

The Bigger Picture

Doing Church Differently

27th September 2020

Welcome

Welcome to the 24th
The Bigger Picture.

Words of encouragement for
your spiritual journey.

May you experience God this
week,

Mike & Sharon

Word for the week

Words of wisdom from our Pastor, Mike....

I spent a few days recently walking in Wales. On the cliff paths, everyone was giving other walkers plenty of space to get by. When I thanked one particular walker, she used a Welsh word I know well, croeso, which means welcome or you're welcome. Even though she was using her native tongue, she was communicating in a way that I could understand.

However, it was different when I was driving in South Wales on the M4. A message was flashed up over the road in Welsh only. The same message appeared about a mile further on. There was no English equivalent provided for travellers like me unable to understand much Welsh. I'm guessing that the message was giving information about local lockdowns.

I wondered whether I was indirectly being told that this local problem was not something to concern me. I wondered whether God was using this situation to remind me to focus mainly on the local problems of Coventry rather than thinking too widely about problems in the rest of the UK or the rest of the world.

I think that sometimes we can get overwhelmed by so much need that we become aware of. I think that we should always be guided by the Holy Spirit about the realistic limits of our prayers rather than spreading our prayers around too thinly.

For instance, during some past evangelistic events, we were encouraged to pray every day for just 5 local people we knew to attend the meetings and become Christians. I found I could do that and you probably could pray for 5 non-Christians as well so why not start today?

Stop and Pray

A word of encouragement from Sharon...

*I will be your God throughout your lifetime -
until your hair is white with age.*

I made you, and I will care for you.

I will carry you along and save you.

Isaiah 46:4, 9

Sometimes we can be so busy running around for other people that we forget to take care of ourselves.

The same can be true in our spiritual lives. We can be busy 'being Jesus' in the world and praying for other people and yet forget to tend our own needs.

We all need to spend time with God.

Resting in his presence, being refilled & refreshed.

Even Jesus withdrew to the wilderness to spend time with his Father.

God made you and cares for you, he will carry you along and save you. Give him the chance to look after you by making time in your day to spend with him.

May you be filled with the love of God, the light of Jesus and the healing power of the Holy Spirit.



Sharon's Snippets

Hear the Good News?

Driving over to Coventry the other day, I was listening to the news on the radio but unfortunately the connection wasn't good. It kept dropping out so I didn't hear much of it. In the evening I have the news on while I'm making the dinner, but I'm usually so busy that I don't catch much of what is said. And sometimes there's a conversation in the room which means I don't hear what's happening with the news.

It occurred to me that we can have a similar experience when it comes to listening to God. We are often too busy to sit down and make a good connection with God, or to focus on him and listen, we don't shut out the other things that call on our time and give him time to speak.

I encourage you today, give God your full attention, make opportunity to truly connect with the living God, and take time to sit in his presence and wait to hear from him.

Experience it for Yourself

I follow a local nature page on Facebook. Recently there was a photo of an otter family living in the river that runs through town.

Each morning I walk by the river where the photos were taken, so the following morning I stopped to have a look, just in case the otters made an appearance.

While I stood looking at the river, the following came to mind, 'Seeing a photo isn't the same, you have to see it for yourself', along with the understanding that, too often we listen to, or read about, other people's testimonies but it's better to experience God for ourselves.

You don't have to rely on third hand accounts. Don't be satisfied *knowing* about God, want to experience God for yourself. Raise your expectations, expect to hear from God and you will.



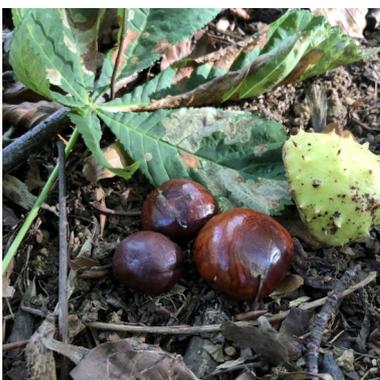
Seeing the Bigger Picture...

Thoughts from Helen....

On a short walk last Sunday, I walked past a Horse Chestnut tree. I noticed the conkers on the ground, and I thought of how shiny conkers are when they first come out from their shell but over time they fade and go dry.

I carried on and came to another Horse Chestnut tree. I picked up two conkers, one quite shiny, this reminded me of what Mike shared in one of his mini messages 'let your light shine'. The other conker was also shiny but it was slightly chipped.

As we sometimes get knocked back and feel chipped and dry like the conkers, oh how we need the Lord even



more to enable us to shine! To refresh us, to give us strength to carry on when we feel weary. For His glory!

This verse came to mind and made me smile!,

'We are more than conquerors through him who loved us'.

Romans 8:37.

And some words from the song '[More than conquerors](#)' by Rend,

*When my hope and strength is gone
You're the One who calls me on
You are the life
You are the fight that's in my soul
Oh Your resurrection power
Burns like fire in my heart
When waters rise, I lift my eyes up to Your throne
We are more than conquerors through Christ*