



ALLANDER EVANGELICAL CHURCH

FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER

10th May, 2021

Defining Love John 13: 31 - 38

Although this is a short passage it is full of significant truths. It emphasises love as a key element. That love needs to be defined for it is both God-, and other-, centred love as opposed to the self-centred love that is so prevalent in our natural culture and human disposition. Understanding that love is essential.

The highlighting of true love as being crucial is set in a context where Jesus expresses his love to the remaining disciples (now that Judas is gone) He can be open with them by providing them with insight into what was his divinely appointed redemptive mission – taking humanity's place on the Cross.

True Love is defined by understanding the glory of God. That glory is manifest in the fact that Jesus consciously embarks on the final stage of his journey to the Cross showing the extent of God's sacrificial love for them, laying down his life that we might be forgiven and that God's wrath against sin be satisfied. It is redemptive.

Love is also a command, a deliberate act of the will, in obedience to the charge Jesus gave them. It certainly is not the cosy, emotional, 'love' the world practises in its selective, feeling-based, way of working. He loved the unlovely: so should we. It reflects undeserved love and benevolence to poor, lost and vulnerable sinners. Nowhere is that more clearly demonstrated than in his anticipated forgiving and restoration of Peter who impulsively – but not deliberately – betrayed him under pressure. Surely, love so amazing demands my commitment?

Services in the Church

It has been very encouraging over recent weeks to see more people attending our services since restrictions were raised allowing us to meet, albeit with continuing safeguards, in the church building. It has been especially good to see visitors and new folk join us and to see the warm welcomes being extended to them and returnees after a long absence. The Back Hall has needed to be brought into use to accommodate the numbers while still keeping within the guidelines. Our prayer is that it will become like Jacob's Bethel – a place where there is a sense of 'God is here' and that we all have a real encounter with God with a view to a new beginning rather than simply sinking back to a comfortable normality.

Help for India

With the escalating Covid crisis in India we have an opportunity to provide practical help through the Christian Ministries Charitable Trust headed up by John Speirs, a regular visitor to Allander. They have a plan of action for reaching out to 5000 families in the city of Chennai with a 'bag of rations' costing £10 each; providing ration bags in remote villages and slum areas and supporting CMCT staff purchase supplies locally. Gifts can be sent by Bank Transfer to the CMCT Bank account (50-41-06; Account 56188021) quoting 'Helping hand' as a reference.

Pray for:

Ava's grandfather in ITU and for Inga and her colleagues in Oaxaca. And for the many others who appreciate prayer.

Zoom Codes

All the church services (except Sunday evening) are available by Zoom using the Meeting ID: 819 2022 9424 and Passcode 047533 or phoning 0131 460 1196 for telephone access. These meetings include: Sunday morning (provisionally), Prayer meetings on Tuesday at 8 00pm, Wednesdays and Fridays at 10 00am and Thursday Bible Study at 7 30pm.

There was a technical hitch last Wednesday morning with the computer failing to recognise the difference between l (lower case L) from I (upper case i). Normal service is now resumed.

What if the password was Llanelli?!

Romania

A couple of weeks' back we were rejoicing that the lorry load of goods for Romania had been safely packed and was on its way with the task at this end fully completed. Things at the other end, however, told a different story. Delays, cancelled rendezvous, and Brexit-related bureaucracy, creating frightening extra costs meant that the additional expense incurred made this a trip of doubtful value if such difficulties are likely to be

repeated. An alternative approach may be required for providing help in the future.

Mission of the Month

Last month a total of £350 was contributed to the work of Slavic Gospel Association, which they have gratefully acknowledged.

This month we support Myra's Wells providing clean water in Burkina Faso. .

Visitors

We received a nice note from Mark and Justine Weber saying: *Thank you very much for the Newsletter. We enjoyed church last Sunday and appreciated the warm welcome we received.*

Ascension Day

This Thursday 13th May in the Christian Calendar, is Ascension Day - the day Jesus returned to be with his Father in Heaven. You can read and reflect on this important and significant event in Acts Ch. 1 v 1 - 10.

Prayer is a

Luxury for we come to a King;
Liberty in that we are free to do so; and a
Legacy whose benefits we can bestow.

Margaret Stewart

Finally,

None of us would dispute that the world is a complicated place to live in. We all want peace from the chaos, somewhere where we can find refuge and be refreshed. We love our holidays and feel good after them. Yet, when we get back, we are in danger of becoming caught up in the frantic cycle once again.

Psalm - 19-7 (NLT) says:

The instructions of the Lord are perfect, reviving the soul,
The testimony of the Lord is trustworthy, making wise the simple.
The commandments of the Lord are right, bringing joy to our heart.
The commands of the LORD are clear, giving insight for living.

Refreshment is found when we spend time with God, and studying his word. That is where we find peace and comfort amidst life's daily distractions.

Jim Flett