

He rama tāu kupu ki ōku wae

Your word is a lamp for my feet

Psalms 119:105

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Thanks for your feedback and encouragement after last Sunday's sermon. It is evident that God was at work speaking to us and stirring us up. I just want to acknowledge that... It is the *rhema* word of God speaking to us. This is what feeds us and makes us hunger for more.

Last week we worked through Psalm 73 and we were reminded of how important it is to gain true perspective from the sanctuary of our long term relationship with Jesus, not denying the difficult places we find ourselves in and the tough and sometimes faithless questions we have, but to stir up, fan into flame, the power of the Spirit and gifts and calling placed there from the beginning. Not to put to bed the power that is within us because of disappointments and old thinking.

This week I would like to highlight the power of declarative prayer. This kind of prayer comes out of the context of our relationship with God, knowing who we are and our position in Christ.

Let's first reiterate some context. Psalm 112/1 in contrast to Psalm 73 is a declaration of our home, the abundance and blessing of life with God. A really positive psalm.

Psalm 112

¹ Praise the LORD.

Blessed are those who fear the LORD,
who find great delight in his commands.

Psalm 1

¹ Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or **stand** in the way that sinners take
or **sit** in the company of mockers,
² but whose delight is in the law of the LORD,
and who **meditates** on his law day and night.
³ That person is like a tree planted by streams
of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
whatever they do prospers.

Here's a declarative prayer to pray:
"I am like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, I am yielding fruit in season—NOW! THIS IS MY SEASON; my leaf does not wither and in whatever I do, I prosper."

What's the result of loving and fearing and attending to God's ways?

It's blessing.

The happy condition of those who revere the Lord and obey him. Let's examine what this blessing consists of.

This psalm has echoes of Psalm 1, a eulogy to the godly, which begins...**blessed** is the one

Where do I habitually position and contextualize myself this psalm asks?

Is it in the company of those who reject God and revel in their own autonomy? So that I stand with them and I sit or settle down with their way of life. This becomes a context of spiritual hardness and ignorance.

Or do I habitually position myself in the Word of God and in the power it has to transform me?

This person is alive, is a living green thing! Whose roots go down deep and are fed by underground streams of water, who yields fruit at the right time and who prospers and does not wither. So firstly blessing means I will be full of life and bear fruit.

² Their **children** will be **mighty** in the land;
the generation of the **upright** will be blessed.
³ **Wealth** and riches are in their houses,
and their righteousness endures forever.
⁴ Even in darkness **light** dawns for the upright,
for those who are gracious and compassionate
and righteous.
⁵ **Good** will come to those who are generous
and lend freely,
who conduct their affairs with justice.

⁹ They have freely scattered their gifts to the
poor,
their righteousness endures forever;
their horn will be lifted high in honor.

in the end they will look in triumph on their foes.

Back to Psalm 112. Secondly,
The blessing of fearing God is that children will
be blessed.
They will be mighty, influential, full of integrity.
They will not live in poverty but in abundance.
They will know light in dark and calamitous
times.
Two hallmarks reap further blessing: giving
generously and being just in all their affairs.

These men and women of integrity will be held
in high esteem and honour.

That their righteousness endures forever is a
repeated phrase.

There is increasing, successive blessing on those who fear the Lord. Despite the many faults of the Western Christian world, Christendom brought some major blessings and benefits. Democracy, Justice and Law, Fair penalties, equality, welfare, freedom and security, the scientific and technological advances etc. The ability to settle down and build houses and plant gardens, have families in peace. The blessing that rests on the Jews even today despite their infidelity which is catalogued throughout the OT and their non recognition of the Messiah is still remarkable. Personal and generational blessing comes in fearing Yahweh.

⁶ **Surely the righteous will never be shaken;**
they will be remembered forever.
⁷ **They will have no fear of bad news;**
their **hearts are steadfast**, trusting
in the LORD.
⁸ Their **hearts are secure**, they will
have no fear;

How can this be? Never be shaken, no fear of bad news...
Is there an underlying fear that something bad will happen
to me? That I won't be able to deal with it when it comes?
That God doesn't have my back.

This can only be because time after time we choose God and
his sanctuary and to trust in Him and believe in his
promises and declare them to be the truth.

Harrowing scenes of the murders of Coptic Christians have been seen around the world. The last words of some of those killed were "*Ya Rabbi Yasou*" (My Lord Jesus Christ).

