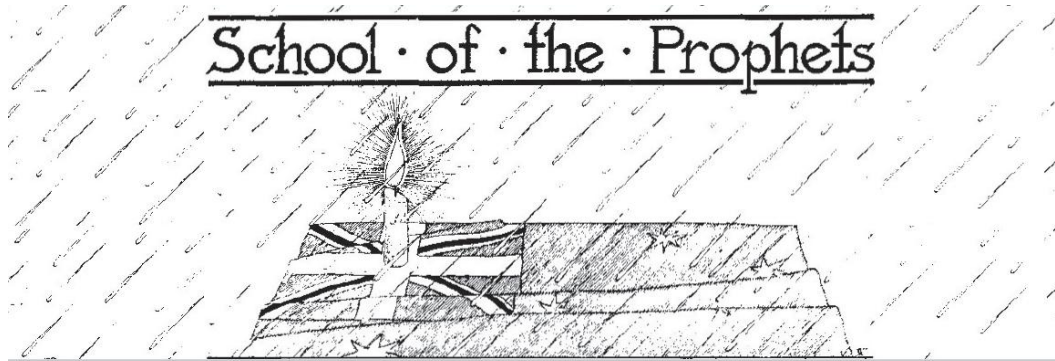


School · of · the · Prophets



Theological Animation for Discipleship

School of the Prophets (SOPs) 14th March 2010 - Session 4 @ Ultimo University Church – Brief Notes and Summary

Discipleship and Holiness

Biblical Text - Philippians 3:12-14

Discipleship is costly. Discipleship is joyously demanding. The worth of our discipleship is measured by how long we sustain the journey, through the good times and the bad. Discipleship; the following of Jesus is always about obedience to the demands of the Kingdom:

"The kingdom of God is revealed in the call to discipleship; the kingdom which is among the kingdoms of the world, but which confronts and contradicts and opposes them; the coup d'état of God proclaimed and accomplished already in the existence of the person Jesus. Those persons whom Jesus calls to Himself have to stand firm by the revelation of what discipleship is. Indeed, they have to correspond to it in what they do and what they do not do. Their own actions, if they are obedient, will always attest to what God has done in Jesus Christ." (Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics)

Where does holiness fit into discipleship? Often, when discipleship is considered, the concept of holiness is forgotten. And yet the two, discipleship and holiness, must be inextricably linked. Our ability to follow the will and ways of Jesus (discipleship) is connected with our commitment and dedication to live lives for God (holiness).

Some myths about holiness:

- *Holiness is only about an interiorising, privately engaging Christianity*

The problem here is that holiness only has implications for the individual and privatised experiences of faith. This is not true. Holiness must have social and political implications. Our lives of holiness should be made public so that the world can see that we are indeed "set apart". Discipleship is about personal and political holiness, and never one without the other!

- *Holiness is only discovered through our own achievements*

The myth here is that holiness is something that we can earn or work for. This is not true. Holiness is always, ALWAYS, derived from God. It is a gift given to us by God in the gifting of the Holy Spirit, for the purposes of Jesus' way in the world.

For more information regarding School of the Prophets

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Which Christ do you follow?



The image on the left appears inside a Scandinavian church. The image on the right is from a painting called 'La Crucifixion' by Matthias Grünewald. An important feature of the Grünewald painting is the depiction of John the Baptist (on the right) and his elongated finger pointing to the crucified One. This is what discipleship and holiness means; to always be pointing away from ourselves, and pointing to the true Christ, the crucified God risen up for the sake of the world.

'For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified.' (1 Cor 2:2)

More on holiness:

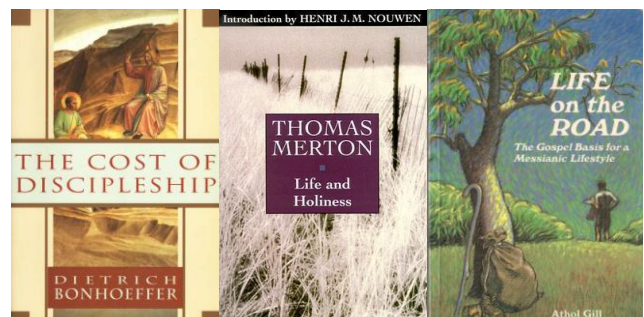
- Holiness presupposes a commitment that you've given your life to Jesus Christ.
- Holiness is not a process of striving for human perfection. Holy people are flawed, they are human. In fact, the call to be a saint is not a call to be less human, but to be MORE human. To cry more, to feel more pain. To laugh more, to celebrate more, to struggle more.
- Being holy is going to cost us. It may require us to leave behind the things that we would otherwise cling... money, relationships, fear, ambition.
- Holiness does not occur in a vacuum. Our efforts to be holy people are shared with the people of God, with the Church. When the cost is too much to bear, it is the community of Christ that will sustain us. Our personal holiness and the holiness of the Church are always interrelated.

Books for the journey....

Cost of Discipleship (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

Life and Holiness (Thomas Merton)

Life on the Road (Athol Gill)



"I have one passion. It is Jesus. Jesus only." (Zinzendorf)

SEE YOU AT THE NEXT SOPs MEETING

School of the Prophets Session 5

When: Sunday 2nd May 2pm - 4pm

Where: Ultimo University Church, Cnr Bulwara Rd & Quarry St, Ultimo