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Who Are We?

The motif which has hung for many years behind the speaker's platform at the Keswick Convention in the Lake District is, '**all one in Christ Jesus**', a line taken from Paul's letter to the Galatian church; Galatians 3:28 – *"There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."*

What does that say to us? It says that, regardless of position, prestige or prominence, we are all loved equally. There are no distinguishing characteristics which marks out one better than the other – and that regardless of how we sometimes feel about either ourselves or each other.

But, what doesn't it say to us? It tells us that; -
we are not each other as though we are required to be a sort of Christian clone. Isaiah 49:1 says *"Listen to me, all you in distant lands! Pay attention, you who are far away! The Lord called me before my birth; from within the womb he called me by name."* He knows us all by name. There's unique for you!

But it also tells us that; -
we are each other's. 1 Corinthians 12:27 reads *"Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it."*

So let us live knowing that we are unique and at the same time live as though we are closer than our dearest siblings. And above all, let us live knowing that Jesus is our all loving, all giving, all caring, all saving Lord.

Cliff Darby (Griffydam Church)



WOMEN OF ACTION AT WRU CHAPEL, DORRINGTON, LINCS



What a privilege to host The Women of Action Foundation Day on March 9th, 2024.

Twenty two ladies met for the first of this year's teaching on having A Solid Foundation. These ladies joined us from the surrounding area, representing other denominations as well as our own.

We began with a time of 'getting to know you' over coffee and refreshments before settling down for the mornings teaching with a special time of worship.

Sandra then began to engage with Holy Scripture to establish God, our Rock and Foundation.

Next, we came to consider the Cross and its centrality to our Salvation, during this time we shared Holy Communion (or as I am being called back to referring to this meal as 'The sacrament of the Lord's Supper').

The final session led us to consider the awesome power invested in us by the indwelling Holy Spirit. 'He that is in us is greater than he that is in the world'.

Before we departed to our homes The opportunity to pause, reflect and share after each mini session was a very moving and rewarding time for each of us. We felt the 'Power of God' upon the whole proceedings.

we shared a meal, satisfying our bodies and spirits through this precious time together.

I would encourage all ladies throughout the Wesleyan Reform Union to take the opportunity of enrolling in the other meetings planned during the year and spread the dates and times to as many ladies as possible.

Thank you, Sandra and your Team, for all your dedicated work.

God Bless you.



Solid Foundation (Matt 7:24-27)

ALL LADIES WELCOME

Women of Action

Invite you to a morning of teaching, reflection discussion & prayer on theme:

"Solid Foundation" (Matt 7:24-27)

SATURDAY 8TH JUNE

**Stoney Middleton WRU Chapel
Cliff Bottom, The Bank, S32 4TD**

Doors open 10 am Start 10.30

To book your free places call

Beth: 01433 631887

Refreshments and lunch provided.

WRU CONFESSION OF FAITH

(to be continued)

3. We believe that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and are thereby subject to God's wrath and condemnation.

A friend shared a story of a person who attended an Alpha Course for the first time. During a discussion group it was shared that *'Jesus died to save us from our sins'*. The person declared that they had never sinned and therefore **had no need of Jesus** and left! To that person sin was murder or stealing, they failed to comprehend that sin can be anger, envy or gossiping; seemingly trivial in comparison.

Is your heart heavy like mine reading that? Let us also be challenged, they are not alone in their lack of understanding. We can say "I believe...," but it is essential to know in Whom we believe and why.

Our third Statement of Faith is a big theme to cover in a few words, but Paul is not ambiguous in his statement *'for ALL have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23)'*. Our sin is the condition of our hearts toward God. It is sin that separates us from an intimate relationship with our Father God. **It means living without freedom from sin or hope for the future.** I don't want anyone to live without hearing the Good News of Jesus, do you?

As I am writing, it is post-Easter, and I am drawn again to the Emmaus Road (Luke 24) and the wonderful Bible study they received from our Resurrected Lord, Who, by interpreting Scripture, revealed Himself to be the fulfilment of God's eternal plan of salvation for the world.

I believe, in the beginning, God created a perfect world and He

created humankind in His image - that is good and without sin, living in a free relationship with God, and they were blessed. Perhaps Jesus began with Genesis 3, when the conflict with sin began and the relationship changed. The consequence of their disobedience is separation from God, **IS DEATH**, not just for them but also for all humankind.

But God's desire for His people is to be like Him, and He is holy. By choosing to live in our sinful state means we are in rebellion against God.

Scripture tells us that by nature we are slaves to sin and objects of wrath (Ephesians 2:3). The only way to satisfy God's righteous wrath is Christ's once-for-all sacrifice, without this, our hope of eternal life is extinguished, and we all perish. But hallelujah, the world was loved in an amazing way, because God gave His ONLY Son - 'there was no other good enough,' as the Hymnist writes. **God demonstrated His love for us in this: 'while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.'**

By accepting God's offer of salvation by grace, which comes through faith, we can rejoice with Paul knowing, '... there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1).'

