



Walton-on-Thames Methodist Church
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Dear Members of our Church Family,

One lesson that the authorities wished they had learnt during the first couple of weeks and months of the Coronavirus pandemic is to be able to know about how the disease is passed on from one person to another, especially where the carrier may not be showing any symptoms. In spite of this admission, our Prime Minister is not ready for there to be an enquiry about what could have been done better and what lessons should be learnt. We pray that the lesson that the authorities have learnt since the onset of the epidemic, is taken into a good part. I suppose we could say that the lessons for the government, may also be directly beneficial to all NHS staff, key workers and be for the benefit of members of the population. Particularly because we may wish to know who could be a carrier of the virus or who could transmit the virus so we may act to stay safe. Meanwhile, we are encouraged to be very careful and to do our best to protect ourselves and others.

Since the 24th of July, the fine for entering a shop or supermarket without wearing a mask is £100.00. Please do not forget to comply with this regulation. Some people may also develop the habit of wearing gloves in addition to the use of sanitisers, and washing of our hands properly and regularly. Particular good news is we can visit other people, meet in their gardens and also host people in our gardens. Our plans for recommencing the use of our church building is progressing and members of the task force who are looking into these challenges are optimistic. For the three churches in our cluster, namely Addlestone, Weybridge and Walton, Methodist Churches, Walton is aspiring to open for prayers on Thursday's from 2pm to 3pm. Please continue to pray that the arrangements are fruitful and that this first millstone is achieved this Thursday 30th July.

Our meditation from last week, "Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52", takes us into a series of parables out of which, aside from the parable of the mustard seed, the one about the nets catching fish draws more attention for me.

The separating of the fish took place after the expedition and the bad or not required fish were thrown away. I understand that the types of fish were the qualifying factor. However, if we bring in the interpretations of scriptures in which catching fish may be translated as winning souls for Jesus Christ, I was taken aback that some will be rejected after they have been caught. For me this raised question such as why were they rejected and whether the rejects were those who disobey the word of God? During the 9.45am Service from Wesley's Chapel on Sunday 26th July Revd Steven Cooper cited that Jesus was using images and metaphors that his hearers will understand. In addition to which, I contemplated that the angels from heaven separating people so that some may enter God's kingdom whilst others may be rejected is still a grim scenario.

Some Christians may believe that by embracing the grace of God, our wrongdoings may be forgiving. The rejections of people, even though there is grace for all, moved my thinking away from the fishes being people. I find new resonance with the sea being our sea of thoughts from which different kinds of fishes may represent different thoughts and ideas. We may have good thoughts that we wish to keep and take into our hearts in contrast to unwholesome thoughts that we wish to dispose of, such as sometimes during our daily reflections. For me, this is a developing intuition that could be deduced from the passage which may rightly point to the end of times. Accordingly, I pray that the act of separation which is in the power of the fishermen or the believers may help our thought process, mindfulness and decision making every day. Towards next Wednesday we are invited to meditate on the scripture from "Matthew 14:13-21", Jesus feeding five thousand people.

May God help us to take on board the thoughts that are good for the preservations of our body, mind and spirit, especially as we face the challenges of COVID-19 and think about our union with God here on earth as though we are in heaven.

Sincere regards

Sydney Samuel