

# Coach House Church BEACONS

---

## THE LEG WORK OF LEGACY

---

13TH NOVEMBER 2020

During this Corona Virus outbreak, I have had to carry out a number of funerals, which under normal circumstances would have had the church packed to the rafters, however, due to restrictions all of them have been done with limited numbers and a sense of being distant from those we would like to be close to.

I didn't take the funeral this week for a great friend of the church, but I did manage to attend by the provision of technology and the use of the internet to livestream the service to those watching at home. The one thing theme that kept reoccurring was that of Legacy. What a legacy this lady left, serving as a missionary, a primary school teacher, of being a wonderful encourager and great ambassador for Jesus.

Added to this the example she set to those around and to her family, this all added up to an impressive catalogue of example and encouragement – a solid legacy to be remembered. I wonder if we were to take a little time to stop and think deeply, what would our legacy be? I want to encourage you to do just that. Take some time and think about your legacy.

Now, I will guarantee that most of us will sit in silence for a while and find it difficult to get past the negative things we think of first. Our failures or lack of commitment when we should have exercised more 'faith'. How we have failed rather than triumphed. It is a very natural thing that we dwell on our bad points or failures. Most of us are inherently inclined not to be boastful about ourselves and more likely to point out the good things in others first (and that is usually why when we come across someone who is boastful, that we generally have a negative reaction towards them – who do they think they are?)

I guess, one of the things that set me off on this train of thought, was the behaviour of some Christian leaders during the US elections, claiming all kinds of things in the name of the Lord and boasting about results and so forth. One was caught in

inane robotic laughter (that if you ask me, was far from Godly or real). We are surrounded by so much counterfeit that it is really important that we know how we are doing, and to this end, we are urged by the Apostle Paul to – 'evaluate ourselves honestly'

***Romans 12:3 (NLT)***

***I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us.***

This is one of my 'go to' scriptures as it reminds me of who I am. It keeps my feet on the ground and my eyes focussed on Jesus, who perfects my faith.

Now a look at other renditions of this verse help us to see clearly what it is saying to us:

***NIV - Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.***

***NKJV - to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.***

So, the words that sticks out to me is not the action of evaluating ourselves, or even thinking of ourselves – but the way in which we do it – with Honesty or thinking Soberly. In other words, we are in danger of thinking of ourselves much higher than we ought, unless we apply honesty or think soberly. Without honesty we will quickly come to the wrong conclusions about ourselves. In fact, I would go as far as to say that although we are not inherently boastful, we are also economical with the truth.

Being honest, or considering soberly takes a bit of effort because we have to have a comparison point to do it. So, what or who do we compare ourselves with in order to apply this correctly? Thankfully the scripture tells us exactly how to apply this as well. We assess ourselves against the faith that we have in God.

But even this is open to our interpretation. Is it really to do with our level of faith? And if so, what is this faith that God has measured out to us?

I think the message translation helps us to understand this passage accurately and puts the correct application before us:

***Message: Living then, as every one of you does, in pure grace, it's important that you not misinterpret yourselves as people who are bringing this goodness to God. No, God brings it all to you. The only accurate way to understand ourselves is by what God is and by what he does for us, not by what we are and what we do for him.***

Now then. This rendition reads very differently from the traditional interpretations, but what it does do is apply the correct understanding of Faith is.

Faith is our ability to trust the truth that God is who he says He is and that scripture reveals accurately His nature or Character. The more we understand Gods constant character as shown to us through scripture and the life of Jesus ('the same yesterday, today and forever' - Hebrews 13 v 8) – then the greater our understanding of who we really are.

Comparing myself with my wife, my friends, family or other Christians is not going to cut it. I can easily see faults in others (as they will see faults in me) and therefore we run the risk of thinking of ourselves as better than we ought, just as the scripture warns us.

However, when we use Jesus as the standard, when we hold up our character to Gods character, we begin to see the gulf that lies between us. Soberly and honestly evaluating myself up against a just, Holy, righteous God is only going to leave me realising how sinful and rotten I really am.

Now, this may seem a very dangerous position to put ourselves, robbing us of all self-worth, but the truth is – we are told to evaluate ourselves secure in the knowledge that God sent Jesus to cover our failures, sin and unrighteousness. Therefore, considering who we are in light of this, only shines more glorious light on who God is and the sacrifice of Jesus, who bore my sin and shame in order that God could even consider my works and life.

The entire process helps us to focus on God and Jesus, who is the author and perfecter of our faith, the beginning and the end.

In the words of the worship song,

'It's all about you, (Jesus) ... and not about me'

So, why did I start this beacon with talking about the wonderful legacy of a faithful lady?

Well, let me tell you. The funeral this week in its entirety, was for the lovely lady we were remembering and giving thanks for, celebrating the life of. But the Legacy that we remembered, was that her life was all about Jesus, her Saviour and Lord.

It fell to others to speak of her life, the goodness, the beauty, the faithfulness and her love for others. However, it was stated over and over again that the reason for all these attributes was not the lady herself, but Jesus being outworked through her. She would always step back in order for Jesus to be seen. The leg work of her legacy. Stepping back and letting Jesus shine.

When we evaluate honestly our lives, it should help us to see that it is only because of the Spirit given to us, when we believe in Jesus, the sacrifice and covering for our sins, planned by, and revealing the character of, an unchanging God, that we even exist. He is there for all those who would honestly humble themselves and ask for His forgiveness.

Those who want the glory and praise now can have it. I'd rather step aside and let God take the Glory.

Lord give me a humble heart and legs that are willing to move aside in order that You are seen and not me.



---

## PASTOR ANDY JACKSON



*Coach House Church*

leadership@coachhousechurch.org // 0161 432 5604

the coach house church, 222 wellington road north, stockport sk4 2qn