



## Issue 25 – 12th September 2020

### Welcome to this edition of Inspire

Inspire is an opportunity for us all to share with, and encourage each other with testimony, scripture, inspirational thoughts, teaching or a picture - anything to bless and encourage. Please send all contributions to me, Jenny, via:

- email at [inspire@belperbaptist.org](mailto:inspire@belperbaptist.org)
- or via WhatsApp on 07500780426

and they will be sent out each weekend via email, WhatsApp and by letter to those without Internet access. There is also a dedicated page on our website. [www.belperbaptist.org](http://www.belperbaptist.org)

### Content

As this will be on our website and circulated via WhatsApp we need to be careful about content. For example personal detail or political content will not be published. Any views expressed are those of the contributor and are not necessarily the opinion of the church or its leadership.

### Church is not the building - we are!



CartoonChurch.com

## Lost and found!

As DIY stores reopened after lockdown, I bought a small tin of garden furniture paint with a view to restoring our rather tired looking bistro patio table. A few weeks later, I searched the garage for the tin without success. The renovation was abandoned! As often happens, the tin has now turned up when I wasn't looking for it - hidden under an empty rubble sack!

I'm sure we have all had those experiences of frustration and sometimes panic when we can't find our keys or wallet or something else of value. We retrace our steps, search the places where we normally keep things, often finding the missing item tucked inside something else or in the pocket of the coat we rarely wear. There is genuine joy when we find the lost item before having to go through the hassle of cancelling cards or replacing locks. Or we can be irritated when we find the item shortly after we have cancelled everything.

Luke chapter 15 includes parables that Jesus told when the Pharisees and the teachers of the law were muttering because Jesus welcomed and ate with sinners and tax collectors who gathered around him to hear his teaching.

*Then Jesus told them this parable: <sup>4</sup>“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? <sup>5</sup> And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders <sup>6</sup> and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbours together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ <sup>7</sup> I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.”*

Over the years, we have rejoiced on many occasions when someone has come to faith in Jesus, and publicly declared that in testimony and by going through the waters of baptism. These are always moving occasions, albeit infrequent. At what point did churches settle for conversions and baptisms being rare events rather than the expected outcome of proclaiming the gospel?

Our Moderator, Derek, has recently reminded us that the church exists to complete the mission of Jesus. He stated that “Mission is not optional or marginal – it is crucial – it is what we, as part of his church, are for – mission is why the church exists.”

*Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”*  
(Matthew 28:18-20)

In the parable, the shepherd left the 99 sheep who were safe to go and look for the one that was lost. The gospels reveal Jesus spending time with the religious leaders of the time – frequently challenging them about their hypocrisy and the way they treated those regarded as outcasts. A significant element of Jesus' appeal and his teaching was his compassion towards and willingness to spend time with sinners and outcasts. He actively sought out “the lost”.

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the early church took the gospel firstly to the Jews, and then to the gentiles who responded very positively to the message of hope and inclusion in the Kingdom of God.

As together we seek God’s vision for Belper Baptist Church, it is right to ask ourselves how serious are we about mission? How much of our energy and time are we prepared to invest in taking the good news about Jesus to those who are lost – meeting them where they can be found? Or do we prefer to spend most of our energy and time looking after ourselves, perhaps hoping that a few may come and join us along the way.

This is not a comfortable challenge, but it is there in the scriptures. *“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. <sup>3</sup> Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.” (Luke 10:2-3)*

It is also an inspiration to have the clarity about what the church is for. Of course, we need to worship, to care for one other, and our faith needs to be fed and nourished. We need to be committed to growing in discipleship. Why? So that we become effective as disciples seeking to make more disciples. With the digital technology available to us, we can project the gospel into the space occupied by “the lost” in ways unimaginable a decade ago.

*The Parable of the Lost Coin*

*<sup>8</sup> “Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Does she not light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? <sup>9</sup> And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbours together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’ <sup>10</sup> In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”*

**David Harvey**

# Coins of the Gospels

**SILVER DENARIUS**

The denarius was considered a fair day’s pay for a common laborer in the first century. Jesus asked to see this coin when asked if it were lawful to pay taxes to Caesar (Matt 22:18).

