

29/11/09 – Living the Message – Intro

Mark 16:15 & 20 (MsgB) Then Jesus said, "Go into the world. Go everywhere and announce the Message of God's good news to one and all." ...And the disciples went everywhere preaching, the Master working right with them, validating the Message with indisputable evidence.

Philippians 2:15 (MsgB) Go out into the world uncorrupted, a breath of fresh air in this squalid and polluted society. Provide people with a glimpse of good living and of the living God. Carry the light-giving Message into the night.

Jesus: the Incarnation

John 1:14 (NIV) The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Incarnation: Literally "in the flesh"

Jesus came as God's Word in flesh – to demonstrate God's truth and grace in visible form.

Colossians 1:9 (NIV) For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him

We are called to 'Incarnation' as well

John 20:21 (NIV) As the Father has sent me, I am sending you

Matthew 5:48 (MsgB) You're kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you.

2 Corinthians 4:7 (MsgB) We carry this precious Message around in the unadorned clay pots of our ordinary lives.

1 Thessalonians 1:8 (MsgB)

The word has gotten around. Your lives are echoing the Master's Word, not only in the provinces but all over the place. The news of your faith in God is out. We don't even have to say anything anymore—you're the message!

John 17:16-18 (NIV) They are not of the world, even as I am not of it... As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.

Will you go?

Isaiah 6:8 (NIV) Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

13/12/09 – Living the Message – God With Us

The Message of Christmas:

Matthew 1:23 (NIV) The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel—which means, "God with us."

John 1:14 (NIV) The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

Dwight J. Friesen: The celebration of Christmas is the celebration of God with humanity—it is the Incarnation, Emmanuel, God with us. Fully God and fully human, Jesus by his very life and presence was mission.

REFLECT: Take a minute and just imagine Jesus walking through the door right now. He comes over and sits down next to you. Here he is: God with you, in person, in the flesh. All his attention is fixed on you: his ears to listen to you, his eyes to see you, his hands to touch, his heart to feel. Now consider these things: what would you like to say? What would you like to ask? What would you like to do?

The Message of our Lives:

Ephesians 5:1-2 (NIV) Be imitators of God as dearly loved children and live a life of love

Philippians 2:15 (MsgB) Go out into the world uncorrupted, a breath of fresh air in this squalid and polluted society. Provide people with a glimpse of good living and of the living God. Carry the light-giving Message into the night.

Matthew 5:48 (MsgB) You're kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you.

2 Corinthians 2:15-16 (NCV) We are the sweet smell of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are being lost.

2 Corinthians 4:7 (MsgB) We carry this precious Message around in the unadorned clay pots of our ordinary lives.

Dwight J. Friesen: Incarnational living invites all Christ-followers to flesh out their uniqueness, encouraging them to reflect or embody Christ. When people and their respective communities see their "being" as inevitably making the invisible Christ visible through their lives, then every interaction, every act, every moment of stillness becomes a Christ moment... now life becomes mission in a holistic sense. Mission is inevitable when Christ is incarnated, but without incarnation mission looks a lot like busy religiosity.

REFLECT:

Reflect on the Message: God with us. What does this mean to you? How does this truth impact your life?

Live the Message: How can you bring the presence of God wherever you go? What tangible ways can you express God?

03/01/10 – Living the Message:
Live IN the Message – (Part 1)

To live OUT the Message for the sake of the world, we must live IN the Message.

John 15:4-5 (NIV) No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Colossians 2:6-7 (NIV) So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him

1 John 5:20 (Msg) we are living in the Truth itself, in God's Son, Jesus Christ. This Jesus is both True God and Real Life.

1 John 4:16 (Msg) God is love. When we take up permanent residence in a life of love, we live in God and God lives in us.

Romans 12:3 (Msg) Living then, as every one of you does, in pure grace...

Romans 6:14 (Msg) You're living in the freedom of God.

Romans 6:19 (Msg) And how much different is it now as you live in God's freedom, your lives healed and expansive in holiness?

