

## “Do it Now”

*Living The Good Life* Lenten Series

Isaiah 55:6-9 & John 12:1-8

Rev. James Ramsey ~ April 6, 2014

I was graced with several God-moments this week and for that I am thankful. My experience is that some weeks are short on God-moments and other weeks signs of God's presence seem all around. But it's all part of living the Good Life. The prophet Isaiah said, *Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him when he is near.*

We had our Bunny Breakfast yesterday. Lots of people do a great deal of work in order to host such a festive breakfast party – one that invites and reaches out to our neighbors in this community and shows that we at East Union



love children, have a heart for hospitality and are committed to providing quality family and inter-generational events. The Bunny Breakfast provides all sorts of opportunities to connect with people and with the Easter Bunny!

Families and children wait in line to have pictures taken

with the Easter Bunny. The bunny welcomes the children to sit close or climb into the lap. Some children seem apprehensive. Some are so terrified they refuse to go. Others have to be coaxed and prodded by their parents. Still others can't wait for their turn. It is not uncommon for a child to leave the Easter Bunny upset because the experience was so scary. I witnessed one little girl, accompanied by her grandpa, who left in tears, but not because she was afraid, just the opposite. She relished her time with the Bunny. She nuzzled and hugged and kissed and caressed the Bunny. Her adoring face glowed and her eyes never left the Bunny. When those in line became antsy for their turn, the grandpa tried to get his little girl, but she wouldn't leave the bunny. She hugged tight, as if to say, I'm not leaving the bunny. She left in tears her arms outstretched to the Bunny. Later in the morning, her grandpa brought her back, there was no one in line and the Bunny welcomed the little girl with open arms. She settled in again, no interest in the photo, just her precious time with the Bunny, again snuggling,

caressing, looking adoringly into the Bunny's big eyes. The look in that little girl's eyes – her genuine infatuation with the Bunny – her insistence that her grandpa take her back to the bunny during a lull in the action – it made my day. I expect she watched the Bunny from the moment her photo was taken and when she was eating pancakes at her table and saw an opening, she pointed, and said to her grandfather, Bunny, Do it now!

We have been traveling with Jesus as he moves ever closer to Jerusalem. Today he takes a layover on that journey. He stops at the house of his good friend, Lazarus, and the two sisters, Mary and Martha, where they host a dinner party.



We witness Mary's extravagant act of devotion when she takes expensive perfume and anoints Jesus' feet, wiping them with her hair. You can imagine the



fragrance must have filled the whole house so that all those present could not help but notice. Mary's gesture toward Jesus is surely an act of love – an act of worship – and points to Jesus' footwashing of his disciples, which will happen in that Upper Room, prior to what we call the Last Supper.

Mary was sensitively attuned to Jesus' needs as he came closer to his destiny...death on the cross. Her affection that night showed profound care, lovingly performed at a time when Jesus was in great personal need.

Mary did not wait until after Jesus was dead to declare her love and demonstrate her devotion. She seized the day...made the most of the moment. She did it now, rather than defer until later. As it turned out, there would be no later.



Contrast Mary's anointing, which used maybe a pound of perfume with the hundreds of pounds of myrrh and aloes that Nicodemus brought to anoint Jesus' body after his death. The gifts are disproportionate in size. But Mary's one pound was given when Jesus could receive it.

What is it you have that could be given, should be given to Jesus, now? Are there opportunities for you to anoint, love, and serve Jesus, what are you waiting for...do it now, before it is too late. Do you feel you are not ready?

It's a terrible thing, I think,  
in life to wait until you're ready.  
I have this feeling now that  
actually no one is ever ready  
to do anything. There is almost  
no such thing as ready.  
There is only now.  
And you may as well do it now.  
Generally speaking, now is as  
good a time as any.

- Hugh Laurie

*"It's a terrible thing, I think, in life to wait until you are ready. I have this feeling now that actually no one is ever ready to do anything. There is almost no such thing as ready. There is only now. And you may as well do it now. Generally speaking, now is as good a time as any."*

Certainly now is a good time to be faithful.

Today is a good day to serve Jesus. You never know what your one humble, yet extravagant act, might mean. Take this story:

East Union is a church constantly in prayer. Our active prayer chain keeps a running list of those in need of care. Many of these prayers are for circumstances or people we might never meet and whose progress we will never know. One person we have been praying for lately is Mark Lock's father. Mark's dad has been pretty healthy up into his 80s, but he has recently had a stroke that has left him with some paralysis. His speech has been affected, as well as his swallowing, so it has been difficult time. I called Mark early this past week to let him know that I was praying for him and his father and to get an update. Things were hard. His dad had multiple challenges. I wished them God's blessing and proceeded with my week. They had a full plate and I didn't expect to hear from them.



But early one morning I received a call. It was Mark. He felt compelled to call me and share a God-moment he had experienced with his dad. With all his challenges Mark's dad was coping, but discouraged. He hadn't made much progress, he had been pulling out the N/G tube – which is uncomfortable and not that uncommon that patients try to pull it out. They were coming to the point where decisions needed to be made.

God provided a turning point through an unexpected visitor. Mark's sister, Vicki, invited a friend named Mike, to come along to her dad's room.

Mike had never met Mark and Vicki's dad, but hearing of his dilemma, he offered to visit. Mike is 35 years old and a man of deep faith. Knowing from Vicki of her dad's Polish heritage and his love of polka music, Mike offered to bring his accordion. Mike had also lived for a time in Eastern Europe

and spoke some Polish. He came to the hospital, prayed with Mark's dad, spoke some Polish to him and then played several polkas for him. The feel in the room was electric and Mike was like an angel to Mark's Dad. Although he only spent about 30 minutes in the Hospital Room, Mike sensed a need and offered his unique experience to meet that need. Mark's dad responded and God's healing had begun. How many people within a thousand miles have these attributes – a deep faith, play the accordion, have lived in Europe, speak Polish, and would be willing to take an afternoon to visit an old man in the hospital? It was a beautiful thing – the kind of thing that happens when you're living the Good Life. Mike was presented with an opportunity and he didn't wait. I would like to visit your father, Vicki, and I would like to do it now!

What is it you have that could be given, should be given to Jesus, now? You are not the Easter Bunny, and I'm guessing you don't play the accordion, but as you live the Good Life, there will be unique opportunities for you to anoint, love, and serve Jesus, what are you waiting for...do it now!