But the families of these men have reacted with faith in the fact that their men are with God. They were rejoicing "When we saw the video we were filled with joy. They were like lions, none of them left their faith. We thank God."

"we are so glad. They are with Christ. We thank the Lord". "They went to the eternal joy. We were tired when we did not know, but we were filled with joy when we found out they were heroic".

Kamel expressed the story of the Copts: "Since the Roman era, Christians have been martyred and have learned to handle everything that comes our way. This only makes us stronger in our faith because the Bible told us to love our enemies and bless those who curse us."

Declarative prayer is announcing, out loud, something that is true according to the teachings of Scripture and the character of God. In Hebrew, *decree* means "to divide, separate and destroy."

This definition reveals more of what happens in the spiritual realm.

When we decree, "I am blessed" (inspired by Psalm 112:1), we establish the blessing while separating ourselves from anything purposed against it and destroying the plans of the enemy.

When we decree, "My children are strong and full of integrity" (inspired by Psalm 112:2), we divide our children's strength from their weakness and separate dishonesty and unrighteousness from within their midst and in their hearts.

When we decree, "My home brims with wealth" (inspired by Psalm 112:3), we establish our wealth and destroy the spirits of lack and poverty.

What we say aloud is powerful

Romans 10: 6-11

"The word (rhema) is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word (rhema) of faith that we proclaim: ⁹ If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. ¹¹ As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame."

What we declare with our mouths is critical. That Jesus is Lord is one thing that we declare, it is this confession of faith that leads to our salvation. But what is salvation? To be saved is an ongoing process of becoming whole -of physical and emotional healing, of learning how to forgive and be forgiven and mind transformation, not just 'you're saved for eternal life', that's it.

You confess out this salvation every day as you bring yourself into line with what God says about you and with what he has done for you and you pray this over yourself, your family and your contexts. And so we need the **Heart** (believing, being fully convinced with a knowing faith) and the **mouth** (speaking out, declaring the truth of what the Word reveals to us) working together.

What we all know is that we can equally speak out the opposite. Out of the mouth can come both blessing and cursing. Or simply silence, stoicism, acceptance of what seems to be. But God has given us so much more than this.

God said of Jeremiah: *But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am too young.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. ⁸ Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the LORD.*

*⁹ Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "I have put my words in your mouth. ¹⁰ See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, **to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant.**"*

Matthew 17:20 *you can say to this **mountain**, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."*

According to Eph 6: The Word of God is a sword when it comes out of your mouth.

Isaiah 55:11 "So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."

But we have to speak it.

And to do this we have to know who we are and to whom we belong.

Let's examine this in the context of *Matt 7: 7-11*

Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; those who seek find; and to those who knock the door will be opened. Which of you, if his son asks for bread will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish will give him a snake? If you then though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly father give good gifts to those who ask him?

POSITION

In this passage Jesus is teaching about the context and position of our relationship to God.

He is undoing the toxic belief that you have to work hard to get anything from God, that God is more likely to dole out punishment and needs to be coerced or pacified.

It's saying to *ask, seek, knock* and go on asking for what you need because you will get answers and you will be given good things.

Why?

Because God is a heavenly **Father** who loves us, is approachable and wants to bless us with good things.

Just as human parents love their children and go out of their way (in most cases) to bless and provide for and love unconditionally, how much more this heavenly Father with access to the whole of heaven wants to do this too.

When we become followers of Jesus, our identity and position changes.

As followers of Christ we now have an eternal and divine community, a home and a household, for we are adopted as children of God.

Romans 8: 14f, *the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."* The full legal standing of an adopted male heir.

Sorry ladies but we miss out ...but I am going to claim womanship, my full legal standing anyway.

And now I can say: I am a child of God, a son or daughter of the Most High God and I belong to God, I am a Christian.

These are all identity statements and they matter because they tell me who I am and whose I am and they have spiritual power. And further

¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Jesus commands us to ask out of the context of belonging with the full rights of heirs not as orphans who may live from a sense of abandonment and need. We are heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, sons and daughters, and this is our inherited context and identity.

A heavenly father will not give us bad things...or be unfaithful or untrustworthy. Therefore we can declare this.



There is no place for the tall poppy syndrome in the Kingdom of God.

We should not apologise for being strong in the Spirit. For being generals and leaders in partnership with the True King and Ruler of heaven and earth. In fact if we not stand up be the spiritual

leaders at the risk of being mown down we will settle for the status quo.

We were created to live from these two realms simultaneously, the heavenly realm and the earthly one.

