



Provision for the Journey

Light for the Path

Freedom to Move Forward

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Travelling Light News 2021

So far this year we have run two Zoom retreats which went well despite technical problems with Robin's computer at the April one.

By the kind invitation of the Rev. Richard Jones we ran an outdoor Retreat in his beautiful gardens and grounds in late July. It didn't rain! Everyone was truly blessed.

Retreats - Autumn / Winter 2021

We are running two Zoom retreats on Saturday 2nd. October with the theme, Meeting God at the Crossroads and on 27 November Meeting God in the Everyday. Numbers will be limited so if you would like to attend, please book your place as soon as possible.

We are also starting on the initial planning and writing of two new Booklets. Further news as they progress.

We would be grateful for your prayers for the ministry, particularly prayers of protection for the team, as recently TL and the team have been under sustained pressure of different kinds.

Thank you. Every blessing, Robin and Carole

A Personal Reflection

As we start to come out of this present phase of the Pandemic there is almost an insistent DRIVE to return to as near normal as we can. This is to be expected and very understandable – but we need to be careful not to lose some of the lessons we may have learnt. Certainly for Carole and I one has been using both Skype and Zoom to 'see' family very regularly. Before the Pandemic it was occasional phone calls and infrequent visits to Cambridge and Plymouth. In fact we have had far more and closer times with them than previously.

I am naturally a "Martha" and have sometimes struggled to be disciplined enough to take the 'alone' times with the Lord that I should. I recognize the essential importance of these Quiet Times, but it doesn't come naturally to me. I am not talking about prayer times – I mean times of silence, just being quiet and relaxed with the Lord, to give Him the space and opportunity to speak into my heart and mind so as to give myself the time to be blessed by His presence.

As we get back to a new normality there is a natural desire to pick-up where we were before the "lock-down" – life returning to normal, and this is a natural desire in all of us. However for myself, I am aware as I pick-up the old routines, my personal relationship with God will be under pressure. My Quiet moments will start to diminish, and I know if that happens my relationship with the Lord could also diminish.

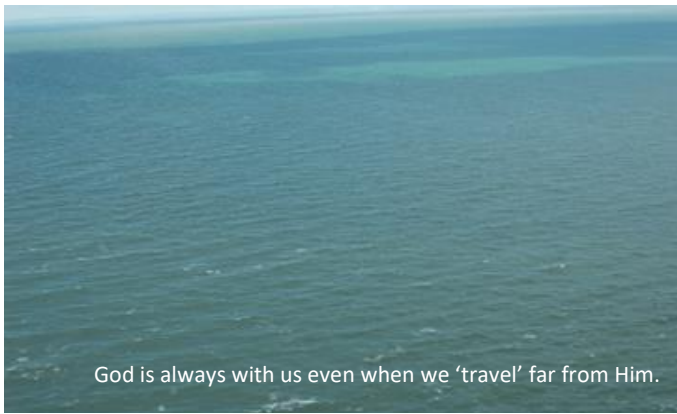
I want, like everyone, to get back to as close a *normal* life as we can but having received so much from growing closer to the Lord during the pandemic, I must personally guard against being too busy and losing the blessings I have received. Let us not lose the importance of spending alone time sitting at the Lord's feet as life becomes more like it used to be.

R.M.



A Prayer of St. Columba

*My dearest Lord,
Be thou a bright flame
Before me,
Be thou a smooth path
Beneath me,
Be thou a kindly shepherd
Behind me,
Today and evermore*



God is always with us even when we 'travel' far from Him.

TRUST IN THE NAVIGATOR

Our life is sometimes likened to a voyage. There were some early Celtic Christians who set out in a coracle, with no idea where they would end up, but trusting that it would be the place God wanted them to be. There are also stories of St. Brendan in the sixth century, responding to the call of God, and travelling great distances, possibly even reaching America, and then returning to Ireland with wonderful tales of what he and his companions had encountered.

Our life too can sometimes seem very much like a voyage. We may feel that we are travelling towards a particular goal in life, only to find that a 'fog' comes down, sometimes very suddenly, and we have no idea where we are going. In other circumstances we may feel that we are becalmed, when the wind we were relying on to fill our spiritual sails suddenly drops, and leaves us adrift, with nowhere to go. Or we may find ourselves in the midst of a raging storm, totally helpless, driven by circumstances we had not foreseen, and buffeted by fear, anger, despair, feelings that threaten to overwhelm us. We fear our lives will be shipwrecked on the rocks we cannot avoid.

Covid19 has been like this for many people. Yet we live in hope. There **is** a new horizon, even if we cannot see it yet. When Jonah and Paul encountered fierce storms, the crews of the ships threw everything that was not necessary for survival overboard. Travelling light was a life or death decision for them.

Yet even a shipwreck took Paul to new places and new opportunities to preach the gospel and testify to the love of God; and Jonah was saved from the sea, and put back 'on track', despite his attempt to 'do his own thing', which was not God's purpose for him, or for others.

The wind of the Holy Spirit may drive us towards a new horizon we would never have aimed for. The fog will disperse. If we have felt becalmed, He will gently begin to fill our spiritual sails again, when the time is right.

If we want to stay on course for the new horizon of hope that God has for us, we have to trust in the navigator. Christ is with us in the boat. He knows where we are meant to be, and how to get there. Voyaging may be unpredictable, but if we let Christ do the navigating, we will get to the place God intends us to be.

Jesus is the Way, so trust Him to navigate the ship of your life. He never promised that life would be easy, but if we trust Him, He will guide us to our destination, and be alongside us, whatever hazards we may encounter on the journey.

