

“Can Any Good Come Out of Me?”
Sunday March 15, 2009
Pastor Ulysse

The main text for the sermon came from John 1:40-51

John 1:40-50

40. One of the two which heard John [speak], and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.
41. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.
42. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.
43. The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.
44. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.
45. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.
46. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.
47. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!
48. Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.
49. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.
50. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.
51. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

Pastor Ulysse opened with a story about when he was driving from Florida to Chicago by himself. It was an extremely long drive, and he knew he just had to get through it. About ten minutes into the drive, he noticed a hitchhiker covered in tattoos, in grungy clothes, and as scary looking as he could be. Pastor Ulysse thought “No one in their right mind would pick him up.” and kept driving. Over an hour later, the Holy Ghost kept bringing this man back to his mind and Pastor Ulysse went back to the same exact spot (at this point over two hours later) where he found the hitchhiker still waiting. The man joined him all the way from Florida to Indiana. Although he didn't share the details, Pastor Ulysse told us “what happened on that ride was nothing short of a miracle.”

God worked through Pastor Ulysse, but it was not because there was anything good about him. It was because he followed the guidance of God. God wants to do miracles in each of us, and we have to allow him to.

In verse 46 (above) Nathaniel asked if there was any good thing that could come out of Nazareth. Everyone knew that the messiah was not supposed to be from Nazareth in the first place. The city had a bad reputation for prostitution and sin. Phillip wasn't exactly sure what the answer was, but he knew Jesus was the answer. In response to Nathaniel's question, all Phillip could say was “come and see”. Today, our faith is still the same way.

We may not have every answer, or know the reason for everything, but we do know that Jesus is the answer, and once people “come and see” him for who he is He will erase all doubt.

In verse 50, Jesus says that he saw Nathaniel under the fig tree. That is where the scholars of the day would sit to read. Nathaniel was a scholar, but wasn't so determined to rely on his education that he discounted Jesus as the real messiah. Instead, he accepted Jesus (verse 49) and started his journey. Pastor Ulysse pointed out that believing and accepting Christ is just the starting point for us as Christians. The rest of the journey is all about being faithful in the little things day in and day out.

Isaiah 64: 6

But we are all as an unclean [thing], and all our righteousnesses [are] as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

By ourselves, we are not good enough. If even our *best* is filthy, how must we seem to God on our *worst* day? That is why we have to count on him. No good thing will come from us on our own. We have to allow God to do it through us. As soon as we start to believe we are doing good on our own, it will stop happening. The key is starting to rely on God.

II Samuel 12:8-9

And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if [that had been] too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.

Genesis 32: 7-10

7. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that [was] with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands;

8. And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.

9. And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:

10. I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

All God requires is our faithfulness and he will bless us more than we can imagine. This verse in 2 Samuel points out that God gave David all the things he could want, and was more than willing to give him more. Jacob said in Genesis 32:9-10 “all I came over the river with was my staff, and now I have so much stuff that I could divide it in half and still have enough” God really does bless his people with good.

Genesis 32:24-28

24. And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.

25. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.
26. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.
27. And he said unto him, What [is] thy name? And he said, Jacob.
28. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

In the same chapter of Genesis, Jacob fights for his blessing. We cannot spend our time just wandering around and wondering if God wants to bless us. He says over and over in his word that he DOES! If we start to understand that good spiritual things have to be our focus, they will come to us. We just have to keep doing what God asks of us each day.

Matthew 9:29

Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.

Pastor Ulysse left us with this thought. Jesus healed people according to their faith. Maybe we are not experiencing the goodness of God in our day to day lives because we are not living in faith that He wants the best for us. He wants good to come out of us. If good things aren't coming out of you, try taking a good look in the mirror and ask yourself why.

God wants good things to come out of us. Don't let yourself stand in the way.