

Slow Down

A Word for 2020 & Beyond
Church on the Park | Sunday, 16 Feb 2020

Text: “We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised” (Heb. 6:12, NIV).

Theme: Slow down so that you can enjoy the gift of life and do not miss the Father’s will.

Intro: The usual problem when driving is not going too slow, but going too fast. In Australia, we sometimes have friendly reminder signs, which tell your speed and remind you to slow down. This is the same issue with our lives. It’s not that we go too slow, but that we go too fast. And if you go too fast you are in danger of missing God’s will, as well as hurting yourself and others. This message is entitled, ‘Slow Down,’ but it’s not encouraging you to be lazy or slothful. Instead, it’s all about you living in faith and patience so that you inherit all that God has promised.

His Plan. His Portion. His Pace.

Last week, I talked about walking at God’s pace and this week we will continue that theme.

SLOW

1) Stop & Strengthen (1 Sam. 30:1-6).

- The best food is not **fast food**, but **slow food**. Slow cooked food can absorb all the flavours.
Low and slow.
 - Today, **God** has been **at work** to **slow down** his **people**.
 - We need to **stop ministering fast food** and **serve** that which has had time to be **worked within us**.
 - God wants us to serve that which has **depth of flavour**.
- **Jacob & Esau** - Genesis 25:27-34
 - In this story, we see **Esau despise his firstborn birthright** because he wanted something **straight away—he could not wait**.
 - When you are **experiencing stress**, it’s important to **stop**.
 - **Stress** can cause you to make **bad decisions**.
 - **Stress** can also cause you to **move too fast**.
 - The **lack of slowing down** causes worry, anxiety, self-imposed stress, depression, exhaustion and the robbing of joy.
 - **If only Esau stopped and prayed**, drawing his strength from God, things would have been much different for him.
 - Instead Esau chose **temporary pleasure** rather than **eternal reward**. He choose **his will** over **God’s will**.
 - This is why you need to stop. It’s so you can choose God’s will over your own understanding, feelings and hunger.
 - **Fast forward** about a thousand years and the **Amalekites, Esau’s descendants, attack David’s base**, Ziklag (1 Sam. 30:1-6).
 - The **Amalekites steal everything** David and his soldiers had, as well as **burn** the base to the ground.
 - The situation for David and his men was very **bleak**. They were so distraught that they **couldn’t stop weeping**.
 - The people became so angry at **David** that they were **talking of stoning him**.
 - *Why is this story important?*
 - I believe God wants his people to **rise up in 2020 and take back** what has been **stolen** from them by the evil one.
 - The lessons from this story will help us.
 - David did not let the **grief take him over**. It’s very easy for grief to eat you up, swallowing you one bite at a time.

- The **turning point**: “But David **strengthened** himself in Yahweh his God” (1 Sam. 30:6c).
 - The root word for strengthened is the same one God spoke to **Joshua after Moses** died: **hazaq**.
 - (Joshua 1:6) חָזַק וְאַמְּץ
- *How did David strengthen himself?*
 - **Psalm 62:5ff** is a good example.
- *What if David did not stop and strengthen himself in God?*
 - He would have been swallowed up with grief.
 - His men probably would have stoned him.
 - He would have lost everything.
- Instead, when David stop and **strengthened** himself he received God’s **strategy** to recover all.

2) Listen & Look (1 Sam. 30:7-8).

- David **inquired** of the Lord in order to **listen** to what he had to say (1 Sam. 30:7-8).
 - David did not just **assume** to know God’s will. Instead, he sought it.
- “We don’t know what to do, but **our eyes are on you**” – Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 20:12)
- “Thus says the Lord, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, I am the Lord your God who teaches you to profit [ascend], who leads you in the way you should go, ‘If only you had **paid attention** to my commandments! Then **your welling being** (שְׁלוֹמֶךָ) [shalom] would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea” (Isa. 48:17-18).
- *When David listened for God, how did God respond?*
 - *What is God’s response to your situation? What does he want to say?*
- You can **hear God for yourself**, but also **submit what you are hearing** to brothers, sisters and leaders.
 - Get their input too. You be able to make sure you are on the right track.
 - **Rehoboam** split the kingdom because he listened to the youth rather than his elders (1 Kings 12:8).

3) Obey (1 Sam. 30:9-10).

- David went in **pursuit** of the Amalekites because **God said so**.
- He went to **recover all** that was stolen from him.
 - *What has the enemy stolen from you? What do you need to take back?*
 - Don’t do it yourself, but have a **‘band of brothers/sisters’ with you**.
- Remember, God has promised you **“every spiritual blessing in Christ”** (Eph. 1:3).
 - You’ll need to **fight** for everyone.
- The enemy loves to rob people of the fruit of love, joy, peace and patience. He loves to steal relationships. He wants to take away from you the riches of God’s Word.
 - The battle for these things is fought in prayer.
- It’s in **obeying God** that you experience **the power of God’s word**.

4) Watch & Wait (1 Sam. 30:11-20).

- “So David **recovered all** that the Amalekites had taken...” (1 Sam. 30:18).
- Even though many men (**200; 1/3**) **dropped out** on him, **God still made a way**...through an Egyptian man.
- When you obey God, watch what your Father will do.
 - Look at Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 20:22-25).
- The cross was all about **Jesus** taking back what the devil had stolen.
 - **Look** to the **cross** and you will be healed and restored.
- David was **generous**. He gave gifts to all the men (even those who stayed back), as well as all the Israelites around him (1 Sam. 30:21-31).
- Up until this time, this was **David’s greatest test**.
 - **Afterwards**, God **delivered** him from **Saul** (1 Samuel 31).
 - But, what if David gave up at this point?
 - He would have never became king.
 - We probably would not be celebrating him.

Conclusion: Slow down so that you can enjoy the gift of life your Father has given you. Slow down so that you can hear his voice. Slow down so that you don't spin out of control and burn out. Slow down so that you can spend time with your heavenly Father. Slow down so that you can be filled up. Just as a car needs to stop to be refilled, you too must stop to be filled up with God's Spirit.