



## **SUNDAY 4TH FEBRUARY 2024**

Topic: Living Close to God in repentance

Psalm 120

Speaker: Ps Sam Toms

### **Sermon Notes**

- Difference between Tourist and Pilgrim
- Invitation to journey as a pilgrim
- The journey starts with awareness (vs 1-2)
- It Requires RAW and REALNESS (v3-4)
- COME AS YOU ARE
- BUT DON'T STAY AS YOU ARE
- repentance - a change agent (5)
- Low Hanging fruit
- Journey of pilgrimage – becoming WHOLE (6-7)

## Small Group Questions/Discussions

The Christian journey of knowing and growing in intimacy is a journey. As with human relationships, they take nurturing and developing. One of the main difficulties as believers is that we can see the journey of knowing God like going on a holiday. We can stay at the nice spots, visit the 'must see' locations, and keep a sanitised view of the world and our own selves. We can be tourists in our faith, not willing to go to the slums of our despair and stay away from the painful areas in our life. A better expression of our journey is that of a pilgrimage. In a pilgrimage, one is immersed in the culture, experiences the journey in a life changing way. The challenge that God lays before us is to travel with him, in all the circumstances and areas of pain in our life, that we allow him access to the places where fear and control reign in our lives. This pilgrimage for our church is more an invitation to journey differently.

Psalms 120 is a psalm of journeying, the first of the Psalms of Ascent, of journeying to Jerusalem to meet with God. What is striking in this psalm is how Raw and Real the author is. This is crucial in developing deeper intimacy. The author in vs 3-4, speaks from a place of pain to those that are pursuing or attacking the author.

- In your prayer life, how Raw and Real are you in talking with God?

If being Raw and Real is hard for you, often the reason is because we don't know or trust the character of God. Knowing he is good, faithful and just, allows us greater freedoms to express ourselves with an open heart.

- Do you feel like you can come to God just as you are?

- Share if you feel comfortable: What areas in your life do you avoid going into depth with God? (finances, tithing, painful relationships, family members, past mistakes, unmet expectations, disappointment?)

- The more we engage in a raw and real capacity with God, the greater we grow to know Him, experience his love. Would you take a step of faith and trust and dig out the emotions that you have buried that still have a legacy of pain in your life.

God calls us to 'Come as you are', but don't stay as you are!

- We are called to journey and pilgrimage through the pain, the hurt, through the broken and fragmented relationships of life into a place of wholeness. Of his Shalom (Peace). Would you consider what rhythms in your life need to be adjusted to make room for the transformation that God is wanting to do in your life. It might be something as simple as switching off from social media after hours, and pondering and soaking on a passage of scripture. The change that God is wanting to make in our lives is not a product of our own doing, but a bi-product of intimacy with him. Consider making worship a daily habit in your life.

- What accountability systems do you have in your life to keep you pushing on to the goal of 'becoming christ-like'?