



Sunday, July 29, 2012

Our Rock in Times of Trouble

Speaker: Scott Masson

Scripture: Psalm 61

Sermon Notes:

1. As a church, we speak to the issues of our day insisting on the abiding relevance of every Word of Scripture for our culture.
2. If Jesus is King, then His Word has life relevance for us today.
3. As Christians we're not to *adopt* the culture, but we're to *adapt* the Scripture applying it to our culture.
4. Translation is a form of adaptation. The Koran, it is said, cannot be translated. Therefore Islamic culture is effectively Arab culture.
5. God's truth is applied truth and it challenges every culture. It seems anti-traditional to traditional cultures, and conservative to permissive cultures like ours.
6. Christianity has given us equality before the law, equal personhood for women, etc.
7. We live today in times of trouble; in order to live a full life as creatures under God we must abide by God's Word.
8. The heroes of children's fiction are inevitably orphans, inspiring children to grow up distanced from any personal connection with the past: they are self-reliant with no natural instructors, and no parental authority.
9. There's an agenda in this: we want to make ourselves as gods, (cf. Gen 3:5); radical autonomy and rebellion are the norm.
10. Young people today still feel they're rebellious even though they're conforming to establishment rebellion.
11. Rebellion is seen in the form of "being gay." This is encouraged in the public schools, the assumption being that the human heart is good, and whatever it desires must be worth pursuing.
12. Jesus counters the view that purity is external (Matt. 15:17-20).
13. The real problem is the sinfulness of the human heart; we need a heart transplant.
14. The heart is the center of our being, and it is corrupted, producing adulteries and fornication.
15. God gives us new hearts so that we are able to follow Him.
16. The Bible convicts everyone, conservative or liberal. We are biased judges when we reject God's Word because we're guilty.
17. Scripture says we are sinners unable to save ourselves. Since God has saved us, we lose all authority over our lives.
18. To become a Christian you're going to lose your life, but in a more important sense you'll gain your life.
19. Only when Christ is our Lord, can we call God our Father. The Spirit then operates within us enabling us to obey.
20. If God is Lord and He now rules, why is His rule contradicted? History is light enveloping the darkness (cf. Heb. 12:26).
21. We're being shaken so that God's people may be purified; the false church is being exposed, shaken and removed.
22. In Psalm 61, David seeks stability as he feels far away from God, excluded from God's people.
23. David's prayer is answered and the consequences of David's sin are stopped at the Rock of Araunah (2 Sam 24:18-24).
24. The rock symbolizes the Lord who will save David; David is asking to take refuge in the shelter of the Lord, the Rock.
25. David anticipates what God has promised, namely that we can sit in His presence forever (cf. Genesis 3:15).
26. When we are uncertain, we can be confident in our God the Rock (Exodus 33:13, 19-23).
27. God's hold on us is infinitely strong. Our faith is the work of the Holy Spirit which binds us to Christ (Col. 3:1-3; John 10:28).
28. David's request to be 'under the shadow of your wings' envisages the angels portrayed on the cover of the ark of the covenant. The place on the ark he envisages is usually translated 'the mercy seat.'
29. The 'mercy seat' is where God Himself was thought to reside. David is longing to be seated on the mercy seat with the King of Mercy.
30. David promises to sing praises forever, because he knows he'll be in God's presence.
31. If we've sinned, been rebellious, or self-reliant; if we think our faith is based on us hanging onto God; then we must come to recognize that we as Christians are not our own, we're under the authority of the One who saved us.

Application Questions:

1. How is a book that is 2000-3000 years old applicable to the 21st century world? What makes the Bible relevant to all cultures East and West, North and South?
2. What is the real problem with the human race? What is the solution for this problem?
3. Can unbelievers call God “our Father”? How do we become God’s children?
4. If the public school system encourages conformity to all forms of rebellion as its norm, how will that affect the character and education of the children?
5. How is God “our Rock” in times of trouble? How is God a Rock to Christians suffering violent persecution?
6. Jesus Christ will return as a just Judge, yet He sits on the ‘Mercy Seat.’ What does this tell us about God?