

Tuesday 3rd November George Powell

Fix your eyes on Jesus

Morning, everybody. Welcome to this Tuesday morning devotion. What an interesting weather change. It's getting very cold, I'm having to wear a coat this morning., but nice with the heating on in the office now. So we're all nice and warm.

Today, I just wanted to have a quick chat with some stuff that's going on in my heart. I've been meditating on a few things and reflecting quite a lot on what Janice was saying on Sunday about consecrating ourselves and getting ourselves right before the Lord, if that makes sense. And in this time of reflection, when well, I'm certainly in a bit of a time reflection at the moment with all that's going on the change and we don't want to focus on the fact that, again, our country and our nation is coming into another lockdown on Thursday, but it does make you think it does make you look at where you're at and how things are doing. And the guys, the team here, we've been looking at how that affects church, what does that mean, we've had to reflect on some of the good things that we found during the last lockdown, but also some of the things that maybe we could have done better. So it's like a reflection on where we're at and how we're doing and I think one of the good things that's happened out of the last lockdown if you like, is that there has been a real sense of people concentrating and getting back into focusing on the Lord in a deeper way. So it's actually for themselves it's finding a way to get close and back in communion with God, spending time in Scripture, spending time meditating on those verses, on those promises, on the very things that God has given to us over the years, we've been able to reflect on that. And out of that has come a real sense of people getting closer to the Lord, getting close to Him and getting a sense of peace in their heart.

And again, I just want to encourage you this morning in all that's going on, that the best place for us to be is close in God's arms, in Jesus' arms. Close, fixing our eyes on the truth, fixing our eyes on Him. And you know, when we look at all this stuff that's going on, I mean, you only have to look at the news again and these are comments we've made already over this lockdown, year 2020, where suddenly, if we're not careful, we start to get all of the news in our head and it becomes such a focus that we lose sight of who we are in Christ and who we are in Him. And that peace, beyond all understanding, which is where we need to find ourselves and get into that place of rest, starts to get shaken a little.

And so this morning, I just want to encourage you. So that actually, Jesus is still on the throne, He is still won the victory and that through what He did on the cross, I was reading when He said 'it is finished' on the cross in that moment, 2000 years ago, it is finished. That is it, it is finished, it is done. And what I want to encourage us in again this morning is that actually, the truth is that Jesus is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. And that in all of this situation, however, out of control it feels and I know some people are struggling with having the Coronavirus, and we lift them up to Jesus right now and say, Lord, please be with them, draw close them in this time, let your healing power come and touch those people that are ill, or sick with it. We must not lose sight of who we are in Him. That we are sons and daughters of the King of kings. And in that there is a sense of reflection that we can actually face up to these situations and we can look at things with a different mindset, a different lens, if you like, it's not all doom and gloom.

I don't know about you, but sometimes if I'm not careful, if I start dwelling on those things, I get into this mind meld of a cycle of just thinking this and that and it gets worse and before I know it I'm thinking 'oh my days, what is happening?' And then I have to stop, I have to realise no, I have an inheritance in the kingdom of Heaven and the truth of that and the promises that God has for me and I need to get back onto that, I need to get back onto the focus in my life to be about Jesus Christ, about what He did for me. That I have promises over my life, God has given promises to me that I still need to fulfil, I need to walk in those things. And just spending time back with the Father, back, just meditating, just being with him in His presence, again, you know, Sunday was great, it was lovely to be in a place of worship although I was leading it, it wasn't about that it was actually about the presence of God which was so thick in the room. And I know hopefully that came across, even on the screen if you like, but God was so close to us. And that's the best

place for us to be right? It's almost like in the bosom of His heart. That's where He wants us to be, close to Him in this season, so that we have a different perspective on what's going on.

I am heard a great quote yesterday, I was talking to someone, and they shared a quote with me, and I'm going to be really cheeky and nick it because I think it's a really good quote, it's not one my friend said, but it was one that John Wesley spoke. And because we've been speaking about, if I get back into Jesus, no matter what's going on around me, whatever is happening around me, if I get back to Jesus, it changes my life. And the quote is from John Wesley, where he says, 'The Christian is kept from evil, by greater attraction to Christ'. Let me say it again, 'The Christian is kept from evil, by greater attraction to Christ'. If my focus, if all my love and everything I look at is focused on Jesus Christ, I don't want anything else. That is it, I am safe and secure in that, it's such a wonderful place to be. It's so that, when you're first in love with your, your husband or your wife, the best place you want to be is just with them the whole time.

And, I remember my dad saying about me, when I was in love with Carolyn, right at the beginning, he said, 'I couldn't get any words in edgewise and nothing mattered around him. He was just a waste of time, because his focus was on the love of his life and that was the most important thing to him'. And therefore, when I, George, had wake up, come on get to that place, that's come on with what's going on. And I had to stop because my focus was so fully on God's gift to me. So I think if we start to get to a place where the love that we have for Jesus is so intense, all around us starts to change, we get a different perspective on what's going on.

