

Coach House Church BEACONS

KEEP A LID ON IT?

25TH NOVEMBER 2020

One of the amazing things of this strange year, has been the way in which people have responded. I remember well speaking with Jamie way back in March about how we could keep connected with people, when the entire shutdown of civilisation as we knew it was upon us.

The idea to do these beacons came quickly and confidently. Why don't we produce a 10 minute word of encouragement, based on our understandings of the Christian faith we believe in.

It was a brave move in a lot of ways. As a church, we were still only just over a year into our new beginnings, establishing our thinking and zoning in on our direction and calling. So, to ask a small team of individuals to undertake the commitment of producing a mini sermon and recording it on time to a strict rota, was going to take a lot of effort and time.

9 months later we have now passed the 200 mark, that is 200 individually stylised efforts, containing personal stories, honest evaluations, scholarly teaching, heart-searching, and soul-bearing thoughts.

We have raised questions, set out to give answers and pressed on to keep our family connected. Little did we know that this collection of effort would have the capability of reaching out further than we had ever anticipated.

We got the news this week that the beacons have been accessed drum roll please

Half a million times! Yes, you heard that correctly.... Half a million times!

Now, that is simply staggering. I cannot think of any way that we could have accessed these kinds of numbers by doing what we have always done. But, actually, this is Gods way of making His name known and it follows the same patterns we see in the Bible. It shouldn't be a surprise to us.

The 'Modus Operandi', method of operation, can be seen all the way through Gods word.

We were never meant to keep a lid on it.

When God created Adam and Eve, he gave them a task. We tend to focus on their lack of ability to follow a simple instruction and not eat from the tree of knowledge, however in other instructions they got it right.

Let's have a look at what God asked two people to do...

Genesis 1:28 (NLT)

'Then God blessed them (Adam & Eve) and said, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it.'

Take a small number (2) and from that number multiply and fill the earth. Today we have some who say the world is over populated and birth rates need controlling and this is used as an excuse to do the opposite of Gods instruction, as they bring murder and destruction instead of life and blessing.

The world got so bad at the time of Noah, that God started again with a small number. This time it was eight, Noah and wife, their three sons and their wives... but the instruction remained the same, first to the animals that had been rescued;

Genesis 8:15 (NLT)

Then God said to Noah, "Leave the boat, all of you—you and your wife, and your sons and their wives. Release all the animals—the birds, the livestock, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—so they can be fruitful and multiply throughout the earth."

And then to Noah and his family:

Genesis 9:2 (NLT)

Then God blessed Noah and his sons and told them, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth.

We see this re-occurring theme, over and over again in the Bible. We were never meant to keep a lid on it.

I noticed something else as I was reading these accounts in Genesis. The word Genesis itself means 'beginnings' and what we are reading is the story of how everything began. And just in case we miss it, God keeps putting down markers for us as we read.... How about this one that closes chapter 10:

Genesis 10:32 (NLT)

These are the clans that descended from Noah's sons, arranged by nation according to their lines of descent. All the nations of the earth descended from these clans after the great flood.

The book of Genesis itself falls into two halves. The first half deals with the global view of how the earth was formed and populated, and the second half zooms in on how God gives promises to individuals, which will result in a saviour (Jesus) being born to a family line (Abraham)

It is fascinating to see how God closes off the global view with such a grand statement that we so often miss.

Every nation, that is all humankind – has its root back to eight people. Noah, his wife, their three sons and their wives.

It is also quite worrying to see how quickly mankind forgets what God has provided and done for them. We were not designed to keep a lid on it, but somehow, we do.

God is the author and creator of all things, and yet very few hold to the Biblical truths nowadays. We firmly put a lid on it.

The BBC commissioned a series a few years back called 'The incredible Human Journey', which followed Dr Alice Roberts around the globe, tracing the ancestral origins of the world's tribal groups. It was fascinating stuff, and over the six episodes we were treated to the startling admission, that all of the world's population and diverse people groups, stemmed from a very small number (a handful) less than 10,000 years ago ... Err... hang on a minute, a BBC factual series about the world we live in, admitting that the whole population on earth derived from a handful of humans, only a short time ago (no mention of millions and millions of years). I remember watching the conclusion of episode six on the edge of my seat ... Were evolutionists, who openly deny a Creator God, about to agree with the Bible... after all, we have discovered that Gods conclusion was that all mankind came from 8 people!

Unfortunately, at the end of the episode, without any qualifying data or evidence, we simply had the lid firmly slammed down, with the revelation that this handful of humans which populated the entire globe, managed to escape from Africa where we had happily existed (without ever wondering what was beyond the Nile) for millions and millions of years.

Well, I guess Africa must have been pretty densely populated after all that time and mankind was beginning to need a little elbow room!

How sad that we seem programmed to keep a lid on the truth, even if the evidence points one way. If you get the chance to see the series sometime, give it a watch. It is completely in tune with the Bible narrative until about 10 minutes from the end of the last episode. That's nearly six hours of amazing truth, and 10 minutes of unexplained, unsupported speculation.

As I write this, I am having a new roof put on the house (having a new lid put on if you will!) and this makes me think that somethings we need to keep a lid on. ... or does it?

The roof over my head serves to keep me secure and warm. To keep the energy and heat in, it is simply having a lid on the walls that makes my house

secure from the elements and allows me to store valuable stuff now that I have the security of my dwelling. If anything, having a lid on makes me introverted and protective of what I have.

I notice, that in the book of Acts, later in the Bible, the believers remain nice and secure in Jerusalem, instead of doing what they have been asked to do – 'go out into all the world and make disciples of all men'

It is only when persecution comes upon the believers that they scatter from Jerusalem and eventually end up taking the Gospel (the truth of Jesus being the Messiah) into the surrounding areas and then out into the known world.

Do you see the pattern emerging again? Jesus took 12 followers, showed them the truth and then tasked them not keeping a lid on it! I'm thankful they didn't, because today the church owes its existence to the small number being fruitful and filling the earth.

Our job is to keep on doing the same. The current Pandemic and lockdown restrictions, should have stopped the good news going out and maybe that is what the powers of this world wanted. But half a million accesses to the beacons tells an altogether different story.

Some things you just cannot keep a lid on.



PASTOR ANDY JACKSON



Coach House Church

leadership@coachhousechurch.org

// 0161 432 5604

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