Our only hope is found in Christ Jesus, may our hearts burn within us, and shine out of us as we pray and share the good news to ALL.

Rev Sharon Hollamby



RISING FROM THE ASHES



Exactly five years ago, 15th April 1919, TV screens reported the terrible news that fire had broken out in the roof space of Notre Dame cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1991. We watched aghast as the firefighters battled all evening into the following days to extinguish the fierce blaze engulfing the roof and spire. We prayed that the damage could be limited and the cathedral saved. There was an overwhelming outpouring of support from the international community after President Macron promised that the cathedral would be rebuilt, setting out a five year timetable for its completion. Pledges totalling hundreds of millions of euros flowed in.

The cathedral was initiated by Maurice de Sully, bishop of Paris in 1163, taking about two hundred years to build. From the mid-twelfth century, the Church granted indulgences (forgiveness of sins) to those who would help to build a church or cathedral. *Did they not realise that Jesus died to forgive our sins?* Therefore, rather than going on crusades to absolve their sins, people dedicated more money and effort to the construction of houses of God with great enthusiasm and ambition desiring to excel in this quest of constructing magnificent buildings reflecting God's glory.

King Louis IX deposited relics of the Cross including the Crown of thorns, a nail and a slither of the Cross, which he had purchased at great expense from Emperor

Baldwin II. Napoleon was crowned here in 1804 and Victor Hugo's historical novel, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* was set around the cathedral. In 1909 Joan of Arc was beatified in the cathedral.

The renovations are estimated to cost around 800 million euros which seems a staggering amount. Notre Dame cathedral will rise from the ashes enabling all its beauty, history and artefacts to be on view again.

Whether this building was built to glorify man or God, there is no doubt that its craftsmanship, beauty and proclamation for God needed to be preserved. The NAME of our Lord IS a strong tower.

Marie Nichols (Staincross Church)



E 2 S

Equip to Serve

(formerly Local Preachers' Fellowship)



DAVE TUCKETT
(E2S secretary)

We are a team within our Union who are passionate about preaching. Not just about **what** we should preach and **how** we should preach it, but how we can encourage members of our churches to develop their gift of preaching for the benefit of their fellowships and, ultimately, for the glory of God.

These are good and worthy aims - I hope you agree! But here are some actions we are taking this year to bring reality to these aims which we hope will encourage and inspire you!

DAY OF MINISTRY 2024

BRINGING COMMUNITY INTO CHURCH

E 2 S
Equip to Serve
(formerly Local Preachers' Fellowship)



A day of interactive workshops exploring different ways of bringing our communities closer to Jesus, led by Cassie Biggin and her team.

Saturday 5th October 2024
10am Till 3pm

Bethel Community Church,
Shetcliffe Lane, Bierley, Bradford BD4 6DF

Contact **Dave Tuckett** by email or phone to book

Email: dtuckett@btinternet.com

Phone: 0114 231 3475/07789 770344



Presented to

A Faithful Preacher

In Recognition of

50 years

as a Local Preacher.

Thanking God
for your
faithfulness and
dedication.



Signed: _____ Chairman of Equip to Serve

Date: _____

We want to honour the many local preachers who have served our churches faithfully over many years, especially in churches with no minister or pastor.

Is there someone in your church or circuit who should be recognised in this way?

Please let Dave Tuckett know (details above) and we will arrange a Certificate. The first two Certificates are going to be presented in the Bradford Circuit later this month.

Our team members are: Jackie Clark (chairman), Daphne Hodkinson, Cliff Darby, Brian Hyde, Howard Copley, Phil Hartshorn, and Jim Rossell.

You would be very welcome to join us at one of our regular Zoom meetings – if so please contact me.

Dave Tuckett (E2S secretary)

GROWING DISCIPLES

Growing churches

IMAGINE having a large, satisfying meal, but it makes you feel more hungry! This was certainly my experience yesterday at the 'Discipleship Training' workshop at Jump. Imagine, too, that we had laughter, despite having such a serious subject to discuss! ...but, moving on... Thank you so much to Richard and Ian, who gave us so much 'food', a day full of encouragement, as well as challenge.

Quotations flowing fast, from David Watson, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, John Wesley to name a few, and a few references to Holy Scripture, too!

We were led to evaluate if we were true disciples and reminded that a true disciple or follower of Jesus would have visible and tangible commitment to the Master, learning from Him and striving to become like Him.

The day went so quickly, with

fast-flowing, interesting, and challenging teaching. Two things were particularly significant to me, both related. The word "Seek" in the well-known verse "Seek ye first..." It now screams out with so much more depth – craving, searching, longing, striving for the Kingdom of God AND His Righteousness.

Similarly, "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness..." Do we have that 'hunger', longing, strong

desire, urgency, dedication, passion, commitment...?

A day of encouragement and challenge, delivered with empathy and expertise. I gather Richard and Ian would be happy to deliver the workshop again in other areas. Watch this space! Meanwhile, well fed, but still hungry, I'll be looking out for any follow-up events!

