

#1 – CARPE DIEM! – HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR DAY (Bill Cahusac)

- Where have you seen God at work in your life this week? (Share any brief examples and encouragements).
- Was there anything from Sunday's message which you found particularly inspiring or challenging?
- Was there anything else you particularly noticed?

Psalm 118:24 (NRSVA)

*This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.*

Four things to help you make the most of your day (and your life!)

1. **Be Still...** "Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed." (Mark 1:35). "Be still, and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10)
 - *What might you do in order to more effectively still yourself each day so as to remind you of God's presence and goodness?*
 - *What have you found helpful as you seek to make space and time to be still?*
 - *Is it working?*
 - *Do you have rituals or habits which help you, or are your days more haphazard right now?*
2. **Be Thankful...** "... let us rejoice and be glad in [the day that the Lord has made]." (Psalm 118:24). "Those who bring thanksgiving as their sacrifice honour me." (Psalm 50:23 NRSVA). Neuropsychologist and author, Dr Rick Hanson, writes, "The brain is very good at learning from bad experiences, but very bad at learning from the good ones. While this negativity bias may have helped our early ancestors survive, today it often keeps our attention locked on the anxiety, trauma, and suffering from which [many of us now] seek relief." The Book of James reminds us that "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father..." (James 1:17). But, as Bill said, we have to "Make the choice to rejoice!"
 - *As you think back on your life, what in particular do you remember, for which you are thankful to God? (Note: This might be a big thing. The Israelite people never stopped being thankful to God for their deliverance from Egypt)*
 - *As you look around you now, what do you notice that you generally take for granted, but to which you might pay attention; are there some little things to be thankful for?*
 - *Why do you think Bill said that we need to get good at being thankful for little things and not just the big things?*
 - *How might you become even more thankful?*
3. **Be Present...** Give people your full attention. The best gift is to be fully present to the person you are with. Or, as Bradley Jersak writes, "LISTENING WELL. The trick is to move from pretending to listen while inwardly formulating a clever response to knowing in your heart that the person in front of you is absolutely fascinating." (Instagram post 11.07.21). Slow down. Don't walk into a room wondering who is the most important person present; ask, rather, who needs my presence? [The story in Luke 7:36-50 is, in part, about the people Jesus noticed and gave attention to. Note Jesus' question in v.44, "Do you see this woman?"]
 - *What change could you make in order to be more fully present with people?*
 - *Do you notice anything that gets in the way of you being fully present to other people?*
4. **Be Ready...** "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." (1 Peter 3:15)
 - *What do you think the author meant by this? Is it about knowing 'the gospel in a nutshell', or do you think it is more about listening to the real questions people are asking?*
 - *What hope do you have?*
 - *Why do you think Peter talks about speaking 'with gentleness and respect'?*
 - *Are you ready?*