

REEMERGING TOGETHER 5

21st June 2020



AS WE CAREFULLY BEGIN TO MOVE BACK INTO SOMETHING OF A MORE 'NORMAL' RHYTHM OF LIFE LET'S NOT HOLD ON TO STUFF. INSTEAD MAY WE BE THOSE WHO SHED THE THINGS THAT HOLD US DOWN AND STEP FORWARD TOGETHER IN THE POWER OF CHRIST

READINGS:

PSALM 17

HEAR, O LORD

LUKE CH12 V13-21

THE RICH FOOL



become lost in the house. God tells an amazing story about each one of us that he sent his only Son to find us and save us because he loves us so much. **Think and Chat:** Think about how much you love the things you have: What would you do if one of them was lost? Chat about that. Would you give one of your possessions up to help someone else? Chat about that too! ♦ When we read God's Word we can see that our sin makes it as if we are lost and far away from God and his love for us, yet God did more than we can ever imagine to find us by giving up, not one of his precious things but his most precious thing, his only Son our Lord Jesus, who died on the cross for us so that we would no longer belong to the world but to God. Remember the love you have of your nice things and for your family and friends, multiply it by one million and you are still not even close! As the world arounds us continues to change, remember that God's love for you does not, trust in Jesus and live for him, for through faith and the wonder of God's grace you are the apple of his eye and his precious possession.

Pray: 'Thank you Father for your great love for us, thank you for giving Jesus so we might be found in you. Forgive us when we sin, help us to live well for you, not because we want to earn your love but because we want to thank you for it. Amen.'

PRAYERS

Heavenly Father, we live in a world where the security we once seemed to enjoy has been eroded away and dark clouds of unknowing seem to still be looming on the future's horizon. Lately all that seemed to be so secure and reliable has turned to sawdust in our hands. Yet Lord, we praise you, for we can entrust our future to you, knowing that your love surrounds us and that your grace is sufficient, no matter how the circumstances may appear. Thank You, that we are accepted alongside your Son, as your beloved. Keep our hearts from sin and worry, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, may we build ourselves up in your most holy faith, by praying in spirit and truth and walking the way of righteousness. May we learn day by day to focus our eyes on you...

Take a moment to pray for all those affected by coronavirus in whatever way, the world and church near and far- lift to God the people and places that lie heavy upon your heart

"What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?"

Mark ch8 v36

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY

You are precious in his sight! Ask the children to bring their three most precious possessions and set them out, get them to talk about each one- what stories do they have about them, why do they love them so much?

The Bible tells us that God loves us as his precious possession, like one missing sheep in a hundred or a shiny coin that has



DEVOTIONAL

Just Let it go!

Do you remember the TV show *Hoarders*? I must confess it was once a guilty pleasure of mine. I was fascinated by the folk who filled their houses to overflowing with all manner of things, keeping that which had gone past all use or worth. One man hadn't thrown away a newspaper in 30 years, another hadn't been able to clean his bedroom in 20 years.

Certainly not to the same extent but hoarding would be something that my family would not be unfamiliar with. My Granda kept everything, broken plugs, old cables, nuts and bolts, you name it. Once my dad and I went down to do a clear out, we hired a mini skip and began to fill it, by the time it was filled there were allsorts in it, broken chairs, old paint tins, the lot, the skip was ready for overflowing. However the next morning the skip miraculously had room in it again as my Granda had spent the night sneaking stuff back into the house. While we can laugh off the *'that'll come in handy'* attitude and there is certainly nothing wrong with a *'make do and mend'* approach to life, when we see the programme *Hoarders* we ought to notice a trend worth avoiding. The trend is that the hoarding so often causes difficulty between the hoarder and their family, it breaks up marriages, it destroys relationships between children and parents, it disrupts the steadiest of friendships. The core of the problem is stuff. Stuff gets in the way and for us as Christians, as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, this takes on both a material and spiritual dimension.

How's your stuff? Do you have a good rainy day fund, A nice place to call home, lovely things to drive, collections that impress, do people respect you and think you're important? That's all great and there's nothing wrong with it, but do not forget that if making money, having home comforts, keeping up (or ahead) of the Jones's, getting more and more of what you fancy, tickling your preferences and having things done your way, your ego or your pleasure becomes more important to you than your relationship with God, if they come before living out your faith, then the 'stuff' has got in the way and it will only damage your relationship with God and with others.

Are you a spiritual hoarder? We need to ask ourselves- *are we hoarders?* Maybe your house is spotless, everything in its place, but how about your walk with Jesus? What are you holding on to? What are you hoarding? Is it pride? bitterness? unwillingness to forgive? sins of whatever nature? do you hold a grudge? A dislike towards someone that affects how you talk to them or treat them? do you know you have behaved wrongly but won't apologise? do you not view and treat other believers as your brothers and sisters, but look down on others, hold jealousy against others? Maybe it's none of those things, perhaps your issue is fear, you are afraid of the world because of what has happened of late and you worry about what things will be like as life begins to turn more towards how it was before, maybe that has stopped you sleeping, maybe it is all you think about. All that makes me think of the TV show again, one man on *Hoarders* wanted to hold on to so much stuff, that the cleaner lost his temper and shouted at him *'let it go....it's just rubbish!'* God says the same- let it go, it's rubbish, it smells, it gets in the way, it makes a mess, it pulls you down- repent of it, don't bring it with you as life begins to move again and the beginning of the end of lockdown appears.

Remember the prophet Isaiah's famous words and in the name of Jesus believe them, let go and follow him who died to call you his friend, *"...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"*

***Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven to earth come down,
Fix in us thy humble dwelling,
All thy faithful mercies crown.***

***Jesu, thou art all compassion,
Pure, unbounded love thou art;
Visit us with thy salvation,
Enter every trembling heart.***

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHURCH REOPENING!

It was so encouraging to hear the NI Executive give the indicative date of 29th of June for the reopening of churches. Subject to medical, governmental and denominational advice we plan to meet for Sunday worship, in whatever format we can and conscious of whatever restrictions we must abide by, on Sunday 12th July. More information will follow, with details being sent out to members with an update week beginning 29th June.

LEAVE

I will be on leave from Sat 20th- Sun 28th June, if you require the services of a minister please contact your elder.

CREGAGH REEMERGING TOGETHER

This will be the final update sent out in this format, there will be no update for Sunday 28th June. As explained above an update will be sent out the following week.

OPEN CHURCH

The church building will be open on Monday 10am-12noon, 6-8pm and Fridays 10am-12noon for private prayer. A one-way system, social distancing and hygiene procedures will be in effect. The facility to drop off church envelopes is also now available during these times. During Monday evenings and Friday mornings the organ will be played for a time.

PRAYER

The fortnightly Prayer Link will be sent out week beginning 29th June, if you have any prayer requests please pass them on, if you do not receive the Prayer Link but would like to via email or printed copy please let me know.

BIBLE STUDY

The Bible Study will not meet this incoming week but will resume on Monday 29th June at 7pm.

LOOK WHO'S TALKING

Over the past 12 weeks we have been showing you the artwork that many of the children in the church have sent in, but now it's time for a bit of a change. We have a new feature called 'Look Who's Talking!' which is an attempt to get to know the children in our church just that bit better and see how they've been coping with these unprecedented times. We hope you enjoy this brief insight into their lives.

Karen McCurry

GET IN TOUCH

Please do not hesitate to get in touch