

Weekly Prayers, News and Thoughts

Welcome to our condensed Newsletter. We are publishing this in digital format to help keep us up to date with each other.

Lockdown and social distancing are now undergoing changes and we are monitoring the situation. We are currently considering ways to meet up again physically and to re-open our building and become involved in the community again safely as soon as circumstances allow.

If you know of anyone who you feel would benefit from our online offerings please feel free to share our website at www.bishopbaptists.co.uk with others so they too can enjoy our weekly online service (also available on our YouTube Channel), newsletters, blog and other items of prayer and interest.

Pray for those who mourn and have lost loved ones to Corona Virus, for those who have the illness, for those caring and supporting those who are ill, for those exploring the possibilities of vaccines and for the effectiveness of national strategies and personal practices in overcoming the pandemic.

For help and support. please feel free to contact:

- John Claydon johnclaydon@thenba.org.uk
- Paul Revill paulrevill@thenba.org.uk or
- Elaine Webster elainewebster@thenba.org.uk

Prayers

Please continue to pray, either by yourself, or collectively, using one of the many online and social media channels for:

- ***Members & friends of our Fellowship***
- ***People, families & neighbours within your own circle experiencing difficulties***
- ***Those who work for our benefit and welfare in frontline jobs, putting themselves and their families in vulnerable and frequently life-threatening situations***
- ***Supermarket staff and other supply industries***
- ***Carers in Care Homes and Nursing Homes and Sheltered Housing and Hostels***
- ***Carers who look after members of their own families***
- ***Postal Workers and other delivery people who bring us our mail, food, and medicines***
- ***All those in positions of leadership, research, development, industrial organisations, and new productions, at this traumatic time***

This week We are asked by NBA to pray for our Baptist Hospital Chaplains at this time of great challenge and for our NHS as they support staff and patients who also carry anxieties of their own:

- ***Rev Robert Muir - Wansbeck Hospital, Ashington***
- ***Rev Jim Wright - Lead chaplain at North Tees Hospital, Stockton***
- ***Rev Rodney Breckon - James Cook Hospital***
- ***Rev Graeme Harrison - Lead chaplain, Northumbria Healthcare Trust***
- ***Rev Liz Edwards - North Tyneside hospital***
- ***Rev Dave Etherington - North Durham University Hospital + BAGH***

Please pray especially for all those living and working in:

- ***Barrington Meadows***
- ***Evergreen Primary School***
- ***Lady Eden House***
- ***Bishop Barrington School***
- ***St Anne's CoE School***

Pray for those who mourn and have lost loved ones to Covid-19, for those who have the illness, for those caring and supporting those who are ill, for those exploring the possibilities of vaccines and for the effectiveness of national strategies and personal practices in overcoming the pandemic. We must not forget those people who have recently lost loved ones too, from other causes and who are going through the grief and stresses which are made even harder to bear by the present circumstances.

Northern Baptist Association - Prayer for Whitley Bay Baptist Church

One thing perplexes me in Acts 16: 25-30:

We are informed that all the prison doors had been opened and every prisoner was released from their chains.

Yet, when the guard arrived Paul and Silas informed him that all the prisoners were still there.

In the midst of an earthquake, when the walls of a building are shaking the safest place is out in the open.

The natural urge is to escape.

What kept the other prisoners there?

Could it be that the apostle's worship was so infectious that they remained against all their other natural drives?

Worship born out of a deep-seated understanding and appreciation of God is surely the most powerful force on earth.

As our churches prepare to reopen, let us move forward in such an attitude of worship that the communities we serve cannot help but be challenged.

We thank God:

- For God's provision of our new pastor.
- The success of our Zoom Care Drop-In sessions.
- The growth of our Pastoral Care Team.

We pray:

- That Pastor Paul will settle well into his new role and enjoy God's richest blessing.
- For the continued success of our Zoom Care Drop-In sessions.
- That our understanding and appreciation of God will enrich our worship and deepen our relationship with Him.

(Prayers and text supplied by Roger M Daniel: NBA Co-ordinator)

Pull Over - Take A Break

Read John 15:5 - Jesus clearly said apart from Him we can do nothing.

In what ways should this truth affect you and your emotions?

How can a spiritual discipline like fasting teach us that we're not in control?

People like to be in control - It's true!

Why? - Because people prefer autonomy, and autonomy precludes God's rule - We don't like to let go.

Fasting is good for our souls, (but only do so, if it is safe medically to do so) because fasting leads us to feel our helplessness in a way that points us toward God. It allows us to rest in God's control and release our grip on the circumstances of our lives.

When we understand and accept God's leading, we lay down our own paths, our own pursuits, and our own manoeuvrings to try to get to where we feel we need to go. Trusting in God requires letting go. We acknowledge that ultimately God is in control and that His method of being in control often involves twists, turns, and meanderings that make us uncomfortable.

Yet the sovereign providence of God can only mean that He's the absolute ruler, controller, and sustainer of all aspects of His creation. He's the sovereign King. He's running the universe. His prowess and wisdom guide our lives into His intended purpose.