Much prayer is trying to break through from earth into heaven to access God and convince God that he should answer.

But really we have this around the wrong way.

Instead of pleading or repetition, we ask a **heavenly father** for our needs.

We thank Him that he has already done the work on the cross and our prayer is based on that fact.

From this position I wield authority in the Name of Jesus.

Don't be whimpy!!

- If it's your will...Lord could you ...
- Lord please be with us today.

Or so general as to be sickly

- Help me to serve you better and help us with the things we are trying to do.
-
- Thank you that **you are** here with us today because you never leave us. We declare the immediacy of your presence.
- I am a child of God and the heritage of the Lord is at my disposal.
- You have given me/us authority in this world to pray in the powerful Name of Jesus and so I declare that my family will
- I declare your promises over my life, the fulfillment of prophetic words spoken over me.
- The courage to speak and not withhold your word or your comfort.
- I claim back what has been taken from me and what I have given over in my anger and frustration.

It's a different way of praying. It comes from:

1. relationship...sonship
2. from knowing who I am, authority in Christ
3. from listening to the Spirit and knowing the Word and praying out the rhema word that God gives.

What we do this afternoon is a prophetic and declarative act. Declaring the truth, the Word of God over the valley and the city, from the top to the bottom.

What is it that God wants? He wants to be sovereign, to have relationship with the people of his pasture.

He wants to break, smash the strangleholds and the powers that we have accepted, that we don't think we can influence and change. We think we cannot stop and change the tide going out against God.

But we can because Light is stronger than darkness.

I am mighty says the Lord and powerful, but you struggle to believe it.

You struggle to believe how much I have authored you with and how much I have placed in your bowl.

When that bowl is broken open, my purposes and power will not be contained.

My people must know who they are.

My sheep hear my voice.

They must not forget the Rock from which they are hewn. Tell my people that I love them, more than they can ever comprehend. The depth of my love which is LONG and HIGH and WIDE and DEEP. It is fully focussed on them.

They must practice.

Where do I practice?

I practice on my treadmill.

God told me to walk on the treadmill...and to pray strength over my body and bones. This is in the natural.

Sometimes Helen, it's sheer plod on the treadmill of life. You put one foot after another to go the distance and there is no quick fix or alternative route. Keep at it. I am in your body and my strength is in you. I am at work from the inside out strengthening your body and building my presence in you. When you exercise, call upon my strength in your muscles and in every fibre, for the flow of the Spirit from spirit to body will heal it and strengthen it.

My will in you is for strength and stamina and resilience – first in the natural and then the spiritual, the two go hand in hand.

Have I not given you my word. I am Word, my Word is in you, life and presence.

Helen, you are in Me able to move mountains which seem impossible.

In me you have all the resources of the Spirit

Learn how to call them down from heaven for whatever you loose in heaven is loosed on earth.

You loose love, mercy and grace and peace

You loose goodness and kindness and faithfulness

You loose gifts of the Spirit

You loose insight, wisdom and knowledge

You loose the cobwebs, the sickness, you dislodge weariness and depression, sloth and sleepiness.

You speak into the spiritual realm and create Light with your words

Speak up and speak out the word of faith and hope and love and encouragement and strength.

Build up the walls of the city. Do not let evil get a foothold.

Proclaim the Good news over the city and over the people and over the land, for in its welfare you will have welfare.

Neighbours Day continues to be a catalyst for thousands of Kiwis to connect with their neighbours and turn their streets into neighbourhoods, ata whaingia te pa harakeke.

Atawhaingia te pa harakeke – this whakatauki or proverb speaks to the essence of what Neighbours Day is looking to achieve, nurture familial bonds in the solidarity and unity of community. Atawhaingia is to nurture, protect, cultivate and love. The Pa Harakeke is the Harakeke (flax) grove of the village, used as a metaphor for an intertwined community.

LOGOS AND RHEMA

What we also need to understand here is the difference between the two Greek words for WORD. In the New Testament, the Greek words *logos* and *rhema* are both translated *word*. However, they are not synonyms for the same idea, but each have precise Biblical meanings.

Logos is used to refer to the totality of the Word of God as well as the person of Jesus Christ, Who is the living *Logos*.

- In the beginning was the Word...the LOGOS and the Word was with God and the Word was God.
- “For the word [*logos*] of God is quick, and powerful” (Hebrews 4:12).
- “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word [*logikos*, from *logos*], that ye may grow thereby” (I Peter 2:2).

