



Rector's Bulletin No.8

Those who attend the 8.00am Sunday Holy Communion will have known Chris Daykin, Sue's late husband. Whenever I think of him and Sue I remember the Bible passage he had chosen for his funeral, one I had not seen used on such occasions before:

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. 2 Timothy 4:7-8

It almost seemed arrogant to use Paul's words for himself, but no, he was exactly right to do so. That is exactly what Christ has promised those who trust in him. That was Christ's prize for 'winning' the race'. When Ginnie Serpell telephoned me last Wednesday to inform me of Greg's passing into glory, those exact words entered into, and would not leave, my mind. What a race he ran, what faith he kept, what a fight he fought. Greg and Ginnie have been to us the very essence of what has underpinned and fostered so very much faithful ministry at Emmanuel and St Paul's. As a fighter, he fought amongst the heavyweights of our city churches; as a runner he ran tirelessly for Gospel proclamation by Word and deed; as a man of faith, his feet were so obviously and totally anchored on the rock of Jesus Christ, his most conspicuous Lord and Saviour. What a wonderful testimony, what a wonderful inspiration. There are many more words to be said, memories to be treasured and gratitude to be expressed, but these must remain for future occasions of thanksgiving.

The corona virus has, at one time or another, challenged us all to face up to the stark reality of our mortality. So too has it caused us to consider afresh what matters *really* matter in this world. I remember when I was once invited out on a night exercise with 29 Commando as their chaplain. Little could be distinguished in the deep Norwegian forest in the dead of night. Then a battery commander lent me his night vision goggles. A whole new world came into vision and focus before me. A previously unseen world. Seeing clearly what lay before me, I could now negotiate my world. That's what Jesus, the light of the world does for us through his living Word. Christians know with certainty the nature of the ground they are navigating, we don't wander aimlessly, we can be sure and certain of where we are headed. That's a gift that can come from nowhere else in the world.

**“Let us
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As I write, there are very well, scientifically founded, hopes of there being a vaccine against Corona Virus Covid 19 by September. Praise the Lord for that good news. But while we remain in the midst of the pandemic and realise what a very great price the world has already paid in

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terms of life, health, anxiety, economy and livelihood, let's make every effort, by prayerful resolution and reflection, to make sure that these sacrifices buy us something lasting.

I see signs of what we might be learning: people's renewed prayer habits; renewed delight and trust in the Word; society's increased love and compassion for our neighbour, revived community spirit. But I wonder, if each of us wrote ourselves a letter about what we are learning and what we hope will remain changed in our lives after all this, what would it say? What might it challenge us on twelve months from now when this is almost forgotten?

Why not bury yourself a time capsule to open in May 2021?! Some of the precious truths our current adversity is teaching and underlining for us right now remain only tentatively lodged in our current experience and can be so easily forgotten or lose their conviction. Just like when I had to return my borrowed night vision goggles, I was plunged straight back into the fumbling darkness and gloom. Let's not let recovery from Covid19 do that to us. Let's take steps to secure those fragile lessons we've learned

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Greg's life reminds us of the treasures lavished on us by Jesus Christ; of our frailty, yet our ability to triumph and prevail through Jesus' grace and mercy. No wonder Jesus said, *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."¹* Let's remember the hidden world of the reality of the Kingdom of God. Let's not just be *temporarily* changed by this, let's be *transformed* by it. Seeing more clearly the path that lies ahead, *let's "press on toward the goal to win the prize of God's heavenly calling in Christ Jesus...."²*

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off every encumbrance and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with endurance the race set out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.... Hebrews 12:1-2

Praise God for the night vision of the Scriptures which enable us to penetrate the darkness and gloom, bring us out into His most marvellous light and point the way in which we should walk in hope, by faith, to rest in the eternal love of Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hang on in there! We are making progress – in more ways than one! *The One who calls you is faithful, and He will do it.³*

Rev Karl May 21st 2020

¹ John 16:33

² Philippians 3:14

³ 1 Thessalonians 5:24