



# THE SUNDAY MESSAGE

## THE MOUNTAIN

sunday 10 october

Talking through the message during the week helps you turn what God is saying to you into action steps.

These notes provide some ideas to reflect upon about what we are to achieve in this life.

### *Why do people climb mountains?*

 **Matthew 14:23** and **Matthew 5:1-2**

The famous answer from mountaineers is “because it is there”. But we are not all mountaineers, so for the rest of us the reason is usually to get a view of the surrounding area where we spend most of our life. People who want maximum view for minimum effort go to the Sky Tower. The difference between Sky Tower and a high hill is the positive effect on our body and mind from the effort of walking up to a high place where we are usually alone to enjoy the reward of the view. The Sky Tower provides an efficient and outstanding view but it lacks the privacy of the moment, the sounds of birds, the smell of nature and the feel of a breeze we gain on a hilltop. When we climb a hill to be alone with God we are often rewarded with His presence if we will just stop and wait as we enjoy His creation. Now that’s a reason to climb a mountain.

### *Do you have to go to a ‘mountain top’ to meet God?*

 **1 Samuel 1:8-28** and **John 21:1-14**

The answer is clearly no, but it does help when we do find a ‘mountain place’ to meet with God. It might be a garden, a beach, a boat on the lake or the harbour, a place in our home, our car, a park, a Sunday church service, a special experience like a conference or a special time of the day or week. If you have a ‘mountain place’ in your life when did you last visit it and meet with God? Was it today or last week or last month or quite a while ago? If it has been a while it is time to get back to it or find a new ‘mountain place’ because we were not made to go for long periods of time separated from meeting with God. Someone once said if you find yourself separated from God go back to where you last meet with Him and start from there. That might have been reading the Bible, being in worship, listening to preaching, praying, fasting or being with other believers who are on fire for God. Peter did this when he returned to fishing and met with Jesus once again.

### *Do I have to come back down from the ‘mountain’?*


 Look at **Genesis 5:23-24** & **Hebrews 11:5** and **Daniel 6:10-28**

Yes and no. ‘Yes’ because most of us need to return to the normality of our life: family, work, study, cleaning, cooking, leisure, commuting or helping others. God’s plan is for the church to be among the people who do not know the saving power of Jesus. This means coming away from the times of intimacy, often alone with God, and being light and salt to those around about is in our words, our actions and our love. The answer can also be ‘no’ because as we grow in intimacy with God we discover that the gap between the mountain top encounters and the normality of life narrows so that we enjoy intimacy anywhere and in any circumstance.

## NEXT STEPS

If it feels difficult to find your mountain place to meet with God then that’s normal. The reason is because the devil continues to resist anything we do to draw close to God in worship, prayer and fellowship. He does so in cunning ways which are easily overlooked, many times because they look like good things (**2 Corinthians 2:8-11**). If we plan to become more intimate with Jesus and to be increasingly led by the Holy Spirit in all parts of our life we can expect resistance. Identify it and fix your eye on the goal (**Hebrews 12:1**). Anything less will probably fail and we will be trapped in a web of apathy, passivity and busyness.

The truth is that you can achieve this. You can meet God on the mountain. You can return to the normality of life and be different and influence others towards good. There is absolutely no doubt that this is the will of God for you.

 **Philippians 4:8-9** and **James 3:17**

### Hearing God

There are a couple in the City Campus who, among other things, have a ministry showing people that they can hear God speaking. I’ve heard them pray and welcome God into the gathering. It is powerfully anointed so that faith to be able to hear Him easily arises. I’ve seen them ministering and heard testimonies of people who were amazed and delighted with their experiences hearing God speaking to them in a variety of creative ways.

Why do so many of us think it will be hard to hear from God when we need to? For example, we have a major decision to make and really want God’s direction. Jesus knew He would hear from God when He went up a mountain to choose His closest disciples (Luke 6:12-16). This couple in the City Campus also expect to hear from God when they meet with Him. It comes from years of experience building faith and walking with increasing holiness. God wants us to hear Him directly more than He wants us to be totally reliant on others hearing for us. This is called growing up. He will do everything we allow Him to do to help us to grow up (Hebrews 5:12-14).