

{Slide: What's in your cup?}

I found this analogy interesting...made me really think
You are holding a cup of coffee when someone comes along and bumps into you or shakes your arm, making you spill your coffee everywhere.
Why did you spill the coffee?
"Well because someone bumped into me, of course!"
Wrong answer.
You spilled the coffee because there was coffee in your cup.
Had there been tea in the cup, you would have spilled tea.
Whatever is inside the cup, is what will spill out.

The point is that when life comes along and shakes you (which WILL happen), whatever is inside you will come out. It's easy to fake it, until you get rattled.
And with today's family focus - our children are going to bump our cups in ways we could not have even imagined.
And so
The contents of our cup becomes critical
Because we decide what to put into it.

We have just come off an amazing 4 part series called, "Who is this man?"
Talking about seeking and savoring the supremacy of Christ.
In many ways the answer to what to put into our cup has already been answered.
Remember the cycle
SEEK - SAVOUR - SUBMIT - DISPLAY

So we have to ask ourselves... "what's in my cup?"
That's the DISPLAY bit
When life gets tough, what spills over?
Light or Dark?
When that baby wakes up every hour on the hour and you need to put in a full day's work the next day.
What comes out consistently?
Light in the form of Joy, gratefulness, peace and humility?
Or dark in the form of anger, bitterness, harsh words and negative reactions?
I think parenthood scratches the hidden recesses of our character.
Fortunately we have a choice.

Programmers back in the day had a saying, GIGO
What you put in is what you get out
Sloppy programming will give you sloppy results

{Slide: Who is filling your cup?}

And what does that even mean?

We are all influenced by our surroundings, directly and indirectly.
Directly when someone tells us to do something.
Indirectly when we notice things around us.
Consciously when we decide on a certain course of action.
Unconsciously when we react in a certain way.

There are a lot of things queuing up trying to influence us.

Parents

While we are growing up, mainly the character of our parents or whoever the significant parental figure in our lives is.

How they talk

What they say

How they behave

How they treat each other

How they react to each other and to outside circumstances

The decisions they make

What they consider important or not

What they believe in or not

Until you have something to compare it against,
all of this will shape you.

Siblings

As we get older, siblings and other family start having an affect.

At least our parents are trying to teach us something, or they should be

Our siblings are not trying to teach us anything are they, unless it's trying to teach us a lesson.

Now we start to learn how to survive.

Because all interactions are not always positive.

When someone interacts with us physically

Or someone abuses us verbally or emotionally

But we start building up an arsenal of defenses, automatically

We are survivors.

And until you have something to compare it against,
To work out what is good and what is bad
all of this will influence you.

Peers

At some point, our peers get involved

And they bring a whole new set of influences into our personal space, our bubble.

Different habits

Different cultures and religions

And we get to spend time away from the direct influence of our families, we are on our own, learning to make it in this new world.

(Beer story)

And our character keeps getting shaped.

And until you have something to compare it against,

To work out whether these new influences are good or bad
all of this will change you and become embedded into you.

Therestoftheworld

And all the time we are noticing the bigger world and even more cultures and an exploding media access and content, all have an affect on who we are

Access to technology and the availability of the whole world in our pocket

Freedom to do whatever we like on the Internet, and to say whatever we like on social media

We have the power to decide

And we keep learning

And until you have something to compare it against,

to decide, to navigate whether these new influences are good or bad
all of this will change you and become embedded into you.

Ourdefaultcharacter

Not forgetting our default character and temperament having a say, pointing us towards areas that suit us more and away from areas that make us uncomfortable.

Are you Melancholic

Or Phlegmatic

Or Choleric

Or Sanguine

Deeply embedded . Hard wired ways of dealing with your surroundings

And until you have something to compare it against,

We take for granted that the way we are and the things we think are the norm

I bet you that you think that everything in your cup is rock solid and right and secure and should be there.

Let's do a case study of someone else who thought that.

What about Paul?

What was in his cup?

{Slide: Act 22v2-5}

Act 22v2-5

*Then Paul said: ³"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. I **studied under Gamaliel** and was **thoroughly trained in the law of our ancestors**. I was just as **zealous for God** as any of you are today. ⁴I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison, ⁵as the high priest and all the Council can themselves testify. I even obtained letters from them to their*

associates in Damascus, and went there to bring these people as prisoners to Jerusalem to be punished.

