

Coach House Church

BEACONS

FEED WELL

19TH JUNE 2020

This beacon I want to be slightly different in my approach and share some words of encouragement shared with me by a lovely lady from another church that I have associations with.

I won't mention the ladies name as when she hears these words, she will no doubt recognise her story. I would like to thank her for the kind note that was handwritten to me, from which I have adapted this Beacon today.

No doubt in the last few days you will have seen and heard the weather outside your homes. It has been quite some time since I have heard thunder and experienced the lightning flashes illuminating the sky with such dramatic effect. As a kid we were told that thunder was the sound of God moving His furniture around! Now I know it is all to do with the difference in pressure created by the lightning flashes as it heats the air it travels through, causing it to expand supersonically, which we hear as thunder – similar to the sonic boom that Concorde used to make when hitting supersonic speed..... but I digress.

We hopefully have all seen that the one thing that loves a good dowsing in a storm, especially after a bout of dry weather, is our garden plants. I think that we have triffids in our garden the rate at which they have grown in the last few days...

Which brings me to the words shared from my good friend.

She wrote to tell me of a birthday present that she had received, a beautiful plant called a Peace Lilly. A particularly thoughtful gift given what is going on in the worlds around us today ... but more on that later.

I am first reminded that Jesus, when he spoke to his disciples used lilies as an example in Matthew 6 v 27-31

This is part of a famous talk that Jesus gave which we sometimes know as the Sermon on the mount... this particular part says:

Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? And why do you worry about clothes? Consider how the lilies of the field grow: They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory was adorned like one of these.... If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'...

Here we have Jesus telling his followers not to worry about the things around them, the clothes they wear, how they will be received. Simply Do not worry. He illustrates this using the wild flowers around – the 'lilies of the valley' – they are beautiful – more beautiful than Solomon in all his great splendour – and yet, even so, they are destined for a short life . How much more will God care and clothe those who belong to Him, with His glory and goodness.

This would later be fulfilled by Jesus who the bible tells us, gives us, who do not deserve such love and forgiveness, his clothing of righteousness so that we can come into Gods presence. Amazing! His sacrifice covers our wrongdoing and pays the price God demands for purity and holiness – Mind blowing!

If we have all of these things given to us, free from punishment associated with Sin because of our relationship with God through Jesus, then why worry about what is happening around us today – they are small and trifling compared to eternal matters?

But that doesn't stop us from being affected by the world we live in. Of course, we are concerned when we see the pandemic sweeping across the globe, of course we worry about how our families will be in the face of a changing world. But Jesus is stating quite clearly that God is still in control and our hope of eternity with Him puts perspective on all our troubles and concerns. They are not meaningless, but they are temporal.

One day, my lady friend was feeling tired and weary, which is not surprising as the flower was given to her on the occasion of her 86th birthday!

She noticed that as she was struggling with the day, so was the lily. No longer was it standing tall in the flower pot, not it was bent over and fading. It reminded her of her own feelings and weariness.

And yet it reminded her of something else to... The flower, like us, needs nourishment, it needed water pouring into the soil for the lily to feed on and revive. We are also promised nourishment to our souls when we struggle. We have living water flowing through us, because Jesus promises it! We just have to accept it and rest in it.

John 7 v 37-39

"If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.

Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said,

'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' " Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive...

The Holy Spirit living within us, as the seal that we belong to Jesus, is our living water. He nourishes us, encourages us, teaches us and guides us in all truth. Like the flower, we need to feed constantly, to be nourished by the Spirit constantly. We would never water a plant and then say 'job done' walk away and expect it to last forever. If we neglect to take on nourishment ourselves then why would we expect anything different?

If we do not let the Holy Spirit work in us every day, if we fail to acknowledge that a relationship with Jesus, is a live, ongoing, fruitful life – then we will surely start to tire and wither to?

How do we keep ourselves and the Spirit within us nourished? Well, we need Gods word as given to us in scripture – the Bible. We need to talk and have ongoing relationship with heavenly Father God, who created us for fellowship with Him – we call this prayer.

The more we feed and take on nourishment, the stronger we will be and the more able to stand firm when we see the world around us, seemingly spinning out of control. So, let's take a moment to slow down and ponder some things.

God promises us peace – even in turmoil

God is in control - even if it doesn't seem like it and the world denies Him.
God is our provider in times of trouble – but He gives what we need – not what we want. God is able to do all things – there is no such thing as impossible with God (except sinning!)

God loves us – even if we run away from Him

God proved how much He loves us, by sending His only begotten son – Jesus – to die for our sins.

God lives in us by His Holy Spirit – we are being renewed on a daily basis. Why not take some time today to rest and let the rivers of living water flow through our bodies and minds – letting God strengthen us and refresh us by his Spirit.

Jesus said in Matthew 11 v 28,

**Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.
Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls....come to me all of you who are weary and I will give you rest**

Jesus doesn't offer something that He cannot give, so why not trust Him today? I'm sure if you did this, my friend with her Lilies will be very happy.



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