

Sunday 27 January 2019 St Thomas

Have you ever had a dream where you find yourself in the most excruciatingly embarrassing situation? Such dreams are often about finding yourself standing in front of a huge crowd with all eyes on you and you find that you are inappropriately dressed. Some people's worst nightmare is dreaming that they in front of a crowd of people and find that they have nothing on at all. Everyone is staring. It's worse when its people you know and who know you... Today we heard about Jesus reading in the synagogue and Luke describes how all eyes were on him. And most of the people probably knew of Jesus. Nazareth was not such a big place in those days. You can imagine the scene – with everyone silent and wondering what was happening. And here is Jesus – right at the beginning of his ministry, about to witness to what God is really like and what our relationship with God can really be like.

There are two themes that I hope we can take with us today.

Firstly, we too should be witnessing to the God of love in our lives. People should be looking with wonder and anticipation at what we do and say. Because although we might want to tell people about Jesus and the salvation that he brings, how we react and speak and live our lives tells the story of what's in our hearts.

I think I've mentioned before how so many people in Surrey can't wait to get to heaven to tell God how His plan might have been improved. We see it all the time in Surrey drivers. –I always say to myself that they must be very important – they are all in such a hurry.

So here are a few ideas I've found on the www for living our lives: They're a note from God to all of us...

I am God. Today I will be handling all of your problems. Please remember that I do not need your help. If life happens to deliver a situation to you that you cannot handle, do not attempt to resolve it. Kindly put it in the SFGTD (something for God to do) box. It will be addressed in My time, not yours. Once the matter is placed into the box, do not hold onto it.

If you find yourself stuck in traffic; don't despair. There are people in this world for whom driving is an unheard of privilege.

Should you have a bad day at work; Think of the person who has been out of work for years.

Should you despair over a relationship gone bad; Think of the person who has never known what it's like to love and be loved in return.

Should you grieve the passing of another weekend; Think of the person in dire straits, working twelve hours a day, seven days a week to feed their children.

Should your car break down, leaving you miles away from assistance; Think of the paraplegic who would love the opportunity to take that walk.

Should you notice a new gray hair in the mirror; think of the cancer patient in chemo who wishes they had hair to examine.

Should you find yourself at a loss and pondering what is life all about, asking what is my purpose? Be thankful. There are those who didn't live long enough to get the opportunity.

Should you find yourself the victim of other people's bitterness, ignorance, smallness or insecurities; Remember, things could be worse. You could be them!!!!

And the second is simply this:

You can't fool God – God knows what we are really like. Just be honest with him and ask his forgiveness and turn to Him as Father and you will find true happiness and fulfilment.

When Jesus stood in the synagogue, no one knew what was going to happen in the months and years to come. Yet we have the benefit of knowing how it all turned out. That young man standing and reading in the synagogue was at the start of a ministry that ended in his death and resurrection and the

love of God revealed to all in the forgiveness made possible by his actions.
Perhaps the second theme is really the first theme put in different ways?

If (as I said earlier,) we too should be witnessing to the God of love in our lives. People should be looking with wonder and anticipation at what we do and say. We should urgently want to tell people about Jesus and the salvation that he brings. How we react to our life challenges here in Surrey speaks volumes. How we speak and live our lives tells the story of what's in our hearts. Deep within our hearts should be the love of God known to us as we proclaim Jesus as Lord.