

Repositioning: A Radical Re-Orientation to the First Day of the Week

Part 1

1/7/24

Thesis: Putting Jesus first in our week could change our orientation to life, work, and our week.

Introduction

A. I know this church likes it when I preach hard.

1. So this month might be right up your alley.
2. Over the next couple of weeks, I would like permission to say some hard things.
3. And I ask that you receive what I say with the love that I intend even though it may feel more personal than usual.

B. This month's messages could result in drastic changes in your life and family.

1. Ultimately, you will be closer to God and walk in more power than ever before. But it will come at a cost.
2. But I feel that if I do not share, then we will find ourselves, individually and corporately, far from where we need to be.
3. Today, I feel like a physician giving medical advice to the client.
4. Ultimately, it's up to each of us to follow through.

Main Text

Revelation 1:9–11 (CSB)

⁹I, John, your brother and partner in the affliction, kingdom, and endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. ¹⁰I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard a loud voice behind me like a trumpet saying, "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea."

1. John's Experience

A. John, one of the twelve disciples, is exiled to Patmos.

1. History suggests that authorities tried to kill John like the others by plunging him into a vat of oil, but his enemies couldn't kill him.
2. His death is not recorded in Scripture, but he seems to be the only one of the early Apostles to die a natural death, sometime around 98AD in Ephesus.

B. It is possible that John wrote his other letters in Ephesus.

1. But this Revelation was written from the isle of Patmos.
2. The Isle of Patmos is an island that the Romans used to exile prisoners.
3. It was a way of removing people from the scene without killing them outright.
4. The Romans were also notorious for assassinating those they exiled while they were away from the public's eye.

C. I say this because I want you to notice that John's greatest revelation came not in a comfortable place but in a place of exile.

1. This was not a desirable place or position to be.
 - a. Surely, God could not speak to John there.
 - b. Surely, John would be silenced while in exile.
2. Yet, Patmos became a holy place as God met John there.

3. But if John had waited for a better place, he would have missed the Greatest Revelation of Jesus.

4. This is where the conviction, at least for me, begins.

D. I think many of us today are waiting for better days so that God can speak to us.

1. We WANT God to speak.

a. We want to encounter Him.

b. We want to draw closer.

c. We want more.

d. But we don't believe that God can meet us in our chaos.

1. We don't believe God will move where we are.

2. We don't think God can bless "this mess."

3. So we keep saying, "someday".

4. Or maybe we've given up:

5. We believe that great encounters with God are for other people but not for us.

2. Yet Scripture shows us that it is the exiled places, the hard places, and the wilderness places that God shows himself most clearly.

3. He did this with Moses, Elijah, John, and countless others throughout history.

4. And God wants to meet you in those hard places, and the mundane, and the crazy.

E. My fellow believer, I have good news: you don't have to...

1. wait till you retire,

2. wait till the kids move out,

3. wait until everything is perfect to experience and know God.

4. I submit to you that if you wait for the perfect opportunity, you will never.

F. On the contrary, what if each week we experienced more of God than ever before?

1. What if each week, we grew bit by bit, precept upon precept, experience upon experience!
2. To use a football analogy:
 - a. There are two ways to move the football down the field.
 - b. You can throw the ball or run the ball.
 - c. Most of us live by the hail-Mary instead of running the ball play after play, yard after yard.
 - d. We sacrifice regular progress in hopes of a wild chance.
3. What would it take for all of us to know God better?
4. John's experience and practice give us an incredible starting point to begin experiencing more of God's presence in our lives.

2. In the Spirit...

A. John says he was in the Spirit.

1. What does he mean?
 - a. Likely, John has been praying, worshipping, and seeking God, and while "in the Spirit," the Lord spoke to him.
 - b. This could mean that he was in a sort of trance.
2. But John acts like this is normal.
 - a. Was John "in the Spirit" on accident or on purpose?
 - b. It seems that he was "in the Spirit" on purpose when God decided to Reveal Jesus in this way.
 - c. John uses this phrase a few times in Revelation.

d. But it seems normal for John to spend time with God in the Spirit.

B. I can confidently say that NONE of us are going to have a revelation like this one that is inspired and becomes Scripture. (not the goal)

1. But the New Testament does show us a life of being “in the Spirit” that is far richer than what most of us are experiencing.

2. A life of:

a. Spiritual intimacy.

b. Spiritual power

c. Spiritual contentment.