**What one coin could buy:**  
15 lbs. of wheat  
(in a basket).



**SILVER HALF SHEKEL**

The temple tax was one half-shekel per year.

**Worth:** 2 denarii

**What one coin could buy:**  
A wooden bucket, 15 lbs. of wheat, and a clay oil lamp.



**SILVER SHEKEL**

Minted in Tyre, the shekel and half-shekel were the only coins accepted for the temple tax in Jesus’ time because of the high purity of their silver.

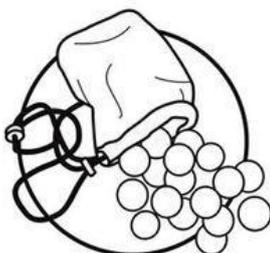
**Worth:** 4 denarii

**What one coin could buy:**  
A tunic, a liter of olive oil, two 1lb. loaves of bread, and a half-liter of cheap wine.



**JUDAS’ SILVER**

The 30 pieces of silver that Judas took in exchange for betraying Jesus were silver shekels, the equivalent of 120 denarii.



**BRONZE PRUTAH**

The bronze prutah was a common coin, worth only 1/64th of a denarius.

**What one coin could buy:**  
1/3 lb. of bread.

**BRONZE LEPTON**

The widow in Mark 12 gave two lepta coins to the temple, each worth only half a prutah.

**What one coin could buy:**  
A bath at the public bathhouse.



**Size comparison**



## For Such a Time as This

There have been two bible verses and a hymn running through my mind in a loop all this week. One is from the book of Esther which I've been reading as part of the Footsteps in Prayer course that I've been following. Esther 4: 14 Mordacai says, via a messenger: "And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?" Esther needs to go and beg the King Aheserus to save the Jewish people. She can't just stroll in and see him, she needs to wait to be called or she risks being executed. Mordecai is reminding her that God has put her in this place at this time for just this purpose and she has to get on with it, whatever the cost.

I'm sure I'm not the only one that has wondered what on earth God is wanting me to do at this peculiar time in history with very little real life exposure to people, little contact with the fellowship, no in person church services. I was on the Amazon website recently and one of their suggested next purchases for me was a mask in Christmas themed fabric. I cried. The thought of not being able to be singing carols together by December is just really hard to contemplate. I can live with turkey round the table with a maximum of 6 people. But no carol service? That's much harder. The second verse that's been on the loop in my strange brain is a question from Psalm 137: "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" \* The psalmist is also referring to the time of exile and wondering how the Jewish people can sing God's praises, sing songs of worship to him in an unholy place, which is contrary to Jewish law. It reminds me in my frustration over not being in church to sing worship, that it feels like I'm in a new country, suddenly not at liberty to go to church and live out my faith in the way I feel called to do. I feel dislocated, exiled to a strange new place where all the old ways I took for granted are gone and I don't know when they'll be back.

Which is why I smiled when I opened my email from David Harvey and read the title of his piece for Inspire this week. Because the theme of Lost and Found reminds me of the song of Amazing Grace that has been on replay all week in my head. It is, I think, what God has been trying to say to me this week, and for a lot of lockdown. I'm running around screaming "Where are you Lord?" and "What am I supposed to do Lord?" and "I'm feeling lost Lord!" He's telling me, and I hope I'm supposed to be telling you too, that He is still here, we are still saved, we aren't lost: we are His found, saved, chosen, called by name, beloved children. Did you know that the book of Esther doesn't mention God once? Yet His sovereign hand is all over the action. We might be living in strange, uncharted territory but there is a plan, He is still working and we were put here right now for "such a time as this". I need, we all need, to look forward not back, to stop lamenting and keep praising, to sing the Lord's song in a new way with hope and confidence. We are where we are meant to be. Not lost but eternally found.

