

Reflection #12 - Clean Up



I am not a big fan of cleaning, but there is one cleaning job that I particularly enjoy - cleaning my road bikes chain and gears. I take great delight in carefully soaking, scrubbing and drying to make them sparkle and shine. Often I want to take pictures of them looking like this and send it to friends who like cycling - slightly sad I know!

Does it matter that I clean my gears? On one level it might be purely about making my bike look good, however, there is a more important reason. Though my bike would be perfectly rideable with dirty components there would be an impact on its performance whilst riding it. The grit and grime that a chain gathers from the road damages the metals, gently wearing them away. The gear changes would be slower and the traction of the chain might be less, both ultimately leading to a slowing down of my pace, and wasted energy! Which is not good when you are trying to achieve personal bests. However, the worst possibility that could happen, is that they rust up and the bike cannot move.

I think the same is true for our Christian lives. Our faith can be like gears on a bike, it begins all shiny, new, efficient and effective. We want to tell the world about Jesus, but over time sin starts to clog up those gears. This does not mean our faith disappears, but our spiritual performance starts to drop off. We don't operate as effectively for God. Our momentum slows down...and perhaps...we...stop...

In our recent joint prayer meeting a few people felt God was reminding us of the need to repent and be sanctified (made more holy). And although we have a confession in our services most Sundays, I wonder if God is calling us to a new time of repentance which is not about saying, "yes, God I am back again", but a real acknowledgment of God's holiness and perfection and how we are just so far off the mark? Perhaps as individuals and as churches we are have dirty chains and gears that need to be sorted out for us to go into God's fresh vision for us?

Psalm 24:3-4a reminds us...

3 Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in His holy place?

4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart...

To move forward in this new time of mission, I think God is saying that we need to repent and be renewed by God's Holy Spirit afresh, so we can power forward for him.

How is your chain and gears of faith at the moment?

Prayer

Heavenly Father,
You are so holy and perfect,
Help me to become more like you,
Not so I look good to those around me,
But so I can serve you most effectively.
Holy Spirit purify my heart, so I can live for you.
Amen.