C.H.M.

FLOATING FREE – a Meditation

Relax, and make yourself comfortable. Release the tension in your body, as far as you are able. Open your hands, as an expression of your willingness to be open to God. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you.

Imagine that you are walking beside a river. The sun is shining, shimmering off the water. The river is flowing gently. The birds are calling to one another. Alongside the river bank several boats are tied up...

Perhaps you love boats, or maybe you are not very comfortable on the water; but as you come up to them, you know that one of them is for you.

Someone points to one, and you realise that it is yours. You see it has oars

...and is that a sail?

Even if you have never been on the river before, somehow you know what to do. You step into the boat, and someone helps you to cast off. You float free.

It is a wonderful sensation. You don't think you need the sail at the moment.

The current is taking you... but where is it taking you?

There are rapids on this river... and shallows...and you're not that far from the sea!

You begin to row. You struggle to control your direction.

Then you hear a gentle voice, *'Do not be afraid. The rapids are not on this part of the river, and if you let Me help you to steer, you can avoid the shallows.'*

You thought you were alone in the boat, but you realise that the person who had pointed out the boat, and helped you to cast off, is with you.

...and that person is **Jesus**.

You feel more at peace, even though you are coming to the mouth of the river, and are about to enter the sea. You feel sure that Jesus will know what to do.

Listen to what He is saying about your present journey...about your life...

Let Him help you to navigate.

Now you know why you have a sail as well as oars. Jesus helps you to hoist the sail.

He takes the tiller. The wind is filling the sail.

You leave the constrictions of the river behind.

You feel free as never before. Jesus is with you. You are not alone on the ocean.

As you journey into the unknown, whatever the future may hold, Jesus is sharing your voyage. His promise is for you... *'I am with you always'* (Matt28 v.20).

C.H.M

LORD, I WILL TRUST YOU

Lord, I will trust you,

Help me to journey from the familiar into the unknown;

Give me the faith to leave old ways and break fresh ground with you;

I determine amidst all uncertainty always to trust;

I choose to live beyond regret and let you recreate my life;

I will believe you for my future, chapter by chapter, until all the story is written.

(From 'The Brendan Liturgy': Celtic Daily Prayer Book 1)

God is always with us – especially in the most challenging times

I have found these last three years very challenging. Carole's serious illness and the complications connected with it and then Covid, just when Carole had started to recover and regain something of her energy – both physical and spiritual.

To say that our lives have been on hold is an understatement.

However God has shown me so much through this period.

It is when you hit the “buffers” – and you have to let go because you cannot hold on any longer. It is then the Lord intervenes and holds you spiritually in His loving arms, as the disciples discovered.

We may like them live through storms in our life too – Covid being an example, but remember Jesus quietened the storm that enveloped the disciples' boat on Lake Galilee that threatened to sink the boat.* Through this experience their horizons expanded, and their lives were changed as they started to minister to the surrounding communities.

Jesus is with us in every 'storm' that we face however it is caused. However we are often so enveloped by our present circumstances, trying to cope in our own strength, that we don't recognize or expect that He is 'here' with us, when our lives are collapsing around us.

We will never realise while we are on this earth how much the Lord loves each one of us. We can never really comprehend the pain and sacrifice that our Lord went through allowing His Son to die an agonizing death for our sakes.

If we can bring ourselves to the foot of the Cross, to the reality of God's and Christ's sacrifice for **ME**, the Lord will lift us into His arms, and we will receive His love and Risen power.

We can then move forward – still with our pain and anxieties – but with His strength and hope, and through the enabling and inspiration and power of the Holy Spirit.

*(Matt.8 v.23).

R.M.



Prayer Requests

If you would like us to pray for you, or for someone or something you are concerned about, email your request.

We pray God's blessing upon you whatever your circumstances.

SEEK AND YOU SHALL FIND

Seek Me, my precious one,
I am not trying to hide from you,
And I know you want to find Me,
To be with Me,
But you are looking in the wrong places;
You think I am out there,
Far away,
Beyond, in the busyness of life,
Beyond, in the vastness of space,
And yes, I am there too;
But seek Me closer to home,
Seek Me in the depth of your heart;
If you have invited Me
Into your life,
Whenever that was,
Then I am certainly there,
For I have promised that
I will never leave you or forsake you,
And I never break My promises;
Yes, you have to seek Me,
But you know where you will find Me,
Here – in the oasis of your heart.

C.H.M.



TRUST IN THE LORD

Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Never rely on what you think you know. Remember the Lord in everything you do, and He will show you the right way. (Proverbs 3 v. 5-6 GNB)

We read about various prophets in the Old Testament. Kings would consult them in order to find out the Lord's will before they went into battle or made other important decisions. The kings did not always like what they were told, but when they did not follow the direction they received, it usually ended in disaster for them.

God is with us in all circumstances of life. We do not have to consult special people, or go to a particular place to find out what God is saying to us. We are blessed by the gift of the Holy Spirit, which was poured out on the followers of Jesus at Pentecost, and is available to us as Christians today. What we have to do is **open our hearts** to God, so that we can hear what He is saying. We have to **LISTEN** with our full attention, in trust and expectation that we will hear from Him. We can pray in all situations, but if we can listen in stillness and silence, we are more likely to receive what the Lord is saying to us. Then we can act on it, if He is giving us direction. We can listen as we pray, and as we read the Bible. Or we can just sit quietly in His presence and be open to Him, whether He speaks or not. Just **BEING** in God's presence is blessing enough.

C.H.M.