

John 12

Party Time

The Party John 12

Introduction

This month I have prepared a booklet on John's gospel on material from the previous minister at RBC. We have also been studying John in our Morning Prayer time using SU notes.

Then I read an article based on this chapter from the latest Evangelical Alliance magazine.

I am also grateful to Lee Strobel who wrote "The case for Faith". I can recommend it to anyone who has been asked difficult questions about their faith and would like a reason for believing in God.

Little of this sermon will be original!!!

We will start at the end of the reading and work backwards

John 12: 9 Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead.

10 So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, 11 for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in him.

On the stage we have

The Chief Priests do I hear a boo???

Plotting to kill Lazarus as well (as Jesus) .. This seems rather pointless. Wouldn't Jesus just raise him again?

Martha Laughing, crying and passing round the food she had spent the day preparing. She's looking for

Mary who is "lost in wonder love and praise"
pouring oil on Jesus feet in care-less celebration of her love for the master.

Lazarus Busy fielding lots of questions about what its like to have a near death experience!

The crowd blocking the street and annoying the neighbours, hoping for more miracles.. and a sandwich if possible

Jesus, the hero of the hour do I hear a cheer?
who has just raised Lazarus and knows that there is a plot to kill him and it is time for him to surrender his life.

Judas

Doing his best to destroy the fun.

Yet he knew he would die in the coming week!!

23 Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

24 I tell you the truth, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.

25 The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

26 Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honour the one who serves me.

Question 1 How do we face coming problems or hard times?

Jesus enjoys a party, knowing that after death there is resurrection.

HE HAS JUST PROVED IT!! (FOR GOODNES SAKE.. as one preacher I know would say!!)

David goes with confidence

1 Samuel 17:36 Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God.

Jehoshaphat with a choir

21 After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendour of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: "Give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures for ever."

22 As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated.

Thomas.. Out of love.... and out of hope.

John 11:16 Then Thomas (called Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

Where do you fit in? Jesus celebrated victory over death in the face of death. As the article I read said

Jesus dancing on the devils dance floor

Lets now go back to the Lazarus Story

Question 2 How do you face, or answer the big ifs?

John 12: 21 "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

If there is an All Powerful All Knowing All loving God, why is there so much evil?

Augustine:

If there is no God, why is there so much good, if there is a God, why is there so much evil?

Professor Kreeft

Evil is evidence of the existence of God. If there is no God where did we get the standard by which we judge evil as evil.

Question 3 If God is all powerful why didn't he He can do anything.

Well can God do anything?

He cannot make mistakes.
He cannot make you love Him.

When God gave us free will He created the possibility of evil but not evil itself.

He wants our love but can't compel it.. Or it wouldn't be love.

It helps answer the question

Question 4 Why do bad things happen to good people?

**Mark 10:18 "Why do you call me good?"
Jesus answered. "No-one is good— except
God alone.**

So a simple answer is that there are no good people.

In creating the possibility of evil God opened the door to people choosing evil rather than good.. and people suffering as a result.

2 Timothy 2:13 if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.

James 1:13 For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;

2 Corinthians 13:8 God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

Evil is paid for in the end.

Question 5 If God is all knowing....Then he knows the future as well as our present.

Professor Kreeft

Then it is at least possible that a loving God could tolerate bad things happening because he sees in the long run that more people will be better and happier than if there were a miraculous intervention.

EXAMPLE the death of Jesus.

The worst event in the History of mankind resulted in the greatest good. Salvation for millions.

What about this terrible tsunami?

Is it a warning shout from God?

Luke 13:4 Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem?5 I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish."

Jesus does not apologise for God he gives a warning that all must die and must be ready to face the living God.

What Good has come from that day when the global death rate doubled?

- 1 UN Global Poverty must be stopped. It may just have been rhetoric but people began to think.
- 2 President Bush: It is a time for the west to show a hand of compassion to our Muslim neighbours.
- 3 Sri Lanka.. About to ban conversion to Christianity. Christian Doctors were being advised not to treat Buddhists- it may be considered a bribe to convert them. Now they are receiving the help they wanted to ban. IS THIS A CHANCE TO RETHINK BEFORE THERE ARE FURTHER ATTACKS ON THE CHURCH? Perhaps thousands in the future will come to salvation that would otherwise not have had the opportunity.
- 4 Indonesia. There have been many terrorist attacks on the Church. IS THIS A CHANCE FOR TERRORISTS TO RETHINK?
- 5 The west... an opportunity to look on the FACTS OF DEATH when it focuses more on THE FACTS OF LIFE.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Question 6 If God is all good, why so much pain?

Pain.. like putting your hand in a fire is a warning.
DANGER.

Romans 5: 3 Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;

4 perseverance, character; and character, hope.

5 And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

How many can say... because of that experience **I am closer to God.**

AND FOR THAT WE MUST BE PREPARED TO PASS THROUGH ANYTHING.

Hebrews 5:8 Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him

Are we more interested in being comfortable than being ready for eternity?

Are you?