

Coach House Church BEACONS

SNOWDON

22ND OCTOBER 2020

A few weeks ago, I fulfilled one of my want to do ambitions. I had been involved on three peak challenges as the minibus driver on occasion but not climbed any of the three peaks, Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike or Snowdon. It was a lovely Friday autumn evening, very pleasant apart from the gusting 50mph winds on the top when I set off with a few friends from Llanberis up the railway path to attempt to reach the summit of Snowdon Only I was on my mountain bike.... our ascent was in order to enjoy/endure the descent down the Rangers path and back to Llanberis. I must admit that I , unlike the others had electric assistance on my bike to help me get to the top and save my battered knees! – don't be misled though, this just made some of the going very tough indeed, as not all the way up was rideable with the steep rocky terrain forcing us to walk sizeable sections - with the added problem of pushing a heavy mountain bike.

There were times that I didn't think it was manageable and that I had bitten off a bit more than I could chew. I sat down a couple of times exhausted, wondering why I thought this had been a good idea! Surely there was an easier way and I was reminded of that easier way a couple of times, as the train made its way up Snowdon to the summit!

It also reminded me of the time I looked after the youth at church and when we were teaching; I would often ask a simple question: How do you conquer a mountain? Answer– one step at a time!

We would be discussing how we grow as Christians, how we push on to achieve the seemingly impossible – one step at a time. And just to encourage our flagging bodies from time to time, every now we should be encouraged to stop and look back at how far you have come. On Snowdon more than a few times as we climber higher and higher and afforded ourselves the view around us, seeing how far we had actually come on our journey and steeling ourselves for the push of effort

required to reach our goal. We almost got blown off the track a couple of times as a strong gust of wind overcame our efforts, but the end was in sight - the summit was ahead – so it was head down and push on.

We finally made it and was rewarded with the feeling of elation of conquering the mountain and the conditions to reach our goal. The views were outstanding all around us from our lofty viewpoint, a beautiful clear evening rewarded us with views across Anglesey and along the North Wales coast. We also saw something else The sun was setting and it was getting rather dark, rather quickly.... and we still had a tricky descent ahead of us. So here we have a beacon of two halves.

The first half is one of encouragement to gain your goals.

We are reminded in Hebrews of a great host that have gone before us, spurring us on to reach the finishing line of our earthly life and attain the reward of eternal life.

Hebrews 12:1 (NLT)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us.

I won't dwell too much on this aspect of the story as I have already talked about this previously in one of my beacons – Just be encouraged to keep on keeping on! And if you think that you are not achieving or changing quickly enough, then take some time to stop and look how far you have come. It is good to encourage our hearts and often it is others who notice the changes in us faster than we do Take time to honestly evaluate your faith.

So, back to the story – and the second half of our beacon; 4 bikes on top of Snowdon with exhausted, but happy riders The prospect of a good run down, enjoying the benefits of our exertions only darkness is pressing in ... and when there is no other source of light around ... it gets very, very dark, very quickly!

I was very happy to have invested in a new powerful light to light the path ahead... which reminds me ... it is time for an insertion of a passage of Scripture to think upon!

Psalm 18:28-36 (NLT)

You light a lamp for me.

The LORD, my God, lights up my darkness In your strength I can crush an army;

with my God I can scale any wall.
God's way is perfect.
All the LORD's promises prove true.
He is a shield for all who look to him for protection.
For who is God except the LORD?
Who but our God is a solid rock?
God arms me with strength,
and he makes my way perfect.
He makes me as surefooted as a deer,
enabling me to stand on mountain heights.
He trains my hands for battle;
he strengthens my arm to draw a bronze bow.
You have given me your shield of victory.
Your right hand supports me;
Your help has made me great.
You have made a wide path for my feet
to keep them from slipping.

I probably don't need to over spiritualise my descent of Snowdon guided by the light that lit up the path in front of me. Everything outside the beam of light to the ground in front of the wheel was complete, abject darkness. The only way of staying on the path was to keep focused on the beam of light showing the way, highlighting obstacles and showing the twists and turns before it was too late.

I am encouraged when I read the scriptures that remind me that it is God who gives me all I need, He helps me to maintain the correct direction, He aids me when I stumble, He supports me, upholds me, strengthens me and perfects me!

I hope you get the inspiration in the Psalm we read. God is our provider, the perfecter of our faith. It is all about Him – He is the Rock that is solid and dependable, the light that cannot be extinguished – It is through Him that all things are possible.

But look at the list of things that are for our benefit;
I can crush an army – in the Lords strength
With God – I can scale any wall (That's ANY wall!)

He shields me when I am in danger

He arms me and is my strength – I may be weak, but He is a sure dependable unmoveable rock.

He makes sure my feet do not stumble, I can be sure that when I put my feet where God has directed, they will find solid ground and head in a direction that brings goodness in my life.

He enables me to scale heights and look down from mountain heights (and He did in that moment on Snowdon – but much more than that - I can be someone that God intended and not what the world has tried to make me – I rise above this world and can see how far God has changed me and be encouraged that those changes will keep on coming!

He gives me victory in my weakness and trains me, guides me and creates a path through life that is wide and sure, so that I will not slip.

I made it to the bottom of Snowdon even in the pitch black, which was an amazing ride, but I am encouraged beyond this that my path through life is lit and sustained by God himself. Could not attain a way through this life that would lead to eternity and restoration of relationship with Him, so He provided everything in order to make this happen. He gave me Jesus as a payment for all my wrongdoing and sinfulness. He gave me the light of the World, to light my path and keep my way secure.

My journey to the top of Snowdon and then safely home was only possible because of the light that showed the way. Our lives only make sense when we allow the light of the world, be our light through this world and trust in all that God provides us to bring us safely home to our promised rest.

God gives us so much to enable us to make it – let's make sure we do.



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