

Coach House Church BEACONS

WHERE ARE YOU?

28TH JULY 2020

"Gannie, er R u....?"

Translated that is "Grandma where are you?", as a youngster i spent a lot of time with my Grandma and Grandad Clarke, thats my mums Mum and dad. These two were fantastic champions of Jesus, and incredibly committed to helping others and also my Grandad preaching in many churches.

This week has been a very sad time for us and some of our dearest of friends. In complete shock and without any warning we lost "Auntie Lynda". Auntie Lynda wasn't a real Auntie to me but might as well have been. She was my mums longest and closest of friends, she was the most incredible wife, mother, grandmother, mother in law, and friend to all who met her. Our families holidayed together, fed pigs together, she even got stuck in a field with my Mum .. a story i will tell shortly. She will be missed more than I, we, any of us can probably ever express. Even though this hurts to talk about, I feel led to discuss our loved ones we are missing.

Where are you...??

"Gannie R U ?" The phrase I started with. This was something I used to shout up the stairs when entering my grandma and grandad's house. I was desperate, desperate to know where she was, desperate to know I would see her again. Now usually she'd be in the Kitchen baking, or at least getting ready to bake, or in the garden caring for her flowers. But the voice would always come back " Here I am", the voice of my grandma. Then Peace..... I knew I'd be seeing her, I knew she was there, I knew even looking at the mountain that was the staircase, I would see her.

The story of my Mum and Auntie Lynda stuck in a field, in the Baker and Jones family is legendary. Let me paint the picture. The two families had gone away and stayed at a working farm in Devon for a holiday. We used to walk down to the local beach by walking through the farmers field, of course the way they'd told us. One day en route to the beach my best mate and I decided to walk on ahead, jumping over a fence and walking around the outskirts of a field, everyone else followed. We then noticed that a large quantity of cows had taken an interest in us and were starting to follow us. So as all boys do, we ran back to the rest of the family, only to find that the mums had just managed to get over the fence. We hopped back over leaving Mum and Auntie Lynda stuck with a large amount of snorting cows breathing down there necks...literally. It was hysterically funny. The ones who were safe were urging the others over the fence to safety. its a story that will always be dear to our hearts, but I want to see the comparison of our spiritual journeys, and that of our loved ones.

You see when we see the light and follow Jesus, it's like being Andrew and I, we were in the darkness being chased by things that weren't good for us, 100 or so friesians and as we saw the safety of the other side of the fence we jumped. Leaping for safety. And landed in the safety of Jesus's arms. But, when we jumped, in the briefest of moments we did not stop to think of our mums.

Thankfully our mums did make it across as our dads helped them, after a serious amount of giggling and also apprehension from the mums. But what about now, what about helping our friends and families cross the spiritual fence and come onto the side that brings freedom. We need to trust that God has everything in control. But that doesn't stop us from showing what God has done for us and it doesn't stop us showing them the difference between each side of the fence.

We, as Christians are Jars, in 2 Corinthians in the bible it says we are Jars of Clay. Not many of us have paid attention to the fact that we are vessels of God. God is within us, but it's not a sealed Jar, where nothing can escape, it has a top that is open, so we can share Him, tell people about Him, love Him to others. Yes that can make our lives harder, as we need to strive to be more like Jesus day in and day out. We are somehow under the microscope as our actions are judged daily. But brothers and sisters let me tell you, take this as an opportunity to shine. To help bring God's light into the world. We need to be light to our families and friends.

Jesus gave everything to his friends—his knowledge of God and his own life. Jesus is our model for friendship— because he loved without limits—and he makes it possible for us to live a life of friendship—because we have been transformed by everything he shared with us.

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.

Sometimes we can read this as love another Christian. I don't believe that this is saying that. Its saying love one another, whoever the other is, sinner or slightly less sinner, black, white, tall, short, male, female, young old.....LOVE

One of the most common verbs for "love" in Greek is *phileō*; the Greek word for friend, *philos*, comes from this verb. In the New Testament a "friend" is immediately understood as "one who loves." This fundamental connection between love and friendship is an essential starting point for reclaiming friendship as a resource for faith as a contemporary Christians.

Friendship was an important topic in the Greek and Roman cultures in which the early Church took shape and the New Testament documents were written.

Where are you.....? Let's get back to this as we come into port.

Where are you? a double sided question. On one hand are you on the journey having given your life to Christ..? If so, share it. Share the love, help the person over the fence. Show them Jesus in the way you act, the way you speak the way you love. On the other hand, are you still waiting... still stuck in the field with the snorting behind you, and still haven't asked for help, asked for God to come into your life and set you free...?

If this is you, whether you believe it or not, God created you. In Psalm 139v13 it says "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb." You are the work of His hands, His own creation and nothing you or anyone else may do can change that fact or His love for you. The ultimate demonstration and proof of God's love for you is the death of Jesus on the cross over 2000 years ago. God has done His part. Jesus gave His own life as a punishment for OUR sin. We didn't deserve it. It wasn't 'fair' but that's how much God loves you.

But now you have to decide if you want to accept this gift of forgiveness, this promise of eternal life. If you want to be free from the punishment you brought on

yourself, you need to decide to surrender to God and do things His way from now on.

So where are you? Well I can tell you my Auntie Lynda, my grandma, my grandad and many more fellow believers I know are on there way to Heaven.

They gave their life to Christ and He saved them. Im going to finish by adding just one simple word to the sentence I've said a lot today.

Where are you going?



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