Paul was happy with the contents of his cup.
He had been very diligent in the filling process
It had been filled with all the recommended ingredients of a spiritual life
Paul was convinced that his cup had been filled in all the right ways.
His opinion of his current state was rock solid and immovable.
When a Christian bumped his cup, out came, death, arrests and prison.

Or, as he put it in Galatians:

{Slide: Gal 1v13-14}

Gal 1v13-14

¹³For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. ¹⁴I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

And then one day, God sat down with him and said, "let's talk about what's spilling out of your cup?"

He didn't really say that.

He said this:

{Slide: Act 22v6-10}

Act 22v6-10

*⁶"About noon as I came near Damascus, suddenly a bright light from heaven flashed around me. ⁷I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, '**Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?**'*

⁸"Who are you, Lord?' I asked.

"I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting," he replied. ⁹My companions saw the light, but they did not understand the voice of him who was speaking to me.

¹⁰"What shall I do, Lord?' I asked.

"Get up,' the Lord said, 'and go into Damascus. There you will be told all that you have been assigned to do.'

Here is the question

"Why do you persecute me?"

Who is me?

Jesus?

That's right, Jesus Himself

Except not Jesus as the individual but Jesus as the body

Paul was persecuting the Christians because that's what his cup was filled with.

But he was wrong.

And he realised it and that's why he asked

"What shall I do Lord?"

He needed emptying and refilling before he was useful and ready to,

"be told all that you have been assigned to do"

He had a job, assigned by God, he just needed the right stuff in his cup.

Paul learned quickly.

This is however a reflection of who we all are.

We are all convinced that where we are is OK.

Especially the older you get, the more convinced you become that your opinion is the final word on any matter.

At some point however if you are in continual conflict with people around you

You need to ask the question

"What shall I do Lord?"

Yes you.

{Slide: What should spill out}

When our cup spills out it affects others.

That's what Jesus was saying to Paul.

He was persecuting Christians, the affects he was having on others was not what someone who was SEEING and SAVORING and SUBMITTING to Jesus would have in his cup.

Doesn't that describe all our walks in the Christian faith.

Now remember

what spills out can only be what we put in

When it comes to parenting, the affect we have on our kids now is something that can be the gift that keeps on giving

Decide now what you want to look back on in 10 years.

What contents does our cup need as parents?

If there is one verse that each parent needs to memorize, it's this one

{Slide: 1 Cor 13v4-8}

1 Cor 13v4-8

⁴**Love** is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.
⁸Love never fails.

Why is this so important?

Because if you filter every interaction that you will ever have with your children through this filter then your experience will be the best it can possibly be.

Never forget, **you are the adult**

You are the Christian

The first thing they will learn from is your behavior

They have no idea what is motivating it, that comes later

You are the one SEEING and SAVORING and SUBMITTING to the rule and reign of Jesus and when your cup gets bumped, the contents will be DISPLAYED.

Your children have been sent here on earth to bump and rattle that cup to the best of their abilities.

Basically when you have children, you're saying to God,

"Bring it on"

"I'm ready for you"

"Gimme all you got"

Patient

With your children

With each other

With your parents

(Work from home, patience needed)

Kind

(I left my project at home)

Not easily angered

(Working from home, many interruptions)

Trusts

(Safety belt rule, only 5 in a car)

Hopes

(Never give up on a child

You may be the only Christian example they will ever have)

Perseveres

(Clean room story)

Love never fails

(Went through two failed boyfriends, still supported them even though we did not approve.

Both had car accidents)

{Slide: What's in your cup?}

That's a high calling

But if we truly SEE and SAVOR and SUBMIT

Then it will be a guiding light in our parenting path

And when our cup is bumped we will DISPLAY the image of God,

because we are made in His Image.

End with grandparents role

We do actually know everything better, we just chose not to always tell our children that

Next level of responsibility, need to learn when not to say something

In summary

What's in your cup

Maybe it's time to ask, "What shall I do Lord?"

What are you filling it with, maybe it's been the wrong stuff, like Saul

Because it will get bumped

And when we get bumped

We will DISPLAY where we are with our walk with Jesus.

God, through His Grace, has surrounded us with help, if we want it

We must choose to want it.