



The Aldershot and North Camp Anchor

Issue 19: Sunday 23rd August 2020

Dear Friends,

Even in these continuing days of social distancing, the summer months still provide an opportunity for many people to take a holiday or to have a day out. Sometimes people visit places they have been to many times before and where they know the roads 'like the back of their hand'. Other people will be visiting places for the first time and so a road map or Sat Nav will be needed to help them find their way along unfamiliar roads.



It was said of the Baptist preacher, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, that, just as you could put someone down in any village in England and they could find their way to London, so you could put Spurgeon down in any verse in the Bible and he would find his way to the cross.

This statement says something about Spurgeon's skill as a preacher - but it also says something very significant about the Bible. The statement reminds us that wherever we look in the Bible, in the Old Testament or the New Testament, we are given insights into the nature of God who is seen most clearly in the mission and ministry of Jesus.

Saint Augustine (who lived from 354 to 430 AD) summed up this truth with the memorable phrase, "The new is in the old concealed; the old is in the new revealed." It's a helpful phrase to keep in mind as we read from the Old Testament and from the New Testament and are led by the Holy Spirit to see how the two parts of the Bible work together to lead us to the Jesus and to the cross.



Yours in His service,

Chris Blake

Worship Reflection

Our help is in the name of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. (Psalm 124 v 8)

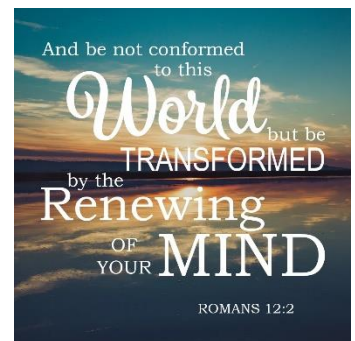
Hymn (StF 317)

At the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow,
every tongue confess him, King of Glory now.
'Tis the Father's pleasure,
we should call him Lord,
who from the beginning, was the mighty Word.

Prayer: Gracious God, for all you have given us, for all you will give us, and for all you give us today, we offer you our thanks and praise. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

Bible Reading (Romans 12 v 1-8)

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.



For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

Reflection:

Paul's letter to the Romans contains much deep and profound theology, but that theology is rooted in a reflection on the challenges of a discipleship lived out in everyday life.

As we seek to be followers of Jesus within our families, our neighbourhoods and our workplaces, we face many pressures to forget the call to live by the values of God's Kingdom and to let our behaviour be shaped by the 'ways of the world'.

At the start of Romans chapter 12, Paul sums this up as he writes "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind". Some years ago, the Biblical scholar J.B. Phillips translated the first part of that verse as, "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold".

It's a powerful image. And perhaps we don't have to think too long before we can remember some of those times when the attitudes and actions of others have tried to 'squeeze us' into copying their ways and behaviours.

We are called to choose another way – the way of transformation as we allow the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts and minds and lives.

Prayers of Intercession

We pray especially this week for -

- School students caught up in the uncertainty due to the policy changes regarding A levels and GCSEs and particularly those who plans of the future have been disrupted.
- For the people of the USA as they move into the final two months of the Presidential election campaign
- For those who have lost their jobs or where their employment is at risk in these challenging days.

Gracious God, we ask these prayers through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord and Saviour. Amen

Hymn (StF 628)

Faithful One, so unchanging
Ageless One, you're my rock of peace
Lord of all I depend on you
I call out to you, again and again
I call out to you, again and again
You are my rock in times of trouble
You lift me up when I fall down
All through the storm your love is the anchor
My hope is in You alone

Final Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, draw our hearts to yours with a love that is irresistible, unite our hearts to yours with a love that is immeasurable, and bind our hearts to yours with a love that is inseparable, now and for ever. Amen.

The Methodist Church is encouraging us all to 'tell our stories'. This week's contribution is from Ros Sherwood from Aldershot.



My story begins with two ladies who I greatly admired and who ran our local Sunday school in Somerset. It was comprised mostly of the children of rural agricultural and industrial workers. We were not always good, and I can remember singing 'cha, cha, cha' at the end of the hymn verses with all the other children. But Miss Mona Batstone persevered with leading our Sunday school, and Miss Emily Marsh, with her hair in plaits coiled around her ears, trilled away singing as she played the piano for us.

One Sunday, and only one Sunday, Miss Batstone invited me to tea in her calm and welcoming home. I have often wondered why she did that and what she saw in me for her make that decision. On reflection, I realise that the more important question is 'What did I see in them?'



I saw a simple faith lived out every day in humility amongst the ordinary folk who lived around them. A genuine attractive faith that was not dependent on status, influence or wealth. That kind of faith touched my heart. It is the kind of faith that draws me to the painting 'Primitive

Methodists at Prayer' by William Titcomb.

I can't explain the attraction, but I have recognised it in others over the years particularly in Willie Holmes here in Aldershot who always encouraged me. None of these people were considered important in society but they were important to me because what they did, they did for God.