

Reflections on the message by David Elms on Sunday 11th April 2010

“Faith Without Works Is Dead”

Times are changing for Christians, but these things were prophesied in the Bible. The days are short; they are dark, but God has given us the light. They are to make us stronger.

The Jews do not have an “Old Testament”. It is not a Biblical term. The whole Bible is the word of God. The Jews call their scriptures the Tanakh. To call the books of Moses “The Law” gives the wrong meaning of the Torah, when Jesus referred to it. Jesus came to give it a richer meaning, not to abolish it. What is the Torah, if not law?

In the Torah there are 613 commandments. The Jews came up with many more minutiae but the original is really a way of life. For Christians, their whole way of life should be very different from the way of the world. The day is coming where they will have to stand up for the Lord. There have been court cases against them that are indicative of where our land is at. The financial crisis is not a coincidence but a reaping of what we have sowed. We must start to proclaim and not be afraid. We need to go wherever God has called us.

The early Christians walked in a particular way. We are not to be offensive people but we are to make a stand for Jesus, though we will be spoken evil of and put down.

There is a misconception that we are saved by faith. The fact is that we are saved by a faith that is worked out. In the sight of God, deeds and works are important. Romans 2:4-8. Everyone will receive according to their deeds. Faith must result in action (Greek, *ergon*). When truly born again we begin to do something that is different, forgetting the former manner of life. We don't want to pay the price, but we have no rights for we have become slaves of Christ. The *doulos* slave that Paul speaks of being was the lowest form of slavery in the ancient world. It must be like this in our attitudes.

We feel we are not capable of doing this but God gives us the power to do so.

Revelation 16:9-11 describes events just before Armageddon. God is longing for men everywhere to repent but people still choose the lower, degraded way. We are seeing it in our country. Luke 3:8. John the Baptist called religious people a “brood of vipers”. He tells them to bring forth fruits in keeping with their repentance. Sometimes it is hard to do the deeds of God but He has called us to a unique way of living. One day *every* knee will bow and *every* tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:10-11).

Keep on walking. Keep on running the race. Repentance means to refuse one way and to choose the other. God is looking deep into our hearts and wants us to do things for the love of God and not out of habit.

Acts 19:11-12. In this day in which Christians around the world are being persecuted, they have everything in Jesus Christ. There will be a release of healing and a mighty deliverance. The truth will be revealed. Paul preached Jesus Christ unashamedly in a pagan world. Do not let us bring in compromise. Do all that you do in the name of Jesus, for that Name has saved you.

Acts 19:17-20. They were talking about Jesus Christ and lived for Him. The people kept coming to confess their sins. Is there anything dishonouring to Jesus in your house? Are there things to be thrown away or destroyed? Lift Jesus up higher and never be ashamed. Do not back down! Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's (Matthew 22:21, Mark 12:17, Luke 20:25). Let Jesus refine you. At first it is hard, but then you begin to move on with God. “Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee”. Are you walking? We are pilgrims in a journey. People need to get rid of things that are binding them and holding them back. Revelation 2 was written to historical churches but has eternal relevance. God says to the church at Ephesus, “I know

your deeds.” God knows what we are doing. This was for believers, but He says to them, “you have left your first love”. We are called to repent and to have a zeal for God. The wells of revival need to be unblocked. God wants us to be in a Spirit-filled life of repentance. God also spoke to the church at Thyatira (Revelation 2:20-23). God wants us to be a righteous, pure people but we live in a dirty age. It matters to God. He wants us to shun all acts of immorality, and to be different to the people of this world. If we do it God’s way, we will be blessed and fulfilled. If we fail, God is forgiving but we have to walk along a different route. If we do we will fulfil our destiny in God.

Revelation 20:11-15. The other side of God’s love is God’s judgement. We don’t want to live in a heaven that is a continuation of this evil earth. These things will happen. The dead will be raised. We don’t look forward to it, but we are looking forward to seeing Jesus.

Faith without deeds is not faith. Changed actions and conversations is what it is all about. Revelation 22:11-14. These are the words of God. We are in the days, not of compromise, but of advance. You can know all the right language and ritual, but without corresponding deeds, faith is dead (James 2:26). God has called us to be living examples (James 3:13). You will lose some things for following Christ. Will it make you bitter, or better? Get amongst people who are praying and cry out for our land. What do you claim for Jesus? We have to take land back for Him.

Exodus 1:15-21 has implications for the medical profession concerning abortion. For their obedience to Him, God blessed the midwives. The Church has stayed too long in Egypt and God is calling it out. It is a day for proclamation.