

In the Barn!

Barneys Newsletter



No. 19 – August 2nd



Are We Unified?

together at a time of crisis seeking unity whilst simultaneously shunning or disassociating from people with whom they disagree. It made me think, what is unity?

God commands his people to be unified (John 17:11, 1 Corinthians 12:12). We know from experience the importance of unity and just how disruptive disagreements can be. But as the conference pointed out, a desire to be together is not necessarily a desire for unity. I came to realise that the danger arising from a crisis is that in the mad scramble to come together people can fall into homogeneity. That is we look to find comfort and safety in the familiar. But unfortunately the desire though appearing on the surface to want to band together, instead encourages people to seek things and people who are like them. This desire is the

This last week I attended a conference entitled, 'Leadership in a Crisis'. The point of the conference was to think through how leaders care for people when a crisis arrives, both individually and as a congregation. A lot of the material expressly referenced the current 'coronavirus crisis' as an illustration of how to handle the crisis. As the conference continued, the leaders spoke about the strange phenomenon of how people will tend to congregate

Your Links to Barneys

www.barneysingleburn.com/livestream

www.facebook.com/Stbarnabasingleburn/

Email: office@barneysingleburn.com

The Cost of Following Jesus

by Nicky Gangemi



really jump out to me as people who are blessed. I find

This term we are doing a sermon series on Matthew, focusing in at the moment on the Sermon on The Mount.

Joe spoke to us last week from Matthew 5:1-16, and we hear a lot about the blessings and costs of being a follower of Jesus. Did anything from Joe's sermon ring particularly true for you?

For me I was challenge by the thought of those who are blessed. Joe explained that in the kingdom of God those who are blessed are those who are poor in spirit, those who mourn, the humble, those who desire righteousness, wo are merciful and make peace. These don't

world I have "worldly glasses on" and I often think that those who are blessed are those who are rich or powerful or those who have happy families and their lives altogether (well, at least it looks like it).

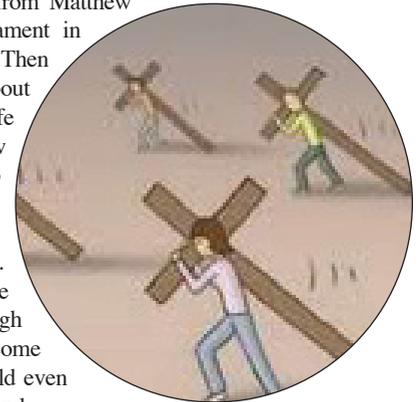
I was challenged this week to have my life be shaped more to be like those who Jesus says are blessed. I want to be someone who humbles myself, someone who comes before God with a quiet heart, to be someone who mourns over my sin and the brokenness of the world. I often get so caught up in this world, but I want my heart's to desire to be for heaven and the coming of Jesus much more. None of these things are easy!

When we try to live a life like this,

we will have many costs that we pay in this life, Jesus surprisingly refers to these things as blessings as well. We will be insulted, persecuted and spoken against. We will walk in the footsteps of our Saviour. He was also insulted, persecuted and spoken against. The comfort for us is that we know we are not alone in these sufferings and also that we will have a reward our heaven! It is a strong reminder for us that this life really isn't what we are to be living for, we are to be living for the next life.

Here are some questions to get you thinking more about the blessings that Jesus mentions and how we might see them in our lives.

- Does your life reflect that which is blessed according to Jesus?
- Check out the passages that Joe gave us to link from Matthew to the Old Testament in the table below. Then have a think about how to see your life aligning with how Jesus wants us to live and ways that we could do this more and more. Spend some time praying through what you have come up with, you could even share it with a friend.

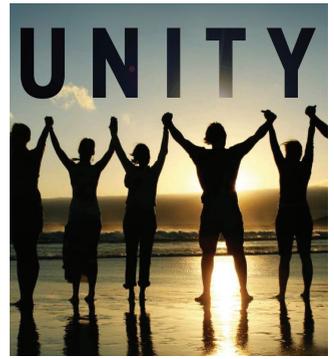


"Blessed are those who..."	OT References	Ways I can see this in my life	Ways I can cultivate this more in my life
Poor in Spirit	Psalm 37:14, 16, Isaiah 61:1, 66:2		
Mourn	Isaiah 40:1ff, 61:2		
Meek/Humble	Isaiah 66:1-4		
Hunger for Righteousness	Psalm 37:6, 16, 29, Isaiah 55		
Merciful	Psalm 37:8		
Pure in Heart	Psalm 37:18		
Peacemakers	Psalm 37:37		
Persecuted	Psalm 37:1, 7, 9		

enemy of unity. True Christian unity encapsulates diversity. This does not mean Christians can define all differences as acceptable. Christ defines what differences are acceptable, but Christians must allow for differences where the Bible is silent.

The importance of this came home to me as I listened to the conference. I keep hearing people say things like, 'When things return to normal!' But as the coronavirus continues I've come to realise two things about the normal people are

speaking about. Firstly, the normal they mostly mean is things as they were before this crisis began; And secondly, things are not going to go back to the way they were before the coronavirus crisis began. Obviously these ideas are incompatible. Regardless of how things pan out with the coronavirus, our lives will be different to the way they were pre-coronavirus. And at the moment none of us can tell what that is going to be like. This creates an uncertainty where in an effort to return to what we know, instead of working together to create unity in face of the current



situation, we instead seek a place of comfort where we create homogeneity in an effort to return to a place that will never again exist. Churches will one day be able to freely meet again, but it will be a very different world to the one that lived at the start of the year.

Find-A-Word - Unity

Apophatic	Different	Merciful	Righteous
Blessed	Diversity	Mountain	Sermon
Community	Heaven	Normal	Unity
Conference	Importance	Persecuted	Worldly
Coronavirus	Incompatible	Poor	
Crucible	Jesus	Realise	

O X A S F Y T I S R E V I D W
H L Y P E Y T I N U K E Z I E
J C N E E R C H J K F L D F I
Q O P R L H M Q H S E B Y F M
E R D S B E X O I A L I T E P
C O E E I A B O N P U T I R O
N N S C C V M Z S O F A N E R
E A S U U E L U L P I P U N T
R V E T R N O A R H C M M T A
E I L E C E M E R A R O M S N
F R B D T R A O K T E C O J C
N U I H O L O V J I M N C E E
O S G N I P A B M C O I N S I
C I W S N I A T N U O M J U C
R Y E B Y L D L R O W E Q S Z

Working out how we respond to God as we live within these new circumstance is going to take time. As we think about how we live in a world very different to the one we lived in at the start of 2020, we need to again think about how we can work together given our diversity of gifts and talents to propel the gospel forward and encourage one another all the more as we see the day approaching. Our Christian unity was created by Jesus' death and resurrection, and is now forged in the crucible of our current circumstances for the glory of God. This calls for patience and grace as we continue to work together to see the gospel go forward in the community God has placed us all.