



ALLANDER EVANGELICAL CHURCH

FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER

24th August, 2020

Sabbath Principles Isaiah 58: 11-14

In concluding this 'lockdown' series, John focused on another aspect of essential elements of the new normal: the positive value of Sabbath principles established by God, even before man fell.

Inaugurated at Creation, it was established by a God of structure and order as an opportunity, as the first experience of our existence, to be enjoying God and sharing in the rest of His accomplishment. It is not a break or respite, but a complete rest. It is a pattern of devotion He established.

The Sabbath was given to feed and enhance the distinctiveness of God's people as they, different from the surrounding heathen nations, could rejoice in His creation, reflect on their redemption, and rest on His covenant promises. Resting was an expression of their faith that God would provide.

While there is great danger in regarding Sabbath principles (e.g. as stringent Sabbath observance) as a set of rigid rules with an emphasis on binding formalism or crippling legalism, there is a more positive aspect. They help us to grow in our faith, to devote time to enjoy God, to be released from this world's misguided pressures; and benefit from the discipline and structure of public worship in doing so. So, let us strive to *"enter into that rest"* and *"call the Sabbath a delight"*.

Bible Study

The Zoom Bible Study will start up again on Thursday, 3rd September at the later time of 7 30 pm. The access details are the same: Meeting ID: 899 8445 3732 and Passcode: 005502

Having finished the Old Testament we will now take an overview of the New.

To whet your appetite, the "homework" for this new series on the NT is to try and identify any significant links, by way of prophecies, events or examples that link the OT with the New.

Ministry

Each Sunday, since lockdown on 22nd March, John has recorded his message on Saturday evening so that it would be available on the website for anyone to listen to on the following Sunday morning. These have been powerful messages, with a real sense of God speaking directly to us in this situation; ranging from the 'comfort' of Psalm 46 to the 'challenges' of the Temple and its intended function. Since our building was opened for services on 19th July, that has meant preaching twice to separate congregations on the Sunday as well as continuing the Saturday evening recording. We appreciate the efforts involved and the quality of the ministry that has ensued.



He will be on a well-deserved holiday now for two weeks from the 25th August. Howel will take the services this Sunday and Jim Gourley on the 6th of September, with recordings being available on the church website on these afternoons.

Services in September

We plan to continue in September with services at the normal times of 10.30am and 6.30pm on Sundays with the same arrangements, subject to any Government changes.

Prayer Meetings will take place, by Zoom and telephone, on Tuesday evenings at 8pm for an hour; and for half an hour on Wednesday and Friday mornings at 10am. Access details remain the same.

More Reflections from Lockdown

Carol Macleod shares the following with us: *Lockdown has undoubtedly been strange for us all. I have still been working. Although the Day Care Centre closed to service-users in the middle of March, we have been supporting people in their homes during that time. A verse that has been precious to me is from Psalm 139*

“every day of my life is recorded in your book”. This pandemic has not taken God by surprise. We trust Him for what lies ahead. [Keep these reflections coming: they are an encouragement to many.]

People and Prayer

We continue to pray for people in the church who are going through difficult times: people like George Cowan and Margaret who is now resident in Mugdock Care Home; Christine and Jack Harvey; Joyce Kyle, Anne Wilson; Netta Gardner, and others.

Financial aid

Taking into account the reasonably healthy balance in the Church's bank account at this time, the Elders have agreed to send the sum of £200 to SAT 7's Beirut appeal. They have also agreed to consider sending a financial gift each month to other Christian charities who may be experiencing financial difficulties at this time. If you are aware of any pressing financial need please speak to David Jack.

Finally

One of the most controversial features of living with Covid has been the implementation of mask wearing. There are conflicting views about the merits and value of this, but nevertheless the Government insists on them. However, something that intrigued me was how this would impact much of modern technology which depends on facial recognition software. A conversation with a friend who works in security informed me that the software is so advanced today that the kind of masks we wear does not prevent it from recognising us. Whatever that makes us feel physically, on a spiritual level it is a profound reminder that under God's perfect vision there is no mask that can veil who we really are. Thankfully the God who knows who we truly are loves us in such measure that He gave His Son to redeem us.