

‘WHAT SLOWS YOU DOWN?’

I recall Fabian using, in one of his talks a year or two ago, “keeping the main thing the main thing.” Our Bible readings this week invite us to consider and review what things in our lives hold us back or limit us to fully committing to “the main thing.” The challenge is how to determine our priorities.

As a committed Christian, what is the ‘main thing’? Is this the same for all Christians?

Read Matthew 6:19-24

A very well-known passage from within Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. Of course, Jesus is not simply stating that God and money are opposites, or that money, of itself, is a bad thing. His invitation is to consider what is the purpose of money within keeping the main thing the main thing. Even, not simply money, but our possessions, our savings, our very reasons for what we spend our time doing. If it is to build up treasures on earth, then, as per Don Henley’s lyric paraphrasing and cautioning this concept, ‘I’ve never seen a hearse with a loaded roof rack.’ Tom Wright cautions that Jesus is not saying ‘don’t worry about this life – get ready for the next one. Heaven here {that Jesus is speaking about} is where God is right now, and where, if you learn to love and serve God right now, you will have treasure in the present, not just in the future.’

When was the last time you looked seriously at what you primarily spend your time and energy doing or trying to achieve? How does this fit with ‘the main thing’?

What will we take with us into the next life, into eternity?

Read Hebrews 11:8-16

This passage comes within a list in praise of Old Testament Fathers/Saints emphasising faith; in Abraham and Sarah’s case, leaving the security of all that they knew, adopting a nomadic life, journeying to an unknown destination. Taking few possessions, they strove towards the promised land, living as ‘strangers in a foreign country’, yet focusing upon the main thing, in faith.

The Christian life is often likened to a journey – do you see this as a sprint or a marathon? I wonder if we have something to learn from Aesop’s fable about the hare and tortoise?

Are you someone who always needs to have everything planned and sorted before starting a journey? Is your faith journey different? If so, in what ways?

Where does God’s grace and the Holy Spirit fit into our faith journey?

Read Hebrews 12:1-2a

Here’s the challenge; “let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles.”

Are we doing what God has called us to do, or should we/you be ‘throwing off’ things that hinder or detract from doing ‘the main thing’?

Prayer: “Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour, and my hope is in you all day long.” (Psalm 25:4-5 NIV)