

40 Days of Fitness

A daily devotional by Rev Garry Hardingham

DAY 8 – The 97 points

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.'

John 14:1-7

Over the past week, we have looked at the nature of God. The fact that despite what the world thinks or acts, God is not dead, that God can be God for us if only we let go of our attempts to frame God. We affirmed that Jesus is truly God revealed and that this is a God whose nature is always for peace and love, as is God's Holy Spirit. And finally we explored the notion that being called to serve is only a problem if we we make it the problem.

For the next week or so, we are going to explore God's Grace. It seems a simple concept. But what really is it? How do we understand it? And what does God's Grace mean for us in the church.

But first, a story.

This bloke died and went to Heaven. When he showed up at the pearly gates, St. Peter was waiting. "I want to enter Heaven," said the man. "You may enter," replied Peter, "if you have accumulated 100 points on earth."

"Well," said the man, "I was baptised in the church and scarcely missed a Sunday in my entire life."
"That's good," said Peter. "That's one point!"

"One point? -- only one point?
Well, I did serve as an elder for 20 years, and I taught Sunday School for 25 years."
"That's good. Another point."

"What!?! only one more point!?
Well, I tried to live a good life. I tried to be a good father and husband."

"That's good," said Peter again. "That's worth one more point." "Oh, my," said the man. "The only way I will get into Heaven is by the Grace of God!"

"That's right!," said St. Peter with a smile on his face. "And that's worth 97 points. Come on in."

(A note here for all you Reformed theologians out there ready to choke on your Coco-Pops, this story is illustrative only...We will discuss this much deeper in the coming weeks. You will get your 8 Weet-Bix's worth of Reformed theology...so prepare your Quik-eze...and no brick bats...yet)

PRAYER

May the grace of Christ our Saviour,
And the Father's boundless love,
With the Holy Spirit's favour,
Rest upon us from above.

Thus may we abide in union
With each other and the Lord,
And possess, in sweet communion,
Joys which earth cannot afford.
Amen.