Scripture generally uses the Greek word *rhema* to refer to the spoken word given by a living voice and is used to describe particular messages that were given to individuals for their personal application. The following passages are examples of this:

“The word [*rhema*] is near you, it is in your mouth, and in your heart: that is, the word [*rhema*] of faith, which we proclaim; That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.... So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word [*rhema*] of God” (Romans 10:8–9, 17; see also Acts 5:20).

This is the aha moment, when something goes ping in our hearts. When the Word comes alive and we know we have heard from God, something particular, something specially for us or others.

- The angel told Mary that she would have a child—“Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word [*rhema*]” (Luke 1:38).
- God gave John the message he was to preach as a forerunner to Christ—“The word [*rhema*] of God came unto John” (Luke 3:2).
- Jesus told Peter where to cast his nets—“Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word [*rhema*] I will let down the net” (Luke 5:5).
- God reminded Peter of His Word—“Then remembered I the word [*rhema*] of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost” (Acts 11:16).

Rhemas are not separate from Scripture, but a part of the whole of God’s Word. It is the Holy Spirit Who illuminates particular Scriptures for application in a daily walk with the Lord. The words of Jesus are significant on this point.

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word [*rhema*] that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4). Jesus also stated, “The words [*rhema*] that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63).

This understanding of *rhema* means I can apply the promise of John 15:7–8 and experience marvelous results from it. “If you abide in me, and my words [*rhema*] abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be my disciples.”

Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words states the following on page 683. “The significance of *rhema* (as distinct from *logos*) is exemplified in the injunction to take ‘the sword of the Spirit, which is the word *rhema* of God,’ (Eph. 6:17); here, the reference is to the individual scripture which the Spirit brings to our remembrance for use in time of need, a prerequisite being the regular storing of the mind with Scripture.” (Read the full definition online from [Vine’s Expository Dictionary](#) 🌟🌈)

MAKING DECLARATIONS

Have you ever just stood and declared God's truth over a situation in your life or the life of a loved one? If you have, then you know the power of declarative prayer.

Declarative prayer is announcing, out loud, something that is true according to the teachings of Scripture and the character of God. It's about proclaiming truth and destroying lies. This changes the spiritual atmosphere. When we declare God's truths over ourselves, they stick. They change the atmosphere. They change us. Declarative prayers get me out of my self-pity, anxiety, confusion and self-doubt. They change my mindset and reorient my thinking.

Examples of declarative prayer:

- **Declaring our own identity in Christ**, for example; "I am a son or daughter of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords."
- **Declaring God's sovereignty and love over the people around us**, for example; "The God of the universe loves my friend. He has sent His Son, Christ Jesus to seek him."
- **Declaring God's sovereignty and power over the nations**, for example; "The God who is greater than the leader of this nation desires justice, compassion and mercy."

Declaration of God's truth is powerful prayer but it's not a 'name it, claim it' form of prayer. It comes out of waiting and listening for how to pray and knowing the Word of God which we wield like a sword in the Spirit. There is power in the Word: "*the words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life*" (John 6:63). **Our words release life and death** - "*The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit*" (Proverbs 18:21). Practicing such prayer purifies our own hearts and the world around us. In praying God's truth, we find our own faith strengthened and our confidence ever more firmly grounded in him

PRAYER EXERCISES: Week 4

MY IDENTITY AND POSITION IN CHRIST

¹⁴ For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵ The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. Romans 8

Reaffirm your identity as a child of God this week.

- What are the truths from scripture that you want to declare aloud over yourself? (You may want to write these down and make a list.)
- Eg I belong to God, I am His child. I am made in the image of God. God delights in me. I am called according to his purpose from before the foundation of the world. David said, 'The Lord will work out His plans for my life - for Your faithful love, O Lord, endures forever...' (Psalm 138:8 NLT).

Jeremiah said, '...His word is in my heart like a fire...shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot' (Jeremiah 20:9 NIV).

Speak the fire of God's *rhema* word into life. Rhema means the 'living word', a special word that brings the Logos or written word to life in the present.

- What is it that you sense God wants you to speak out and loose over your family, your circumstances, over your neighbourhood and over Dunedin?

- **DECREES**

By contrast, decrees are a tool by which we cause the truths of the **heavenly realm** to be manifest into the **natural realm** so they become our daily reality. We decree healing when we are sick. We decree provision and abundance when we are lacking. We decree peace when there is turmoil. Decrees are a tool to fulfill Matthew 6:10: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done on earth, as it is in heaven" (KJV). Decrees manifest heaven on earth.

