

Rev Tim Perkins
March 24th 2021

“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5: 14 - 16

Dear Friends,

I'm sure you have had the experience of watching a bug fly towards a bright light. It might be a bug-zapper or a torch or car headlights when you're out driving at night. I don't know the science behind it but bugs are unable to resist bright lights. They are drawn towards them. It doesn't usually end well for them. The Christian Gospel is meant to be exactly like that, except of course, with a different, life-enhancing outcome!

The theme from the Methodist Way of Life that I want to briefly reflect upon this week is: “We will live in a way that draws others to Jesus.” The words quoted above from Matthew 5 speak to this theme. We are often tempted to think that the way we live our own life does not make much difference to this world that we live in. Its problems and issues are too numerous and too great for us to affect. And yet climate action campaigns, the BlackLivesMatter movement and many other social justice movements demonstrate just what an impact we can have when we are prepared to take a stand, when we allow the values we hold to speak out, when we allow the eternal kind of life that Jesus shines into us, to then shine out to the world we inhabit.

We will live in a way that draws others to Jesus! Our lives are supposed to be so enthralling and encapsulating to others that when they look at us they see something different, something of God, and they want to know more! I wonder how often it has been your experience that someone has come to ask you about why you live the way you do because they have been watching and are enthralled and won't to know what inspires you? I guess that's not been an everyday kind of experience for you! And yet the Scriptures tell us that when people saw the way the first believers lived they would say “See how they love each other!”

We can be tempted to think that to shine the light of God into this often-dark world we have to “do” as many “good works” as possible. We must work hard to transform life. And of course, good works are exactly what they say they are – good works! They are not bad things to do. And often they require great effort and perseverance to bring about significant societal change. But to try to do as many as possible as often as possible is both to miss the point and to burn ourselves out. You see we cannot earn the love of God for us through doing good works. God already loves us to the full extent of God's love. That's what the events of Holy Week reveal to us. We do not do good works to gain God's love and acceptance. The good works that we do are the outworking of the love of God that shines in and through us. They are a response to the very character of God. We love because God first loved us. We love other people because God loves us and God loves them. The love of God has to be the motivating power in how we live our lives. That is the only way we will not exhaust ourselves.

So the question really is “what does the love of God at work in your life look like?” I can say no more than to remind you of the wonderful description of the love of God that St Paul give us in 1 Corinthians 13: “Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.”

Circuit Superintendent Rev Tim Perkins
20 Far Mead Croft,
Burley In Wharfedale,
Ilkley. LS29 7RR
rev.tim.perkins@btinternet.com
01943 864187


The Methodist Church

If you allow the life of Jesus to grow more in you each day through some of the ways we have been thinking about over recent weeks, then you will both know and show more of the love of God. It will happen quite naturally, or should I say supernaturally! You will shine more and more brightly, and people will be drawn to God through you.

So do not focus on trying hard. Focus on knowing Christ and the rest will flow from there. Jesus will show you how to live. He will direct your path. He will shine through you.

Every blessing,

Rev Tim

Financial Giving & Gift Aid

We are grateful to everyone who has continued to make regular offerings to their church throughout the Covid Pandemic lockdowns. This has been particularly important during a time when other sources of income have largely dried up. As we approach the end of the tax year (5th April) churches will be preparing to claim Gift Aid on qualifying income. If you are planning to make an offering to your church it would be helpful if you could do so before 5th April. If you are a taxpayer and have not yet signed a Gift Aid declaration, please consider doing so; this is a vital source of income to all churches (at no extra cost to the giver) and we need to maximise its value. Please contact your church treasurer or Gift Aid secretary for a declaration form.

Circuit CAP Debt Centre Easter Basket Appeal

We are putting together Easter Baskets for the families that we are working with. Each basket will include eggs for the children and some other goodies for the whole family to enjoy. Easter is an amazing time to share our faith and to show them the love of God. If you would like to purchase something to go in, you can either send me an email or give me a call.

samanthaprice@capuk.org

07935223663

Christian Aid & Yorkshire West Methodist District Vaccine Appeal

Yorkshire West Methodist District has partnered with Christian Aid to give people an opportunity to give thanks for their Covid-19 vaccine and help others in crisis across the world. Recognising the deep sense of relief and gratitude experienced by many people after being vaccinated, the two organisations have come together to enable people to pass the blessing on by making a donation to Christian Aid's Coronavirus Appeal. Funds from the appeal are helping vulnerable communities around the world access soap, water, food and vital health information in the face of the pandemic. Many communities around the world face an uncertain wait for a vaccine as questions remain around the cost and timing of a global vaccine programme.

Revd Kerry Tankard, Chair of the District says, "The vaccine is bringing with it a deep sense of relief and hope for families across the UK and we saw that many people wanted to express their gratitude by reaching out to others. This is good news for us all and we genuinely give thanks for how fortunate we are. However, we are acutely aware that this good news is not being experienced equally across the world. While the pandemic affects all of us, it has highlighted the deep disparities in how communities and families are able to protect themselves both within our country and around the world. My hope is that people will give generously to the work of Christian Aid from a place of thanksgiving and a desire to see all people being able to live safely. Whether people can give just a few pounds or a much larger sum, it will be an opportunity to share hope and love with our brothers and sisters across the world who do not have the benefits we have."

You can donate to the Yorkshire West Methodist District's appeal by visiting <https://events.tapsimple.org/online/christian-aid/yorkshirewestvaccineappeal>

