to fill us fully and light us again. Make us the kind of people through whom your unexplainable grace becomes real, and may our communities reflect the beauty and power of your kingdom.

Amen.