C. The opposite of being “in the Spirit” is being “in the flesh.”

1. Hear what the Apostle Paul said in Romans 8

Romans 8:1–11 (CSB)

8 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus,¹ because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. ²For what the law could not do since it was weakened by the flesh, God did. He condemned sin in the flesh by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh as a sin offering,³ in order that the law’s requirement would be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁴For those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit have their minds set on the things of the Spirit. ⁵Now the mindset of the flesh is death, but the mindset of the Spirit is life and peace. ⁶The mindset of the flesh is hostile to God because it does not submit to God’s law. Indeed, it is unable to do so. ⁷Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁸You, however, are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him. ⁹Now if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. ¹⁰And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, then he who raised Christ from the

dead will also bring your mortal bodies to life through his Spirit who lives in you.

2. The Apostle Paul compared a life in the flesh, bound by law, sin, and death, and life in the Spirit.

3. We have ALL lived life in the flesh.

4. Now, it is time for us to live "in the Spirit" and by the Spirit.

D. John was not defined by his location but by his position.

1. He could have complained about being in Patmos.

2. Instead, he understood that his bodily limitations were not spiritual limitations.

a. Just as Paul and Silas praised Jesus while in prison, John was worshipping in exile.

b. Though our bodies may be here, our internal life can be In the Spirit.

E. What would happen if we no longer allowed our physical environment to determine our spiritual involvement?

1. Is it not the goal for us to worship God in all seasons at all times?

2. So, why do we allow our settings to influence our worship?

a. The Samaritan woman at the well was greatly concerned with location.

b. But Jesus said a day was coming when we will worship "in Spirit and in Truth."

3. I believe there is a depth of worship that most of us, myself included, is missing out.

a. It's like going to the Caribbean and never going to the beach.

b. Or going to the beach but never stepping in the water.

- c. Or stepping in the water but never diving below.
- d. We are surrounded by beauty and opportunity but we are missing out because we are in the “flesh” instead of “in the Spirit.”

3. In the Spirit... on the Lord's Day.

A. This phrase “on the Lord's Day” is going to be discussed in GREAT detail next week.

- 1. Next week, I'm going to show you from Scripture and Church history why we gather on Sunday.
- 2. And why this gathering is crucial to a healthy, vibrant life.
 - a. So please do not miss next week.
 - b. And if you do miss, promise me you will watch or listen to the online broadcast on YouTube.

B. Notice that even in exile, John was worshipping on the Lord's Day, which is Sunday.

- 1. He didn't miss this opportunity with the Lord.
- 2. He didn't miss this weekly, regular gathering between him and the Lord.
- 3. And it was on this random Sunday, while John did what he normally did, that the Lord gave him this great revelation.

4. Pursuing the Lord on the Lord's Day.

A. We are all in different stages of our walk with Jesus.

- 1. Whether you are brand new or a long-time Christian, it all begins with worshipping Jesus on the Lord's Day.
- 2. I want to give all of us a few measurable steps we can all take that could elevate our personal Christian walk and our worship services.

B. Next Steps:

1. **Start with the biggest win:**

- a. Sometimes, showing up is the biggest win you have all week.
- b. First, you show up.
- c. We always miss out when we don't show up.

2. Next: **Participate in the regular worship.**

- a. We participate by singing, praying, lifting hands, taking notes, giving in the offering, and responding to the altar time.
- b. Engaging God in the service is so important for each of us.
- c. More than likely, even now, the Holy Spirit is showing you an area that should be your next step.

3. Then, **we practice worship at home throughout the week.**

- a. This can include reading the Bible through.
- b. This can include playing worship music in the background,
- c. Praying with your spouse and kids.
- d. The weekly habits are our strength.
- e. Everything else flows from our personal life.

4. **Start early: Sunday begins Saturday night.**

- a. Let me show you something:
 - 1. When God created the earth and separated the light from darkness, Gen 1:5 says, "There was evening and morning, the first day.
 - 2. Each subsequent day says the same: Evening, then morning...

b. To this day, observant Jews begin their day not at first light but in the evening.

1. We begin our day with work and then end with rest.

2. The Jewish calendar begins with rest and ends with work.

3. I submit to you that our preparation for making the most of the Lord's Day begins the night before.

c. What if we begin our days from a place of rest instead of a place of productivity?

Apply. For the next few minutes, we are going to worship some more.

A. Many weeks, the first couple of songs only whet our appetites.

1. By the time we push aside our week and deal with our flesh and are ready to worship, it's time to stop.

2. So, today, we are going to worship with two more songs.

B. During this time, I want to invite you to ask Holy Spirit to minister to you.

1. Take the next step:

2. If that's closing your eyes and worshipping, unafraid of your neighbor, then do it.

3. If it is lifting holy hands, then go ahead.

4. If you want prayer, grab the hand of someone you trust and pray.

C. Today, on the Lord's Day, we worship.