

# Coach House Church BEACONS

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## SINGING IN THE SILENCE

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25TH JULY 2020

Hello and welcome to this coach House Beacon. I'm Andy and we are now over 100 and counting. Perhaps it is time to thank all the contributors to these devotionals.

Jamie and Bekah Baker, Steve and Alina Adshead, Johnny Knight, Anne Rodger, Daniel Lam, Steve Went, Melanie Jackson and myself have worked hard to keep you inspired and connected.

It has also been of great advantage to us to do these talks. Seeking inspiration from the Holy Spirit and Gods word, as well as speaking truth from the situations we find ourselves in day by day. So, I trust that you have been helped, encouraged and challenged along the way, both as a listener and those who have rose to the challenge of producing these beacons.

As pastor of the Coach House, it has been tremendous to see the speaking team dig deep and respond with such rich application. Thank you everyone for your efforts and thank you to you, the listener who has encouraged us to maintain such a high standard. The ethos behind these beacons has been to keep connected and to remind ourselves of the awesome God we serve in these strange and, in some instance's lonely times.

Melanie's next beacon (which I have been privy to) has been triggered by a newspaper article that we read together about the hum. The sound that started creation.... I'll leave it for Mel to dig deeper into this, but all I will say is This is modern day science which is bringing up these theories and yet, as we know, it was as God spoke that creation into being. .... You will have to wait for Mel's next beacon to discover more. It's worth the wait.

Scripture has many times spoken the truth ahead of sciences discoveries, whether it be describing the stones in the new Jerusalem in revelation, a list of stones which modern science has proved will illuminate in pure light – we shone lasers at them and they responded with beautiful light. Some wondered why some of the precious stones that twinkle in our jewellery nowadays were not in the list in revelation, but God knew which stones would be needed, reserved to reflect pure light.

Why is this important, well it is because the scriptures , in this case the revelation given to John whilst in Patmos around 95 AD, were written some, wait for it.....one thousand 800 and sixty-five years BEFORE the first laser was produced. And what does it tell us? That scripture as inspired by God is well ahead of the science of today.

In Revelation 21 v 23, John writes that the new Jerusalem, the city prepared by God for the believers in eternity, does not have a sun or moon to illuminate it. Instead the Glory of God will shine forth as pure light ... and hence the list of stones. Makes you think eh?

We may not understand all that we read in God's word ( and some have claimed that the word is therefore a matter of weak faith in a man inspired collection of books) – but the only reason we don't understand it, is mainly because man hasn't caught up with the understanding of an all-powerful God!

As we negotiate our way through a return to our church buildings, it has been good to remind ourselves that we are the church, not the bricks and mortar of the building. We would do well to keep reminding ourselves of this and to make sure that as we do return, we don't make our buildings a refuge from the world, but rather, use our new found freedom of expression, demonstrated in neighbourly love and relationships to brightly shine in our neighbourhoods and communities that we serve.... After all, Jesus, in his most famous sermon, the one on the mount that starts in Matthew chapter 5, says this:

***“You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavour? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless. “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house.*”**

*In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.*

That is my prayer as we start to come back to our fellowships and church buildings. Let's not go into hiding, enjoying the safety and sanctuary of our buildings – We are the church and we are called to be seen in our communities, to serve the people around us and to honour God who has shown us great mercy and is willing to forgive all those that are drawn to Him.

One of the things that we cannot do straight away is sing. Even today as we gather in small distanced groups, we are not allowed to sing, or play loud music if people are talking, as exhaled breath with force travels longer distances. All something we have to get used to, but I suggest it may be one of the hardest things for us to bear.... And believe it or not, there is a scientific reason why. So, lets have a think about a few things.

We all know that worship of God is important. Now I'm actually going to tighten up our understanding of worship, to the act of singing and chanting – as defined in the Old Testament.

The Psalms are all prayers which were to be sung and there are many other instances of Gods people singing out their feelings and thoughts about God – in fact today, a great deal of our theology or understanding of God, comes from the songs we sing. We retain the memory of a song far better than a decent sermon! Somehow, we can recall words to songs – that's any songs – almost word for word without ever starting out to learn them.

Think of some of your favourite ditties – it won't be long before your brain supplies the lyrics to you. It is because of this, that work with Alzheimer sufferers has started to focus on singing songs. Somehow the brain stores the info and when stirred into action – releases it. Perhaps it is because songs are emotive and powerful, but I think it is perhaps deeper rooted than that.

We are made in the image of God, so I suspect that we are wired to appreciate singing, after all, God in Zephaniah 3 verse 17

***For the LORD your God is living among you. He is a mighty saviour. He will take delight in you with gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs."***

God sings over us! So singing is inbuilt in us – whether we like it or not! But if we just backtrack a little, if songs are good for our memory and big chunks of our theology are inspired by the songs we listen to and sing, then it makes perfect sense that God instructed His people to worship Him, to sing songs about Him, to chant about His goodness.

This was the staple diet of His people in the Old Testament – read any Psalm to see how the nature of God, Who He is and what He does for us, is sung over and over again.

Science has caught up, eventually and now sees the good that songs can do for us .... But God ordained it years before.

Even as we venture into the New testament, we are encouraged to sing together about Gods goodness – to sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs that help to build faith, gain strength and help overcome loneliness.

The biggest benefit though is that what we sing sticks in our memories. Ask anyone to recite a bit of a hymn and they should be able to do so – it is a powerful indicator that God has used music and singing to act as an aide memoir to His people throughout the ages. So, the lack of singing may be a worry for us, may be the thing that we find the hardest to do without as we return – and actually it has nothing to do with the style or presentation – its that we associate our theology with it.

We may not be able to sing out for a while yet, but we can still listen to music and allow God to strengthen our hearts. Singing will return and when it does there will be a loud and joyful proclamation of who God is resounding throughout this land.... in the meantime, it has been suggested that we hum and let our minds do the rest.



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