

The Bigger Picture

Doing Church Differently

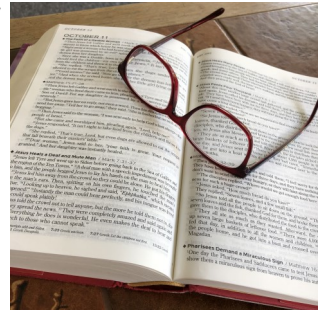
11th October 2020

Word for the week

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

It's official – I'm under investigation! My optician, with 20 years experience, admitted that she was stumped when she discovered that my eyesight is substantially better than it was 4 years ago. I've been telling people this but I've struggled to find anyone to believe me!

'The only possible scientific explanation is that your blood sugar level is higher than it used to be. This can sometimes lead to improved eyesight.' That burst my bubble. Now I must have a check to ascertain whether my pre-diabetes is going in the wrong direction.



In the Bible, we read about miracles but some people search for rational answers. Years ago, I was told that God supernaturally sent 10 plagues against the Egyptians. Last week, I read that most of them have possible natural explanations starting with red clay coming out of Ethiopia causing the River Nile to look like it had turned to blood. This contamination killed lots of fish causing the frogs to escape the rotting fish carcasses and infiltrate the homes of the Egyptians etc etc.

So the bottom line is this; do you believe in miracles or not? Did God perform miracles in Bible times? Does God still do miracles today? Could God have brought a measure of healing to my diminished eye sight? The jury is still out on that one!

Perhaps the greatest miracle you have witnessed is seeing your own life become slowly transformed since you started following Jesus. Or as one new Christian and recovering alcoholic put it years ago, 'The greatest miracle I've ever seen is whisky being turned into furniture!'

What should we pray?

Please give thanks for....

Sunday - the 'open door' back into the MRBC building. Mike will be speaking live to us today from the church platform for the first time since March!

Monday - the efforts of the youth leaders who have faithfully ministered amongst the young people during the last 6 months.

Tuesday - God's physical and spiritual protection of our church community.

Wednesday - calling us to prayer. We have been blessed through 2 MRBC prayer days in the last week.

Thursday - the church leaders and church staff who have done a great job overseeing our 'online church'.

Friday - the leaders of our nation who have done their best to lead the country well under enormous pressure. Pray that God would give them wisdom.

Saturday - the MRBC families with school age children. Ask God to protect them and bless them richly.



Hard Hitting Headlines....

Mike takes us in the book of James (Part 1)

....PAIN CAN DEVELOP US

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

James 1: 2-4

Christians believe that painful trials and deep hurts often have a good purpose which includes the development of our character! God sends us trials, not to sink us, but to prove our faith is real.

An old silversmith was once asked, "How do you know when the impurities are burned away in the

silver?" Answer, "When I can see my reflection in the silver." God will keep allowing trials in our lives until he can see his reflection in us!

....PAIN CAN PROTECT US

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds.

James 1: 2

At one time, it was believed that leprosy sufferers lost fingers and toes because of rotting flesh then it became apparent that the reason was because the victims couldn't feel pain and so failed to protect themselves!

Christians need different sorts of pain to alert them to spiritual danger and help them survive so, in one sense, we should be glad about trials.

Waiting for God? God is Waiting for you

A word of encouragement from Sharon...

During the recent prayer day in church I had a picture of a closed door and the understanding, 'Don't just stand at the door, KNOCK'.

Are you waiting for God to do something in your life, or perhaps waiting for God to bring an end to the COVID-19 situation?

I feel this picture is saying, don't just wait, turn to God, trust God, seek God and pray earnestly - *"For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened."* (Matthew 7:8)

This may be for you, for the church, or for the nation, as the Lord says, *'if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land.'* (2 Chronicles 7:14)

The time is now.



SHARON'S SNIPPETS

As I join the A14 on my way to Coventry, I round a corner to see a group of wind turbines standing in a field. This morning, with the sun on them I was struck by how majestic they looked.

I don't know whether you like them, loath them, or like them so long as they aren't spoiling your view, personally I quite like a wind turbine.

Today they were turning, some days they aren't. A wind turbine can only produce energy if it has the power of the

wind working on it.

This reminded me that we work best when we have the power of the Holy Spirit working in us.

Do you welcome the Holy Spirit into your life? God wants to fill you with the power of the Spirit. I encourage you to always pray for the spiritual gifts and be open to all God has for you.

"And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven"

(Luke 24:49)