

**Sermon 6.7.14 Matt 11 : 16-19, 25- end**

Lately there seems to have been many more new words being used.

Words like uploading.

Livestreaming.

I sometimes wonder why we need new words to describe things we've been doing for a long time.

Language is meant to be for communication not confusion surely.

Straightforward language is much easier to understand isn't it?

So why do we people like to complicate things?

I wonder if there is something here about feelings of self-worth.

Of importance.

If things sound more complicated, can they make the person speaking sound smarter?

Sometimes it's as if we feel we have to prove ourselves which I think is perfectly understandable because

we live in a world that tells us the importance of being smart

Of being successful,  
of being important  
and of being rich.

In many ways our world teaches us that in one way or another we have to prove our worth to be noticed.

Sad isn't it?

Since I've been here I know I've preached many times already about how Christ died for all people.

And I remember clearly preaching at Pentecost and at other times that the Holy Spirit descended on all those who were present.

The same Holy Spirit who came to those first disciples is the Holy Spirit that lives in you and me and all people.

There is only one Holy Spirit.

Yet somehow it is difficult for us to believe, to accept that the same Holy Spirit who descended like a dove on Jesus at his baptism is for everyone.

Not just the special people.  
But for the ordinary people.  
And that is every one of us.

Well here we have Jesus making that point again  
He speaks of infants  
Those who are not the rich and powerful, the ordinary folk.  
And I think that we could call ourselves ordinary.

Yes including those who wear robes in church, and those who wear collars and dare I say, even Bishops and Archbishops.

But if we think we are wise or clever, perhaps because we go to or went to college, because we have a wide vocabulary then Matthew's gospel is telling us that we really are on the wrong track.

Because Jesus tells us that knowledge has been revealed to children, yet hidden from the wise. Now that can be a real problem for adults in

today's society.

Adults, the ones we call Grown ups, are expected to possess wisdom

and to be the ones who teach children,  
but Jesus is talking about wisdom revealed to children

It makes me stop and wonder.

What changes as we grow up?

Why do we become reluctant?

Reluctant to show our need for learning and knowledge?

Is it pride?

If so we are told pride is a sin so that can't be good can it?

The early part of our reading implies that human beings are never satisfied

The idea that people always want more,  
never being satisfied  
which can be a difficulty for some

but it can also be a good thing.

The desire for more can push us on to always try  
and achieve new and different things,  
to learn more,  
to wonder at the world around us,  
to become wiser.

And our reading goes on to tell us that  
knowledge is hidden from the wise yet it is  
revealed to children.

Those who are, as the hymn writer says,  
'pure in heart'

Those who are ready and willing to listen and  
learn.

Those who are open minded and trusting.

Those who are innocent in their thoughts and  
ways.

Children – those who know and accept that they  
have a lot to learn.

And who learn best when things are presented  
to them simply and clearly.

So if we know all this as adults and we expect to  
learn when we're young, why oh why are we  
tempted to complicate things when we become  
adults?

Maybe we think it is important to do that.

Now it IS true that the Bible Is full of long words  
Names of places and people.

Sometimes I read a word in the bible and think,  
"I'm not sure how to pronounce that".

Or I read of a place and think  
"I don't know where that is"

Or I read of a person and think  
"I'm not sure who that is"

And to all these things,

And to the many other things I don't understand  
I wonder whether it really matters that much.

In this reading he talks of knowledge being  
hidden from the wise yet revealed to children.

Further on in Matthew 18 Jesus tells the  
disciples

"Unless you become like a child you will not  
enter the kingdom of heaven".

Jesus explains things to those who listen in ways  
they might understand.

When Jesus is asked which is the greatest of the commandments, He says

“Love God and love your neighbour as yourself”.

It's that simple.

Time after time the disciples didn't understand what Jesus was saying to them.

And again and again he used the parables to make his message as simple as possible.

They often didn't understand what he was teaching but they remained His disciples.

They didn't leave Him because they weren't clever enough.

He didn't dismiss them and find more intelligent people

Jesus kept those people as his disciples and we, you and me, are his disciples today.

Not because we have great minds.

Not because we are special.

Not because we have degrees or any other academic qualification

But purely and simply because of who we are.

His children.

Those who are ready to open our minds to learn more about Him and accept that we don't know all there is to know and neither do we need to.

Ordinary people who find our true value in Him.

Who believe in Him

And it is through us that His love for all people can be spread throughout the world.

Amen