

**Today**

Luke 4:14-21

January 24, 2010

Someday ...

Someday Haiti will find its feet. Someday the cycle of disaster and corruption and exploitation that keeps so many of its people living on the edge of survival will be broken. Someday their neighbors, we, will stop looking past the Haitian people, remembering they exist not only when catastrophe engulfs them.

Someday we will see them. not as destitute, pitiable, backward, hopeless, but as they are: vibrant and creative, resilient and resourceful, joyful in faith. Someday we will see them, not as charity cases, people in need of us, but as neighbors, people we need.

Someday Haiti will rise from the rubble and the ashes and be a nation among nations, a proud and prosperous and peaceful people.

Someday we will fix our healthcare system. Someday we will find a way to deliver high quality health care, not just to some, but to all. Someday we will stop defending our own turf, our own benefits, our own bottom lines, and start paying attention to the benefits and bottom lines of the people as a whole. Someday the debate will be less about politics and protecting personal interests and more about doing the right thing.

Someday you will get a handle on the addiction that threatens your well-being. Someday you will stop smoking, stop gambling, stop drinking, stop taking pills, stop using pornography, stop overeating, stop endlessly surfing the net. Someday you'll ask for help. Someday you will realize you are worth more and deserve better than that.

Someday you will change your life. Someday you'll find the courage to work on a broken relationship. Someday you'll find the courage to say I'm sorry. Someday you'll find the courage to speak the truth, even when it hurts, even when somebody might get mad at you or ditch you for saying it. Someday you'll take the time to do the things that really matter to you, the things that really matter period, instead of the things you think you have to do.

Someday the poor will hear good news. Someday the sick will be healed. Someday the oppressed will be set free. Someday you will be saved.

Someday ...

But someday never comes.

Do you know what inertia is?

*A property of matter by which it continues in its existing state of rest or uniform motion in a straight line, unless that state is changed by an external force ...*

Inertia is just as much a property of human behavior as it is of the behavior of matter. People get moving, we get moving, human institutions get moving in a certain direction and it's hard to change! It's hard to change even when we want to, even when we know it is in our best interest. We are subject to the inertia of identity and history, of outside pressures and personal habit, the inertia of expectation and routine and convenience.

The fact is that our lives go on much as they have been, day after day after day, with only minor course corrections. The effects of this inertia are in some fashion a good thing. Otherwise our lives might devolve into a series of randomly disconnected events. At least we are going somewhere. At least we are moving in a definite direction. At least we know who we are or who we think we are. But inertia keeps us from becoming who we want to be. It keeps us from resetting our direction. It keeps us from being saved.

But all that's going to change! When? Today!

I want you to stand up! Now turn around in circles three times. Shake out your hands and arms. Shake out your head and neck. Get your body and mind loosened up, ready to move, ready to be moved!

Now sit down and listen. Listen!

*This passage of scripture has come true today*

When? Today! What passage of scripture? This one ...

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has chosen me  
to bring good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind;  
to set free the oppressed  
and announce that the time has come  
when the Lord will save his people.*

The poor will hear good news, not someday, but today! The sick will be healed, not someday, but today! The oppressed will be set free, not someday, but today! You will be saved, not someday, but today!

Today is the day!

Today is the day you are going to believe that your actions and your choices do make a difference. Today is the day you are going to believe that God can change you, that God will change you.

Today is the day you are going to start seeing the Haitian people in a new light, seeing them not as unfortunate victims, but as brothers and sisters. You are going to pray for them, as you pray for your brothers and sisters. You are going to do what you can to help them, as you do what you can in time of need to help your brothers and sisters. You are going to stand up for them, as you would stand up for your brothers and sisters and closest friends.

Today is the day you are going to do do what you can to ensure the health and well-being of neighbors in this country. You are going to pray for politicians, and tell them what you think, tell them what you want them to do. You are going to inform yourself on the issues and make sure your voice and other voices of reason, voices justice and compassion, are heard.

Today is the day you are going to admit your addiction and take the first step to address it. Today is the day you are going to ask God to set you free and the day you are going to start to believe God can.

Today is the day, not when you ask for courage, but when you begin to act with courage. Today is the day you are going to trust yourself, body and spirit, to God's grace. Today is the day you are going to begin to think seriously about what it is that God is calling you to do and to be, about what it is God is calling us to do and to be together.

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When Jesus read those words from the book of the prophet Isaiah, they were transformed from a noble vision of the world as it could be into the present, on-the-ground, just-watch-and-see, reality of the world as it is being made to be. They were transformed by a single word: *today*.

This is the glory Jesus reveals! Glory is not in the vision, but in the reality. Not in the dream, but in the coming to be. Not in the wanting, but in the doing. The glory is not in the idea, in the belief, in the word, but in the word made flesh.

*We saw his glory!*

We see his glory, not just as we sing wonderful songs of praise in the church, but as we see Jesus changing us, healing us, empowering us, setting us free ... today!