Often all this occurs without our awareness or acceptance because God doesn't need us as much as we may think He does. Though God doesn't ultimately need us, He uses us to accomplish His purposes.

What joy should we find in being used by God?

When has God used you despite your limitations or perhaps even your unwillingness to be used by Him?

In hindsight how did these occurrences affirm God's providence in your life?

God's Word features accounts of His will and purpose succeeding despite human weakness. In His providence God spoke through a donkey (see Num. 22:21-31). He also woke up a King to position Esther to save His people from annihilation (see Esth. 6:1).

He used tired, hungry foot soldiers and priests, to march around a wall and produce one of the most amazing military feats, of all time (see Josh. 6:1-20).

God's providence and sovereign control exist, whether we acknowledge them or not. Thus, to discover the importance of working, living, and moving within them, is one of the most critical life skills, we could ever develop. Unfortunately, this wisdom is often lost on our egos.

Why? - Because most people want to do what they want to do. Most people want to feel as if they're calling the shots. Most people want to be the centre attraction in the three-ring circus known as their lives, so they deny or rebel against the truth of sovereignty in their hearts and their minds. Yet denying or rebelling against God's providence doesn't make it less true. It just makes us feel that we have more control than we do.

In fact, rebellion against God is typically rooted in a desire to usurp His sovereignty. Furthermore, God can even use people's rebellion to accomplish His plan. Read Exodus 9:34-35 and Romans 9:14-18.

What do these verses say about God's ability to use a human being's rebellion for His ultimate goal?

How can God use something meant for evil to ultimately accomplish good?

What are some biblical examples when God used an evil intention to bring about good?

How does knowing that God can bring good from evil circumstances, make you feel about a challenge you're facing?

If you've spent time wandering the pathway of life, wondering why bad things happen to good people, or how God can allow certain circumstances in your life, these truths are for you right now. As you discover the security of sovereignty, you'll experience the peace that's rightfully yours, as a child of the King.

The greatest truth you can ever know about God, other than hearing and receiving the message of salvation, is His sovereignty. When you know God is in control - even of things that appear to be out of control - you're able to move through life, benefiting from the blessings of assurance, peace, and contentment.

When you truly understand that He's in your corner, as your greatest defender and vindicator, you'll no longer seek to rescue yourself. Only in drawing close to Him, so that you can hear Him, and, as a result, follow Him can you experience His deliverance in every area of your life.

PRAYER

Prioritise time to think about God's control and ultimate power over all. Consider ways He has worked in other people's lives, or in your own life, to bring good results or positive growth from a negative situation. Thank Him for His ability and care to do that, in His gracious sovereign purpose.

(Thanks to John G for this contribution)

Online Prayer

- Northern Baptist Association
Service 12th July https://youtu.be/Q0A5Unx_xwA
- Bishop Auckland Baptist Church
Service 12th July <https://youtu.be/q6Atoexln8E>
- Influence Church <http://www.influencechurch.co.uk>
Services streamed each Sunday at 11.00am and 5.00pm

FareShare Food Scheme

John and Vanessa at Bishop Auckland Methodist Church continue their sterling efforts in collecting the vast amount of FareShare food kindly donated by local suppliers. They are currently taking the food to Woodhouse Close Food Bank to ensure the most efficient route of distribution. The food bank is open every weekday from 10.00am until 12.00pm.

We are now investigating the possibility of additional donations from other branches of the scheme to assist in keeping the food banks resourced so they can continue to help those need.

Church Garden

Given how alive the garden looks it is clear the good friends of Bishop Auckland Baptist Church have donated a considerable amount of their time and effort and resources to bring about such a stunning change. More contacts continue to be made as ever more passers-by stop to look and chat. So once again a great big "THANK YOU" to every one of you!

The latest updates and pictures can be found on the [Garden Blog](#) on our website.

Thoughts

Job 1 v 21: The Lord gives and the Lord has taken away; may the Lord's name be praised.

Dear father, when doubts and fears overwhelm me, help me to remember that I'm precious in your sight. You are always in control and you care for me. Amen.

Job lost all his considerable wealth and all his children overnight!

Despite this harrowing news, Job, at first, looked to God in hope and praised God for being the source of everything. Job acknowledged God's hand even in times of calamity (Job1 v21).

We marvel at Job's strong faith, but Job did also struggle with despair.

After he then lost his health (Job2 v7), he cursed the day that he was born (Job3 v1).

Job was honest with his friends and with God about his pain.

Eventually however, he came to accept that both good and hard /difficult times come from God's hand (Job13 v15 and 19, v25 – 27).

In our sufferings, we too may find ourselves wavering between despair and hope, and between doubt and faith.

God doesn't require us to be dauntless in adversity, but instead invites us to come to Him with our questions.

Though our faith may fail at times, we can trust God's faithfulness.

(from OUR DAILY BREAD, Saturday 9th May 2020)

Isaiah 40:31 NIV

*...but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.*