That's why I've got a couple of scriptures here, you know, the classic in Hebrews 12. When it just says this, 'therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witness, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance, the race marked out for us. Let us – listen – fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross'. Remember I said that earlier, it is finished, He endured that for you, 'scorning its shame, a sat down on the right hand of the throne of God, consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart'. If we start to consider who Jesus is and what He did on the cross, suddenly, there's a faith that rises up in us that actually the very truth of who He is, and what he's done for us, starts to transform our lives.

And the biggest lie that the devil wants to say is, that you're on your own, that you have, you are so isolated, and actually, this stuff that's going on is going to affect you, and it's going to be bad for you. He's telling lies only, he's speaking untruths over you. And unfortunately, sometimes we get to a position where actually we start to believe those things. So we need to get back, fix our eyes back on price back on the very reason that you and I are even having conversations about this right now, is the fact that we are saved, we are set free, we have an inheritance that is greater, we have something that God has given us which is so powerful, and my eyes and the way that I look at things is transformed.

Also, if you go to Ephesians 3, it's interesting, isn't it how Paul, and all the writers of the New Testament, they keep coming back to us, getting back our focus, because it's very easy to get deterred by what's going on around us, distracted by what's happening, situations that we face, it's so easy to get distracted. And then we realise, 'how do I get through this?' My brain starts to take over. Instead of me finding a place in Him, a place of rest, a place of peace, we start to fret, we start to get agitated, and we get what I call 'the washing machine mind', where it's spinning out of control, which is really, really hard to deal with.

'For this reason', it says in Ephesians 3, 'that I bow my knee before the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you according to the riches of His glory to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in a your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And you may be rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints, what is the breadth, and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ, which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to the fullness of God'. Just imagine that just imagine being in a place where you're full of that love of God. That's His promise to you right now, where you are, how you are, that's His promise to you, that you can be filled with that love. 'Now to Him who is able to do far more

abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that went to Him be the glory, and the church and the Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen'.

You see, as we start to get to a place of fixing our eyes on Him, we can't help but start to erupt in worship, we can't help but start to erupt in understanding the kingdom of heaven. And so when we look at our situations, when we look at the things that we're facing, actually, we have a different perspective, which is so different to the world right now. And, again, part of this journey for us is actually what we carry what's inside of us, the very life, the very light that you're carrying, that's where people don't have that imagine, can you imagine it right now, if you didn't have that facing what we're facing, looking at what and if you don't know that, if you don't have Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, in this moment, I'm giving you I'm urging you think about it, think about the truth. Talk to someone, talk to us. Message me. It is so important that in this time that you are facing what you're facing, that you don't have to be alone, you do not have to be alone, because Jesus can be with you. And He is waiting for you with open arms. He's waiting for us with open arms to say, here I am. Come, let's work this together, let us be together in this, let us understand together how the perspective of what we're facing is different if you look at it from my angle.

And so, again, I'm just trying to encourage this morning, hopefully, and I hope you are encouraged the truth is there to set us free. The truth is there to help us in this day where this different, you know, we talk about persecution in the latter days. And I was thinking, you know, in some ways, persecution, the church at the moment is, it's not like biblical persecution, I suppose and some areas in the world where persecution is very real for the church. But in a physical sense, the moment there is a sense of persecution, because of what's happened with this virus. But we don't know. We don't understand it, yet. We don't know what's going on. And yet in the middle of that, our faith can start to rise, we can start to become all that God has called us to be. And also we can start to become the light that is shining, that people will be able to understand and say, 'come on, what is it about you? How come you're at peace? How can you are so full of rest. In the midst of all the turmoil that's going on in the world right now? How can you be at rest? Why is it that you look such a peaceful man or woman?' And you've got the answer, you can say it's because it's because my eyes are fixed on Jesus. My eyes are fixed on the Lord, the God who saves me the God who loves me, that God wants me. The God has got everything for me. He loves me so much, He sent His Son to die for me that I might have life, a life to the full.

I'm going back to that part in the gospels, when Jesus was hanging on the cross. And I was talking to Alistair about it yesterday and he was sort of with me about it saying, you know, when Jesus was on the cross, the devil thought he'd won a victory. And when He died, and Jesus said, It is finished the devil thought 'yes, I've won that. I've won this'. Three days later, three days later, He rose from the dead, conquering death, conquering sin, conquering everything, every understanding that we have of ill health, all those things were carried on Him on that cross. At that moment, when He said it is finished. It was done. And that is what we're standing for. That is what we believe. And that is a Jesus that I need to fix my eyes on. That is the Jesus that I need to as a Christian fix on and that's who I need to be attracted to. Because if I'm attracted to that sin has no room, fear has no room. There is a real sense of understanding the presence of God and knowing him for myself.

So please, this morning, be encouraged. Fix your eyes on Jesus. That's what I called it this morning. fix my eyes on Jesus, the very author of my face, the very one who set me free. So today, I want to bless you Father in all this let us keep our hearts fixed on You. Let us not look at what is around us, but let us look at You. In the storm that we're facing next fix our eyes on You. Bless you have a great day.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai> Ed Perrys

