

# Coach House Church BEACONS

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## ON THE ROCK

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28TH JANUARY 2021

Last Saturday we went out for our government approved daily walk. We are fortunate that we can access an area of country park just a short walk away from our home. We knew that with all the recent rain the area would be quite muddy, and so it proved to be. Some areas were still under water, snow still lay all about and the pathways were all churned up. As we walked where others had also trodden each muddy step made the going even worse for anyone following behind us.

This reminded me of our current situation as we battle this rather nasty and persistent virus. It seems like life itself has become a journey through mud. It seems like each step of that journey has actually only resulted in making matters harder. Each step is just churning the mud up, making it worse for others. Now this isn't a criticism of the way that this situation has been handled by our leaders, I'm sure I couldn't have done any better, it is just an acceptance that the journey has been necessarily difficult.

Well as we continued our walk across the park we came to a spot where there is a large rock. It protrudes above the surface and, despite the bad weather all around we found that it was perfectly dry. As I stood on the rock I felt safe, it was level and solid, I wasn't going to slip over whilst I was stood on the rock.

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### The point Jesus was making was that faith involves listening

This reminded me firstly of a couple of passages in scripture, and then also of a story which was once told to us by a visiting missionary.

Firstly let's look at the scripture; in the letter to the Ephesians Paul writes "So now you gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of Gods holy people. Together, we are His house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself."

Jesus himself told us a parable about building on rock. It is quite well known and you can find it in both Matthew's gospel and in Luke's gospel. Lets read it from Luke chapter 6 verses 46 to 49. "So why do you keep calling me 'Lord, Lord!' when you don't do what I say? I will show you what it's like when someone comes to me, and listens to my teaching, and then follows it. It is like a person building a house who digs

a deep foundation and lays the foundation on solid rock. When the flood waters 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 without a deep foundation. When the floods sweep down against that house, it will collapse in a heap of ruins"

In this parable Jesus is telling us that it is his words that are the solid foundation, that rock upon which we should build our lives. In the passage from Ephesians, Paul goes further, telling us that it is Jesus Christ himself that is the rock, Jesus is the foundation upon which we should build.

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## Jesus is telling us that it is his words that are the solid foundation

So now to that story I mentioned. It comes from an evangelist, who's name I can't recall, who was visiting us from America. The state he lives in is prone to hurricanes at certain times of year and it was during this time that he was due to go and speak at a conference about 100 miles from home. He had decided to take his wife with him and leave his 7 year old daughter at home in the care of a babysitter. As they travelled they had the radio on and news came through that a massive tornado had struck their town. Fearing for their daughter they decided to turn back. When they got back they could see that their home had been completely destroyed. There was no sign of the babysitter and as they moved through the wreckage they heard their daughter crying. She had sought sanctuary in a wardrobe and as the father opened the wardrobe the father could see that the little girl was standing on the family bible. "Why are you standing on the bible?" the father asked. She explained that the babysitter had run off when the house began to shake and she had remembered her fathers words that "if she stood on Gods word, God would never let her down"

Sometimes the simple understanding of a child is the best way to understand. Jesus did not make it difficult to follow Him. The bible is accessible to people of all ages, nationalities or abilities. You don't need to read anything into the words other than what is actually written. The little girl in the story had taken these words exactly as they are written and God had honoured that and protected her because behind that simple understanding was faith. It didn't matter that the little girl didn't really understand what it meant to "stand on the word of God" because it was the girls faith that brought her through that situation.

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## ...there is no situation that God cannot bring us through

And so it should be with us. The point Jesus was making was that faith involves listening to Jesus teaching and then putting it into action.

As we continued with our walk we eventually got off the muddy path and onto the paved way. This wasn't completely clear as there were puddles and areas of mud on the path but it was a slightly easier way.

I think that in the current situation there will be some of you out there that feel as though you are walking through mud at the moment. It is dragging you back, slowing you down, stopping you from getting where you want to go.

Hopefully these scriptures will re-assure you that there is no situation that God cannot bring us through. He is always there, the rock at the centre of our journey. All we need is the simple faith of a child, to listen to Jesus words and then follow them. Perhaps there will always be puddles on our path but when you accept Jesus into your life the mud will soon be in the past and God will lead you onto a better path.



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