Phil Hartshorn (Dodworth)



Local charity Bright Hope in North West Leicestershire (formerly Hospice Hope) took possession of Bright Hope House, its new, purpose-built daycare centre on 9 February 2024. The facility in Swannington has been funded by Bloor Homes. The state-of-the-art 6,000 square feet centre boasts two complementary therapy rooms, counselling rooms, a quiet room, a workshop for hobbies and training / technical facilities. It also has commercial kitchen facilities, a dining room and lounge and a conference room and offices.

The new centre can accommodate up to 24 people in day care for three days a week, where guests can enjoy daily activities and a hot meal at lunchtime. It will also host a wide range of services provided by Bright Hope and its partner organisations.

North West Leicestershire District Council has provided the charity with a 150-year lease on the land at a peppercorn rent, so it can call the building home for many years to come.

The charity provides daycare, counselling, befriending, and complementary therapy for people with life-limiting conditions, allowing carers to take a well-earned break. It offers similar services at its

three support cafes in Ashby, Whitwick and Ibstock. A bereavement hub is also held at the centre. A dedicated team of more than 80 active and experienced volunteers support the charity and its service users.

Stewart Shepherd, Bright Hope's Chair of Trustees, said: "This wonderful collaboration between the council, Bloor Homes and our charity is unique. It enables Bright Hope to develop and build on all we have learned and achieved over the past 20 years.

"The need for our services continues to grow and develop. We look forward to meeting that need now that Bright Hope House is open, when we'll be looking to work with the community and local businesses to support this excellent initiative."

All of the above happened as a result of a God given vision, much prayer and miracle after miracle. Since the inception, the charity has looked to God to provide wisdom, care, compassion and funds. He has not failed and we are now able to offer Him all the glory for this new £3.5m building and continue the work to bring glory to the One Who inspired the project from Day One.

The age of miracles is definitely not dead.

Stuart & Jan Shepherd (Griffydham Church)

OBITUARY

PASTOR PAUL BROWN 1956 – 2024 Beacon Community Church



We appointed Paul Brown as pastor of Beacon Community Church in July 2016. Being Welsh, it was a fortuitous time for him to arrive in Bradford as Wales were exceeding all expectations in the Euros at the time! The only hiccup in the move was the loss in transit of his pet snake, the disappearance of which was resolved a few anxious hours later when "Slinky" was found curled up in a hidden corner of the removal van!

Paul made an immediate impact both in the church and the community. He became chaplain at the local gym and then to Bradford Park Avenue FC. There were close connections between the club and the church for some time.

Paul had a real heart for people, building a true family here at Beacon. A family which continues to be there for each other. Prayerful, practical, providing – church at its best. In so many ways, Paul lit the Beacon, and under his ministry Beacon became a place of warmth and light, of welcome and security, of hope and energy.

He led our worship with assured ease, his unwavering faith an example to us all. Even during lockdown restrictions, Paul immediately got on top of technology. In isolation, we had never been further apart but through Paul's endeavours somehow, we found we had never been more connected.

And when he could, he would greet us all with a huge hug. A hug of unconditional acceptance. A hug which said "I'm here for you. What do you need?" Paul has always been there for us when life has been hard and we have been found wanting - comforting, reassuring, making provision, finding solutions. Living out his motto of being "All things to all people so that some may come to know Christ".

Paul was diagnosed with MND in July 2022. He continued actively serving as pastor until last June when his health meant he no longer could. However, that didn't stop him having bible studies and worship times with his carers and nurses! A pastor to the core, despite all that happened, he never once lost his pastor's heart of concern for others or his willingness to share the gospel.

Paul passed away on March 9th and his celebration service, held on March 26th, was attended by over 150 people. As a congregation, we are grateful for his ministry through which we were wonderfully blessed. And now, freed from the privations of MND with which he had lived so positively, may Paul be wearing his crown of righteousness as he stands before the Lord whom he so faithfully served during his time on earth, especially here at Beacon.

The tale of the Salt and Light



JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS

HE ONE EXPLAINED TO HIS FRIENDS THAT THEY WERE A BIT LIKE SALT!

IN JESUS' DAY, SALT WAS VERY PRECIOUS. IT HELPED PRESERVE FOOD....

....AND SALT GAVE FLAVOUR. IT WAS VERY USEFUL INDEED

SALT HELPED MAKE LIFE BETTER - WE TOO SHOULD HELP MAKE LIFE BETTER IF WE CHOOSE TO FOLLOW JESUS!

JESUS ALSO SAID HIS FOLLOWERS SHOULD BE LIKE LIGHTS

'NOBODY LIGHTS A LAMP - THEN PUTS IT UNDER A BOWL', SAID JESUS

THE WAY WE LIVE OUR LIVES AS CHRISTIANS SHOULD BE AN EXAMPLE TO THE REST OF THE WORLD.

JUST LIKE A CITY BUILT ON A HILL!