

Coach House Church BEACONS

SYMPTOMS OF CHAOS

8TH JUNE 2021

In one of those rare moments of madness the other week I found myself in Aldi (although other supermarket brands were available!) doing some shopping with my mum before we went away to the caravan for a few days. Just one of those essential shops!

Now I don't mind putting a pound coin into the trolley to release it from the others, knowing I am going to retrieve it later when I return the trolley, but have you ever found yourself pushing a trolley around with a busted wheel? You know, the kind that wants to go left or right, in fact anyway but the way you want it? This particular trolley went one way and then the other, seemingly with a mind of its own.

The evidence of this misguided broken trolley was all around me, dented tins, bashed knees (my mums!) the odd near miss with other shoppers who managed to steer a clear course down the centre of the aisles (even missing the fellows in the middle aisles drooling over the latest bit of gadgetry designed to entice them in to spend their money on the next superbly priced gimmick – destined to sit in the shed for many a day untouched! – or is that only me?)

... Anyway, there I was banging into anyone, or anything, unfortunate enough to be in a few yards of my wayward trolley. The signs of the problem were all around me, the evidence that something was wrong, but the real problem is the condition of the trolley.

Have you ever considered that the evidence is all around us of a fallen, broken creation, designated by fear, hurt and decay? But it isn't the creation that is at fault. It's the condition of mankind that inhabits it.

The truth is, God doesn't make imperfect things (bear with me before you start challenging and citing imperfect things that seem to refute my statement) – God knew what He was doing when He created mankind. We were good enough to stand in His presence, to walk, talk and have relationship with Him. It wasn't God who made us imperfect – we chose to disobey Him, trust in ourselves and ultimately bring about decay and destruction.

The Bible is very clear on this, and also that God has provided a solution to reshape us and fix our problem. The problem is SIN, a simple three letter word that basically turns into a massive, unsurmountable chasm that separates mankind from God. As someone who is a sinner, we bear the symptoms of sin – decay and death.

The solution is Gods only Begotten Son, Jesus, who lived a perfect sinless life and then died a horrible death as a criminal, so that the sin of mankind could be offloaded onto Jesus and when and if, we call upon Him for forgiveness, are given the means of our being made right with God. Sometimes this is called being made right with God, or having our sins paid for. Being saved from what we deserve. There was a strange word in the middle of that description though. Did you hear it?

Begotten. Now that isn't a word we use much nowadays, but it is particularly important when describing Jesus. Begotten means 'being brought into existence by the process of reproduction'. What this simply tells us is that Jesus was actually born as a man into this world. He grew up from Baby to toddler, through teens and adulthood – in the same world that we exist in. To use our supermarket analogy, here was the perfect vehicle for navigating through the store of life, never once venturing off course, and reaching the final destination unscathed and untarnished by the obstacles along the way. Perfect, undefiled – SINLESS.

Now being sinless is really, really important.

In the Old testament of the Bible, there were lots of rules and regulations about how Gods chosen people were to keep clean and pure (as best as they actually could in the circumstances) – we know this today as the Law, and it was designed to bring some order into the chaos that mankind had

fallen into. A particularly noteworthy portion can be found in the book of Leviticus and it introduces us to the concept of a scapegoat.

Basically, God set out a ceremony for the people to be cleansed from their sins. The instructions can be found in Leviticus 16 and they are set out as follows:

The priest is to take two male goats, one of which will be offered as a sacrifice for the people's sins. The other goat is sent away into the wilderness after the sins of the people are transferred onto it by the priest putting blood from the first goat onto the second.

It all sounds very bloody, but the truth is that God had ordained a system of sacrifice that was seen to be temporary. It would later be fulfilled by Jesus shedding his blood as a sacrifice for our sins. In Jesus' death he acts as the sacrifice that is acceptable permanently by God, but also as the scapegoat, as our sins are transferred onto Jesus.

Ultimately all other sacrifices were only sufficient for sins committed, but Jesus' sacrifice is once and for ALL. This means all sins of mankind, past, present and future are paid for fully by Jesus. This is all tremendous news for those of us who accept the sacrifice and ask Jesus to forgive our sins. We are guaranteed by the presence of the Holy Spirit acceptance into eternity. Now, let us just deal with the God doesn't make anything imperfect. God made humankind to be in fellowship with Him. That means that we were able (or Adam and Eve were able) to be in God's presence – intimately. God made all things good and perfect, without at this stage death and decay for any of His creation.

In order for our love to be genuine, we had to be able to choose to obey – hence the instruction to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil.

It was one simple instruction that Satan set out to deceive mankind into disobeying.

When Adam and Eve were deceived, they chose to disobey and take their chances, and this created a void between God who is Holy, and mankind who were now disobedient and stained with sin.

The Bible tells us that at this point ALL CREATION began to die. A world that was not designed to die, now discovered the decay and fall that dying brings.

Romans chapter 8 puts it better than I can, so I will finish with that, but I am thankful that God chose to put things straight and give us the ability to have friendship and fellowship with God restored.

My shopping trolley can have its wheel fixed so that it is seen and recognised for what it is designed for. We to, can have our lives fixed, so that we can be recognised for what we were designed for – relationship with God.

Romans 8 v 18- 24

...all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. 20 Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, 21 the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. 22 For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, [i] including the new bodies he has promised us. 24 We were given this hope when we were saved.



PASTOR ANDY JACKSON



Coach House Church

leadership@coachhousechurch.org //

0161 432 5604

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