The English definition of *decree* is "a statement of truth that carries the **authority** of a court order." For example, when a defendant is convicted of a crime and sentenced to prison, he cannot ignore that sentence because the authority of the court order is such that upon conviction, he has no further say in the matter.

The same is true with decrees in the spiritual realm. When we decree God's provision and blessings over our lives, then anything purposed against our provision and blessing can have no further say in the matter. When we decree God's peace and unity in our family, then anything purposed against peace and unity has no valid objection or standing to come against us.

The biblical context of decrees is that they are the same as the will and purposes of God. Given that serious weight in the spirit, I use only Scriptures as the basis for decrees. Often we can get our own idea of how things could or should be, but it is not uncommon for the way God unfolds His plans to look different than what we expect.

Decreeing our own vision can create confusion. Decreeing His will establishes His purpose. This is a serious point. Consider the Israelites who missed the Promised Land because it did not look the way they expected it to look. Consider also the Jews who missed their Messiah because He did not do what they expected. Decreeing Scripture releases God's purposes into our lives without creating confusion or blinding us to His ways.

In Hebrew, *decree* means "to divide, separate and destroy." This definition reveals more of what happens in the spiritual realm. When we decree, "I am blessed" (inspired by Psalm 112:1), we establish the blessing while separating ourselves from anything purposed against it and destroying the plans of the enemy. When we decree, "My children are strong and full of integrity" (inspired by Psalm 112:2), we divide our children's strength from their weakness and separate dishonesty and unrighteousness from within their midst and in their hearts. When we decree, "My home brims with wealth" (inspired by Psalm 112:3), we establish our wealth and destroy the spirits of lack and poverty.

The German *diktat* is the equivalent of our decree and means "a harsh judgment imposed on a defeated enemy that cannot be opposed."

The spiritual ramifications are stunning. We see here that when we decree, we:

1. speak God's blessings upon our lives,
2. institute the very will and purposes of God,
3. separate and destroy the plans of the enemy,
4. impose a judgment the enemy cannot oppose.

That is the power of decrees!

The Father is peeling back the layers that have created a dull edge and sharpening the prophetic voices. The prophetic ministry is coming to the forefront in this season as there is a growing hunger to hear from God. Much of the church world has restricted the Holy Spirit and limited His flow in their meetings but there will be a breaking forth of genuine prophetic ministry among those who are hungry. This is a time of refining for the prophetic community. The words, revelations and voices must be on target and specific. The sword is being sharpened and accuracy increasing!

Amos 3:7 says, "*Surely the Lord God does nothing without revealing His purpose to His servants the prophets.*"

The prophets will be a friend to the church as they partner with the apostles to release direction, insight and instruction, bringing much needed transformation.

- God is revealing His heart by sending forth messengers of love to release His love over the wounded. Many people in the body of Christ are carrying old wounds. It is the heart of the Father that brings deep healing. A fresh revelation of the love of God will bring healing to many.
- God is revealing assignments and empowering Holy Spirit shifts.

There are many divine shifts taking place in the body to align people with great purpose. For those who seek the Father there will be revelation of assignment and destiny. God is illuminating the path and revealing His plans.

- It is a time of seeking, shifting, and moving in obedience—no fear. Fearless obedience. At the beginning of this New Year, the Father is drawing people aside to seek Him. There is much shifting and releasing coming on the horizon. People will be released from dead and unfruitful works to move into kingdom plans. There are also those who have been in a season of separation and will be brought forth into purpose that they saw a long time ago. It seems as if the word has been delayed but in fact God has been preparing their character and getting them ready to steward what is coming!
- There are shifts and alignments into greater purpose. Many have been faithful in leading what God has given them but there is an elevation coming. They will have to say goodbye to one season in order to say hello to a greater season. Some of the shifts will not make sense to the natural mind but are kingdom advances and will bring great honor and glory to the kingdom. It will take radical obedience to navigate the shifts! Just as Abraham was asked to let go of the familiar, so are many being asked to journey into the unknown (see Gen. 12).
- There is a spiritual earthquake shaking and breaking false foundations and shifting people into proper position. As I was praying, I saw a spiritual earthquake coming upon the body of Christ. It is going to shake, chip and break the false foundations and religious structure that is holding back the move of God. At the same time, I saw people being moved under the shaking as they were being divinely positioned for the hour! Just as a chess player would move the pieces in position so the Father will rearrange the board during this time.

