

# Coach House Church

# BEACONS

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## ALL MIXED IN

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4TH MAY 2021

It has to be said, from a meteorological perspective, that April was an unseasonably good month. Basically, we had plenty of nice weather. Now that meant that I was able to get on with tasks to prepare my garden for this years crops. Having built a wall for my raised bed my most recent task has been to fill it up with soil. Now this isn't quite so straight forward. The soil is poor and we have a lot of clay underneath. This has meant that I have had to dig deep, into the clay, and then put in a layer of crushed rock to help the soil to drain. Then the next step involves sifting the soil. I want to remove all the stones, roots and other debris to make a fine soil for growing in. The last step involves adding compost and an unusual ingredient, plaster to break the clay down and make the soil fertile.

Now you might be wondering whether I am going to talk about separating the good from the bad, like the wheat and the chaff, or the sheep and the goats, but no, or maybe the seed on the good soil, but not that subject either. Today I am talking about belonging, and we will see where my garden story fits in later.

Churches always seem to be full of people who are doing stuff. Whether that is the Pastor or the Door stewards, or those who take communion around to people who can't get out. I could name many more roles; some people just do one role, some people do lots of roles, but what about those people who seem to have no role? Do you sometimes think that you don't have a role in the church, or maybe you feel you are in the wrong role in the church? Most of us have been in this situation at some time in our journey. When I was first at the Coach House all I did was just come in on a Sunday, sing a few songs, listen to the message, chat to a few people and then go home. I was a young Christian, and, in truth, probably not ready for a specific role but I did know one thing, and that was that I belonged. Within a very short space of time I knew that I was ready to do something and sure enough a role came up. All I had to do was to paint the fence. All of it, and if you

know the church you will know that there is a lot of it. Later on I joined the music team, went to home groups and the prayer meeting but the one thing that really gave me a sense of belonging and worth was when I joined a cleaning team.

Now all of these things I was doing were all valid, and, importantly, they were all a part of God's plan. Our Pastor Andy has mentioned in his ministry on prayer recently, that our prayers should be largely focussed on seeking God's will. That way we will get ourselves closer to God's plan for our life. If you are not sure about your role in the church seeking God in prayer is a good place to start.

In the first letter to the Corinthian church Paul writes this "All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it. Here are some of the parts God has appointed for the church: Apostles, Prophets, Teachers, those who do miracles, those who have the gift of healing, those who can help others, those who have the gift of leadership, those who speak in other languages"

Now this list might seem a bit daunting at first sight and we sometimes look at some of these roles and think "There is no way I could do any of those" but if you look closely you will see that this is not true. Firstly Paul says "Here are SOME of the parts" and secondly that there are "those who can help others".

Writing to the Galatian church Paul noted this "Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the `Law of Christ`. If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important"

So in these two passages we can see some important points. Firstly that there is always something we can do; and secondly; it doesn't matter how big or small the task is, only that you do what you can. There are always little jobs that need doing in the church and, surprisingly, most of them are not about cleaning or fixing stuff. Mostly these little jobs are about meeting our brothers and sisters needs. Maybe it is just being available to chat, praying for a situation, helping with a task or providing a meal. I have probably made it sound too easy and I know that from time to time our pride stops us from doing what we ought to. Paul was aware of our limitations and in the very next verse in his letter to the Galatians he wrote "Pay careful attention to your own work, then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else. For we are all responsible for our own conduct" As a conclusion to his thoughts Paul later adds "Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone – especially to those in the family of faith"

So what was the point of the story about the soil? What happened to the bits that were sifted out? Well the point here is that nothing is wasted. All the parts have a use. Whilst it is important that the fine soil sits on the top the larger bits that have been sifted out also have a use. Any large stones or pebbles are removed and used as filler in the drainage system. The remaining debris is placed between the lower level of crushed rock and the top layer of fine soil. This prevents the fine soil from clogging up the lower level. So, you see, every part is useful. The lower layers are invisible when the whole system is working properly but that doesn't mean that they aren't important. There are many people or roles in the church which aren't seen but these are just as important as the ones that are seen.

We can see from these words that we are all important in the church. Everyone has some sort of role, the problem sometimes is working out what that is. We should note that, in order for the church to work properly, and thrive, all of us do our roles to the best of our ability and we should all take time to seek God for what we should be doing. If we are all working to the same objectives then the church will be harmonious and able to easily move forwards.

In Paul's letter to the Romans he prayed for his readers:

"May God, who gives patience and encouragement, help you to live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ. Then all of you can join together with one voice, giving praise and glory to God, the father of our Lord Jesus Christ" "I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely, with joy and peace because you trust in Him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit"



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## STEVE ADSHEAD



*Coach House Church*

leadership@coachhousechurch.org // 0161 432 5604

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