

# Christ Church Clifton Sermon Notes & Questions



**Series:** Summer 2017

**Passage:** Psalm 85

**Preacher:** Tim Meathrel

**Date of Sermon:** 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2017

## Sermon Notes:

- Psalm contains a picture of the Kingdom of God
- Ends with the wonderful image of righteousness preparing the way for God to come. Preparing the way for the King to return and to claim his rightful place on the earth
- Psalm ends with a beautiful picture of what the Kingdom of God looks like with people living lives filled with love and faithfulness as righteousness and peace fill the land
- See in verse 11 Heaven and earth in partnership. Faithfulness in God's people is met by God's righteousness in a picture of perfect harmony.
- Result of this is peace and prosperity. OT concept of prosperity is rooted in the Israelite understanding of the promised land (v12) in a very materialistic & physical understanding of prosperity. In the NT prosperity means many different things. It can be material or financial prosperity (but there are no guarantees of this!!!) rather the emphasis is on prosperity being about spiritual health and well-being of soul.

How much do you and I need that kind of a future? How much do we need to pursue that future in our own lives but also corporately in the life of our church and in the life of our nation/s?

### The pathway to this future

- See an amazing progression through the psalm from V4 'Restore us' to 'V6 Revive us' to the result of the restoration and revival... V9 That His glory may dwell in our land
- Everything in that amazing picture of the kingdom flows from the glory of God dwelling in the land; the outpouring of God's Spirit in the land
- Psalm reveals a pathway to it through two cries of the heart for us to pray (Because none of this is possible without prayer!)

V4 *'Restore us again, God our Saviour'*

V6 *'Will you not revive us again'*

Talk today about the first of those cries and talk next Sunday about the second

### 'Restore us again, God our Saviour'

- This is God's heart for us: Restoration!
- God loves to take what is hurt or broken, lost or forgotten and restore it. Breathe His life into it, pour his fire into it so that it is moulded, shaped and transformed into something more glorious and beautiful than it was before
- This is God's heart for CC but it's also his heart for the world and CCs involvement in the world

Three things that I see God doing in this area

#### 1. Restoring the Heart

- This is what I believe God has been doing ever since we arrived: Restoring our hearts
- Restoration of our hearts is key to everything else because all that we do flows out of our hearts as an act of worship
- Living life, Living with people, Living as part of the church leads unfortunately to getting hurt
- To a greater or lesser extent we're all broken people facing different challenges, struggles and difficulties

- God wants to come and minister to our hearts to bring restoration
- Because God's purpose for us is wholeness and healing. Restoration of our hearts so that we are set free to love Jesus, to pursue more of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in our lives and reveal the life of the Spirit to the world around us

### **Restoring the Vision**

- Truth in the spiritual life: God initiates, we respond
- Called in the Christian life to be led by revelation because God speaks
- God speaks & directs as He brings revelation by his Spirit
- What God is doing in this church now!
- Restoring Church vision through our vision process
- Vision is key to understanding where God is leading this church
- Restoring personal vision
- Many growing in an understanding of who they are and what God is calling them to do but I also meet so many people who don't really know what God's vision for their lives is
- Pursue it, pray into it and be intentional knowing that God loves to speak and he has perfect and pleasing plans for you; A destiny and a purpose for your life
- Role of disciples, as followers of Jesus, is simply to follow where Jesus leads

### **Restoring the City**

- God's heart for this city is restoration.
- Easy to look at the world and feel totally overwhelmed by the size of the problems and never attempt to do anything
- See at the moment an opportunity in the city because where this is a gap in society's provision for the least, lost and forgotten the church has always stepped into the gap and led the way in social restoration and transformation (egs in Education, Healthcare, Penal reform etc)
- Live in such a time once again as austerity creates an opportunity for the church to stand in the gap once again
- To give the gospel hands and feet and to see restoration in our society

## **Questions**

1. What strikes you most about this Psalm?
2. In what ways do v10-13 provide us with a picture of the Kingdom of God? How does this picture make you feel?
3. What does the heart cry 'Restore us again, God our saviour' mean to you? In what ways have you seen God restoring your life and Christ Church?
4. God is restoring our hearts. In what ways does God restore our hearts? In your experience what circumstances, tools or methods does God use?
5. God is restoring vision. In what ways do you think that's true of Christ Church at the moment?
6. What is God vision for your life? Do you know what it is? Can you explain it to others in the group?
7. How can we help each other pursue God's vision for our lives?
8. God's heart for the city is restoration. Do you share God's heart for the city?
9. Do you feel optimism or despondence when you look at Bristol at the moment?
10. Do you see an opportunity for Christ Church to get involved in social action in this season? Do you feel any sense of call to get involved? What might we be able to do to serve the city and make it look more like the Kingdom of God?