

Coach House Church BEACONS

ONE RULE TO GUIDE THEM

12TH OCTOBER 2020

I'm not sure about you, but I am getting awfully confused with all the ever-changing rules and regulations that we are having to conform to and obey as national lockdowns, become local ones - local ones become different depending where you live and so on and so forth. It wouldn't be so bad if the rules were constant and didn't keep changing, at least we would know where we up to and could plan accordingly.

In the beginning there seemed to be one instruction – keep your distance, and then, apparently because we didn't keep our distances, wear a mask, don't travel etc, until eventually it became lock down and we were separated, sometimes from our loved ones.

The reasons behind it all also seem to contradict and change, is it herd immunity or localised control, is it to stop the NHS being overloaded or is it simply because we don't actually know what to do. The science seems to say one thing and then equally other scientists suggest the opposite is true.

The only thing I can say with certainty, is that we are all very confused!

We may have another round of regulations to stick to before the end of today, with announcements due imminently, so be prepared for more change and more uncertainty unless... Well, unless you know the God of this universe, who set all things in place and governs all things until He decides when the time to call time, is upon us.

I am reminded that the bible tells us in Revelation that Jesus is the ALPHA AND OMEGA The first and the last - The beginning and the end. OK, so, here we have some certainty. There is a beginning and there is an end and what do we find at both points – Jesus.

This gives us some certainty in life, something that acts and looks like bookends to History, with everything contained between these, pointing from and towards the same person. Jesus – who was there at the beginning and will be at the end and at all points in-between!

So, how does this help us make sense of what we see around us, and how does it give us a confidence that we will come through it? Well, the bible also tells us that in an ever-changing World, he is an unchanging dependable rock. The actual wording in Hebrews chapter 13 helps us out, as it says in verse 8

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. So, do not be attracted by strange, new ideas.

We have a statement of fact, followed by an observation of what it is we actually like to do! Why warn us about the attraction of strange new ideas ... in fact, why call them attractive? It is because they appeal to our human emotions or thinking, which is usually tuned in to anything that detracts us from God's place in our universe or lives.

Yet, as we continue to be swamped by information and rules in these current times, we should find some simple satisfaction in the fact that Jesus, was, is and always will be the answer to the world's problems. Period.

OK, so let's wind back to our opening statement. Wouldn't it be great if we had one rule that governed us, so we all knew where we stood?

Except in truth, we have already tried that and failed! Think about it. When God made man, there was only one rule. You can eat anything, from any tree, but do not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. That was it. One rule, clear, unambiguous, easy to follow. Easy I say! Only it wasn't.

We know that the one rule wasn't kept and the result would be a whole set of rules that would cascade down upon us because now man knew how to sin. This was summed up in the ten commandments given to Moses, but if you look at the books of Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, you will notice that the one rule had become a multitude – and man made it worse by deciding for himself how to interpret the rules to suit his own circumstances And guess what? We are still doing the same thing today!

Rules are there to show us a standard to keep, a level of behaviour which is deemed acceptable. In the Bible's case, the rules were there to show us God's standard for us to attain. We had learnt to disobey and now we had tons of rules to show us how far away from God's intended life for us we had come.

There really is no hope, when you try and follow all the rules. They are impossible. In fact, Paul writes that we all fall short of meeting these standards. Only Jesus ever met the requirement, and that is why He is such good news to us. God provided the solution to man's dilemma. Only by meeting God's standard would a man prove to be righteous. Jesus, followed and kept all the rules... now before we think that this was some easy task, we should be reminded that Jesus was tested in all ways

Hebrews 2:18 (NLT)

18 Since he himself has gone through suffering and testing; he is able to help us when we are being tested.

But just before this verse, we are reminded that Jesus was not tested simply as God, but made himself like man in EVERY respect. He went through every test and every suffering as a man.... So that we can come to Him, knowing that He understands us fully. In all our circumstances.

Jesus, who is the same yesterday, today and forever – has tasted every test and suffering that we could ever face – and succeeded where we fail.

That is why we can depend upon Him, He understands us. Which also means that He also understands our deepest fears and failures. He even understands what it is like to face separation from God. When Jesus was nailed to a cross for our sins, not His own because He didn't have any – he bore our sin and shame – God, His Father, could not look upon Him, and turned away, creating a feeling of separation beyond anything we could ever feel.

So, whatever the changing rules and confusion that it may bring, my hope is in the steadfastness and dependability of Jesus, who vouches for me, helps me and pleads for me in heaven.

We should be mindful of the parable of the wise builder. Jesus gave these words in the gospel of Luke,

Luke 6:47-49 (NLT)

I will show you what it's like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it.

It is like a person building a house who digs deep and lays the foundation on solid rock. When the floodwaters rise and break against that house, it stands firm because it is well built.

But anyone who hears and doesn't obey is like a person who builds a house right on the ground, without a foundation. When the floods sweep down against that house, it will collapse into a heap of ruins."

Look at the story carefully and you will see that the storms and floods came against both the houses. Not just the one built on sand, but the one built on the rock as well!

We will all face issues and problems in life, but I would rather go through these uncertainties with my confidence in Jesus and the promises He makes, which I have proven to be true.

Won't you join me and experience the certainty and surety of the solid and dependable foundation that is Jesus, who is the same today yesterday and forever, who kept all the rules and then died and rose again, conquering death so that we could experience life as God first intended



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