

6 FEBRUARY 2022 'Here am I. Send ME!' Isaiah 6:1-8

These words from Isaiah always jump out and grab me; 'Here I am. Send me!' Is that your response to Jesus' call? 'Here I am. Send me!'?

At this point in time I might be tempted to say; 'Here's Pastor David. Send him!'

What's my response to Jesus' call on my life?

Leading up to this point we heard Isaiah cry out; 'Woe to me. I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.'

Isaiah recognises his own sin; how far away from God he is. How far away from doing God's will he is. The beauty of God amplifies his loss, highlights his disfigured existence.

Who of us here today could truly claim to be perfect; without fault, right all the time? Who of us could tell God that he has to accept us, as we are, on our terms?

Isaiah doesn't respond to God's call on his life because Isaiah believes he's perfect, the best boy for the job. Actually Isaiah tried to use his age to get out of going.

Thankfully, God acts first. God acts before he calls Isaiah.

An angel takes a 'live coal from the altar and he touches Isaiah's mouth' and says; 'your guilt is taken away and your sins atoned for.'

Of course God has acted first in our lives. He's done something far more powerful than taking a few live coals from the altar; he has come in person and given his life for us. Jesus has touched our lives and in him our sins have been atoned for.

In Jesus what an amazing change. In Jesus we no longer live in fear of God, but we live in his loving embrace. Never because we deserve it, but because Jesus was willing to give his life for us. In Jesus, God has touched his heart to our heart and we know his loving presence. We get to live with him in an intimate relationship of love and affection, lived out in a conversational atmosphere.

In Jesus, God has acted first, before he calls us to follow. Before he calls you to follow. Not only has God acted by giving his life for us through Jesus crucifixion, he has also poured his presence into us through the Holy Spirit. God, in person, is with you.

Do you hear God saying; 'Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?'

I mightn't hear those exact words but in life I run across people; and it's there that Jesus is asking me to be his living presence to them. Everyday I run across situations where Jesus is asking me to be his living presence in that situation.

I must admit that I don't always put up my hand and say; 'Here I am. Send me!'

I could say; 'I'm not the pastor; here's David, send him'. Can David be the answer to God's call on my life, or do I need to live my own life; live out my own faith?

What do you think; can I pass the buck and make it someone else's responsibility? Or is Jesus calling me, personally, because he wants me to join him in his great adventure of life. Jesus' passion is that we live life, to the full. I've noticed that avoiding doing life isn't the way to live life to the full.

Thank God, Jesus invites me to join him in living in his adventure. Thank God, Jesus asks me to go and be his loving presence in people's lives and different circumstances.

Today we also heard from Paul; who could have said to Jesus, 'I'm not good enough, you'll have to send someone else'. No, Paul knew he wasn't good enough, that just made Jesus' love, grace, mercy all the more precious to him. So Paul knew if God could forgive him, he could heal anyone, no matter what. Paul emboldened by Jesus amazing grace puts up his hand, time and time again.

'Here I am Jesus. Send me!'

Was Paul always received warmly? Was his life a breeze? Paul was attacked, beaten, literally left for dead, but each time he gets up and says; 'Here I am Jesus. Send me!'

We also had the call of Peter today. Jesus asks Peter to put his nets out after he's just cleaned up from a fruitless night of fishing. I'd have been tempted to tell Jesus; 'Mate, you know I'm a professional fisherman. I think I know what I'm doing.' But Peter simply responds; 'because you say so, I will let down the nets'. And the rest is history as the saying goes; he got more fish than he could handle alone.

So Peter left his profession and says; 'Here I am Jesus. Send me!'

Today Jesus is calling you. Jesus is calling you to join him in saving the world. That's what Jesus has come to do; save the world; one person at a time. Jesus has come to touch people, personally, so that they too might live in his Father's loving embrace.

What an exciting and fulfilling adventure Jesus is inviting you to join him in. He wants you; he's calling you, because Jesus doesn't want you to miss out on life; life lived to the full with him.

Today I pray you hear Jesus calling you; calling you through the person sitting next to you. Calling you through the person who doesn't agree with your stance on worship. Calling you through the people you'll meet this week; that no-one else will.

Pastor David won't meet the people you will this week at the times and places you do. So you have the wonderful opportunity to be Jesus' presence to them; to speak Jesus' words to them.

I pray that we each personally say; 'Here I am Jesus. Send me!'

For Jesus has equipped us; we are forgiven. In him we have the Spirit. And he is ready, willing and able to respond to our calls for help.

Jesus I don't know what to say? So Jesus offer is; 'ask me, and I'll answer'. Isn't that fantastic; I don't have to have all the answers, I can ask at the point of interaction; listen to Jesus response and then act.

I know one reason I sometimes give for not doing something is that I don't know how, or I don't have the experience needed. Now that might be true in certain circumstances; but not if Jesus has called me into the situation. You can ask him with the full confidence that he will answer. After all you've got his word on it.

Jesus won't abandon you. If he's called you to a certain situation or person, he's there with you. The Holy Spirit is there with you, in person. So ask; with the full confidence that Jesus will respond. Grab that first thought and go for it.

Here I am Jesus. Send me!

You may have noticed that God got Isaiah to speak words that the people didn't want to hear. Paul often said things that got people furious at him. Sometimes Jesus might put you in a tricky situation, or one where people are not happy with you.

That's when we really need to hear from Jesus, so that we are speaking his word and not simply responding to what's going on.

Here I am Jesus. Send me! What would you have me say, what do you want me to do? How can I walk with you in this situation?

I like the prayer asking that I might say what I hear Jesus saying and do what I see Jesus doing.

Remember what Jesus said to Peter; 'Don't be afraid'. Don't be afraid, keep your eyes on me, is what Jesus says. And when we keep our eyes on Jesus, why we might even be able to walk on water.

This week Jesus is calling you to be his personal presence to people and in situations. Through a babies cry, a friend's need, a situation at work or within the family. Jesus is calling you. Jesus is asking; 'Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?'

I pray the Holy Spirit enlivens your heart and you recognise Jesus' call in that situation or through that person.

I pray the Holy Spirit enlivens your spirit and you respond; with eyes fixed on Jesus; 'Here I am. Send me!'

Then ask Jesus what to do and say; grab that first thought, and take that step of faith and join Jesus in his great quest of life.