

Word For The Week

9 October 2020

Preaching Dates

Sunday 11 October 2020

Frances Bloomfield and Ken Forrest (am) via Zoom at Cathcart Baptist Church
Andrew Chalkley (am) at Campbeltown Community Church
Bill Haining (am) online at Bridge of Don Baptist Church
Stephen Ilett (am) at Dingwall Baptist Church using Canopy on 25th and meeting afterwards for communion and fellowship via Zoom
Caireen Likely (am) at Sheddocksley Baptist Church, both in the building and streamed online.

Douglas Else-Jack (am + pm) at High Blantyre Baptist Church

Thursday 15 October 2020

Elizabeth De Silva (pm) at Aglow International, Accrington, Zoom outreach meeting.
Charles Sommerville (pm) via Zoom, Thursday evenings Bible Study on Ephesians. For details: drcharles.sommerville@sky.com

Saturday 17 October 2020

Elizabeth De Silva at morning Zoom outreach meeting for Carshalton Aglow.



“Make me know the way I should go”

By Eric Macarthur

Make me know the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.
Psalm 143.8

Last week I started to prepare this “word for the week”. I wrote a first draught. Then I read Bob Ferguson’s and realised he was asking much the same questions, posing similar challenges. In the absence of Sunday morning “church” I have been wondering about our traditional Sunday service: Why do we do it? Does it bear any resemblance to any meeting we read about in the New Testament? Is this “time-out” that an opportunity to reassess our whole response to God’s word? Or are we just desperate to “get back to normal”, back to our old comfort zone? I considered taking a totally different tack. Maybe we need to dwell on this a little more.

Consider Isaiah’s message:

“When you come to appear before me, who has required of you this trampling of my courts? Bring no more vain offerings; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and Sabbath and the calling of convocations-- I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly..... Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow’s cause. (ch.1 v12-13, 16-17)

What if God has shut the churches because he’s sick of our noisy Sunday mornings? What if there are better ways to “worship”, or build one another up in the faith? What if less time taken up with doing “church” could free us up to “go into all the world”? What if it’s time to focus less on putting on a good professional worship service, and put more energy into doing good; seeking justice, correcting oppression; bringing justice and pleading the cause of the most vulnerable in our society? What if these things were central, and esteemed as the marks of a “good” church? What kind of meeting together would facilitate this?

Scientists are telling us that we are likely to have an increase of virus’s crossing over from animals to humans in coming years because of the way we are destroying the natural habitats of wild animals (bats were among Moses list of unclean animals), should not the people of God be grappling with all matters related to this. In cooperation with other concerned people, seek a better way forward? What if God is calling us to a serious change in our lifestyle so that his children can show the way in looking after God’s creation?

I acknowledge these are big questions, and sometimes I feel like Larry Norman did 50 years ago when he sang “ Don’t ask me for answers, I’ve only got one – That a man leaves his darkness when he follows the Son”. There are many elderly people in our churches who are keen to get back to what they were used to, and they need to be cared for, but the world is changing, and I meet people now who are interested in what I’ve got to say about Jesus, but not in coming to traditional church services. Maybe we need to rethink, to wait on the Lord and open ourselves up to whatever the Spirit might do, and what better time than now?