QUESTION:

What steps can you take today to Live IN the Message?

Colossians 3:1 (Msg) So if you're serious about living this new resurrection life with Christ, act like it. Pursue the things over which Christ presides.

17/01/10 - Living the Message:
Live IN the Message (Part 2)

QUESTIONS:

What has your perspective/outlook been this past week:
 - on life?

- on self?

What does this reveal about what you have been believing?

How does this compare with the truths and promises God has for your life?

John 8:32 (NIV) Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

1 John 5:20 (Msg) we are living in the Truth itself

John 3:21 (MsgB) But anyone working and living in truth and reality welcomes God-light so the work can be seen for the God-work it is.

Colossians 3:2 (MsgB) Don't shuffle along, eyes to the ground, absorbed with the things right in front of you. Look up, and be alert to what is going on around Christ—that's where the action is. See things from his perspective.

1 John 3:18-21 (MsgB) My dear children, let's not just talk about love; let's practice real love. This is the only way we'll know we're living truly, living in God's reality. It's also the way to shut down debilitating self-criticism, even when there is something to it. For God is greater than our worried hearts and knows more about us than we do ourselves. And friends, once that's taken care of and we're no longer accusing or condemning ourselves, we're bold and free before God!

QUESTION:

What 2 things can you do this week that will cause you to love God, love your neighbour, and even love your enemies

more than you did last week?

Our presence is most positively felt when we are living as we were created to be.

Matthew 5:48 (MsgB) You're kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity.

31/01/10 - Living the Message: In the workplace

Questions:

What do you consider is your workplace?
Who is your boss?

Ephesians 6:5-7 (MsgB)

Servants, respectfully obey your earthly masters but always with an eye to obeying the real master, Christ. Don't just do what you have to do to get by, but work heartily, as Christ's servants doing what God wants you to do. And work with a smile on your face, always keeping in mind that no matter who happens to be giving the orders, you're really serving God. Good work will get you good pay from the Master, regardless of whether you are slave or free.

Questions:

Are you Good News to your workplace?
What values do you take with you?

John 3 v 20-22 (NIV)

But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God."

Romans 12 v 9-10 (NIV)

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves.

John 15 v 12 (NIV)

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. This is the do as you would be done by

John 3 v 19-21 (NIV)

Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.

Colossians 3 v 12-14 (NIV)

Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Ephesians 4 v 25-27 (NIV)

Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry.

Questions:

Do I pursue God wholeheartly?
How can I be an influencer, a change maker, in my workplace?

07/02/10 – Living the Message: A Life of Love

John 3:16 (NIV) For God so loved the world...

2 Corinthians 5:18-19 (NLT) God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation.

Rob Bell: God loves the world, so a Christian does too.

Questions:

Are the negative perceptions about Christianity caused by what we believe or how we're living?

Do you live towards others (whatever their values, beliefs, lifestyle) as if God is passionately in love with them?

Is there an individual or a group that you need to view through a different lense and start to see them how God sees them?

What steps can you take this week to love others with God's love? Be specific and intentional.

14/2/10 – Living The Message – Kingdom Power

Incarnation: Jesus embodied love, grace, truth, compassion, generosity. We are called to live the same kind of life.

But we cannot cuddle people into the kingdom. There is something more – something else Jesus lived out that we are also to live out, something else Jesus embodied that we are to embody:

Kingdom Power.

1 Corinthians 2:4 (NIV) my message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power

1 Corinthians 4:20 (NIV) the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power

1 Thessalonians 1:5 (NIV) our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power

How authority works:

Luke 7:8-9 (NIV) I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, "I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel"

Let God's authority flow through you.
Speak healing and freedom.
Don't simply ask God to do it for you.

28/2/10 - Living the Message - Good News to the Poor

Luke 4:18-19 (NIV) The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.

Psalm 68:5-6 (NIV) A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families

Galatians 2:10 (NIV) continue to remember the poor