

Kailua Christian Church
Sunday Message
Sun. February 21, 2021
Pastor Dale Vallejo-Sanderson

“Healing, Healthy and Helping”
Vision for a new season

Healthy

*Where changes to love God and others better
Are encouraged and developed*

“All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, (kindly or pleasant) and My burden is light.” Matthew 11:27-30

It was in the early morning as I am nearly fully awake, yet relaxed and savoring the comfort of a night’s sleep. Much had been on my mind of the challenging days of turmoil the church I was pastor was facing. It was if a movie began in my mind. I found myself in the inside bottom of a wooden ship, standing on the keel that runs from the front to the back at the bottom of the hull. The ribs of the hull were attached to the keel and loomed up the hull on either side of me. I stood alone on top of the keel with three ropes in my right hand that extended to the right front of the ship, the middle and the stern behind me. The same was true in my left hand. Three large ropes in each hand. I was straining to hold them taut with all that I had. I was getting tired, sweating and muscles aching, yet I was determined to hold on. Just then I heard footsteps approaching from behind me down at the bottom of the ship. I heard a voice, that I somehow knew immediately in my dream it was Jesus. “What are you doing?” He asked. “I am holding the ship together, trying to keep it from falling apart” I answered with a gasp of exhaustion. “I did not ask you to do this, and besides that, this is my ship, not yours. Let it go.” I woke with a profound sense of relief. I was both humbled by the realization of my own faulty thinking that I was fully responsible for the church, both its rise and fall as if I owned it. And I realized I was holding on for fear of failing, losing and being responsible for whatever may come.

In this dream, Jesus reminded me that the church I served was His church, His people. I was called to work with Him, alongside of Him, but it is His church. How the church does and goes is ultimately in His hands. Remarkably, this set me free to serve better, less anxious, more open to seek His direction and way. It wasn’t completely automatic, nor easy. He was calling me to take His yoke to humbly learn from His gentle ways that gave rest for my soul and those around me and strength for our serving better.

Jesus encourages and develops each one of us to love better by...

I. Welcoming us to share our burdens with Him.

"...nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:27b-28

Jesus said we can only know the Father and Him if He chooses to reveal Him to us. And Jesus does choose to let us know the Father by welcoming anyone and each of us to Himself. He welcomes us in our weaknesses, struggles, disparate needs, loneliness, and discouragements. He doesn't need or require us to try to be worthy, just real. When we are exhausted by the circumstances of our lives, He is here waiting and welcoming. He wants to hear and carry each of our burdens. All He ask is that we be real, honest and trust Him with what weighs us down. Let the shame, guilt, trying so hard we try to carry alone be set aside, He welcomes you and me.

- *What makes you weary at this time in your life? Can you simply share that with Jesus?*

Jesus encourages and develops each one of us to love better by...

II. Inviting us to learn how to release what is hurting us.

"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." Matt. 11:29

It is not easy to release what seems to hound us in our thoughts, robs us of sleep and peace. Sometimes the thoughts, aches, confusion and hurt can seem inconsolable. Jesus understands and has ways to help us release these ongoing agonies. Jesus works through loving and faithful friends who carefully listen and support you. Jesus works through trusted wise counselors, Pastors, professional counselors, and spiritual directors. There are often many who may be quickly to give advice. Yet a good and gifted listener, who ask helpful questions can be amazingly helpful in helping us hear Christ's encouragement to learn a new way to release what has been holding us for so long.

- **What ways of thinking and patterns of choice have you made that keeps you over busy, over controlling, avoiding pain? Are you willing to seek wise counsel to learn another way from Christ?**

Jesus encourages and develops each one of us to love better by...

III. Giving His kindness and delight to us for who we are in this day.

"For My yoke is easy, (kindly or pleasant) and My burden is light." Matthew 11:27-30

Jesus encourages us in order to develop us to love better. He does this by loving us better than we have known before. Most of us are so shaped by the demands of our families we grew up in, the ways and culture of our surroundings and the demands of our community that requires perfection, performances, and presentation of our selves so not to bring embarrassment to our family or ourselves. Often well intended by family, relatives, teachers, and leaders, even friends, we find it difficult to believe and receive God's generous kindness and even delight in who we are, even in our flawed ways. It is difficult to truly give kindness and delight to others if we refuse it from God for ourselves. Sometimes our desire to care for others can bring us to a new level of surrendering ourselves to God's healing kindness and delight that He wants to share with us. It is His unconditional love that motivates Christ in all He says, does, and gives. It is being faithful to Christ to receive His kindness and delight, so that we may be kind and givers of delight to encourage and develop others to know Christ more personally.

- **Will you allow yourself to receive Jesus kindness and delight He has for you? If not, why not?**