***Jenny Lesley***

*\*My apologies to those who read this sentence and now have a Boney M song going around like an ear worm. Try Psalm 19:4 instead.*

## Reckless Love

Before I spoke a word You were singing over me  
You have been so, so good to me  
Before I took a breath, You breathed Your life in me  
You have been so, so kind to me

Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God  
Oh, it chases me down, fights 'til I'm found, leaves the ninety-nine  
And I couldn't earn it, I don't deserve it, still You give Yourself away  
Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God

When I was Your foe, still Your love fought for me  
You have been so, so good to me  
When I felt no worth, You paid it all for me  
You have been so, so kind to me

Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God  
Oh, it chases me down, fights 'til I'm found, leaves the ninety-nine  
And I couldn't earn it, I don't deserve it, still You give Yourself away  
Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God

There's no shadow You won't light up  
Mountain You won't climb up coming after me  
There's no wall You won't kick down  
Lie You won't tear down coming after me

Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God  
Oh, it chases me down, fights 'til I'm found, leaves the ninety-nine  
And I couldn't earn it, I don't deserve it, still You give Yourself away  
Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God

*"When I used the phrase, 'the reckless love of God,' when we say it, we're not saying that God Himself is reckless, He's not crazy. We are, however, saying that the way He loves, is in many regards, quite so. But what I mean is this: He's utterly unconcerned with the consequences of His own actions with regard to His own safety, comfort and well-being. He doesn't wonder what He'll gain or lose by putting Himself on the line, He simply puts Himself out there on the off-chance that you and I might look back at Him and give Him that love in return." - Cory Asbury, 2018*

## John Newton: Amazing Grace

The *Greyhound* had been thrashing about in the north Atlantic storm for over a week. On the eleventh day of the storm, sailor John Newton was too exhausted to pump, so he was tied to the helm and tried to hold the ship to its course. From one o'clock until midnight he was at the helm.

With the storm raging fiercely, Newton had time to think. His life seemed as ruined and wrecked as the battered ship he was trying to steer through the storm. Since the age of eleven, he had lived a life at sea. Sailors were not noted for the refinement of their manners, but Newton had a reputation for profanity, coarseness, and debauchery which even shocked many a sailor.

John Newton had rejected his mother's teachings and had led other sailors into unbelief. Certainly, he was beyond hope and beyond saving, even if the Scriptures were true. Yet, Newton's thoughts began to turn to Christ. He found a New Testament and began to read.

That day at the helm, March 21, 1748, was a day Newton remembered ever after, for "On that day the Lord sent from on high and delivered me out of deep waters." Many years later, as an old man, Newton wrote in his diary of March 21, 1805: "Not well able to write; but I endeavor to observe the return of this day with humiliation, prayer, and praise." Only God's amazing grace could and would take a rude, profane, slave-trading sailor and transform him into a child of God. Newton never ceased to stand in awe of God's work in his life.

Newton left slave-trading and in 1764, at the age of thirty-nine, John Newton began forty-three years of preaching the Gospel of Christ.

John and his wife Mary moved to the little market town of Olney. For the Sunday evening services, Newton often composed a hymn on the theme of the lessons and Scripture for the evening. In 1779, two hundred and eighty of these were collected and combined with sixty-eight hymns by Newton's parishioner, William Cowper, and published as the *Olney Hymns*. The most famous of all the *Olney Hymns*, "Faith's Review and Expectation," grew out of David's exclamation in 1 Chronicles 17 v 16-17. We know it today as "Amazing Grace "

In 1779 Newton left Olney to become rector of St. Mary Woolnoth in London. His ministry included not only the London poor and the merchant class but also the wealthy and influential. William Wilberforce, a member of Parliament and a prime mover in the abolition of slavery, was strongly influenced by John Newton's life and preaching.

Newton lived to be eighty-two years old and continued to preach and have an active ministry until beset by fading health in the last two or three years of his life. Even then, Newton never ceased to be amazed by God's grace and told his friends, "My memory is nearly gone; but I remember two things: That I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Saviour.

## The Lost Coin

Luke 15:8-10

### *Word Search Puzzle*

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

FOUND  
ANGELS  
COINS

LOSE  
WOMAN  
SINNER

SWEEP  
LAMP  
PARABLE

SEARCH  
FRIENDS  
REPENTS

HOUSE  
REJOICE  
SILVER

## Notices

### **Sunday Services:**

Firstly, a reminder of the Sunday morning online service details:

You can join by visiting <https://zoom.us/j/3431622013>

... or using the Zoom app and meeting ID 3431622013

... or phone (0330) 0885830 and enter the meeting ID 3431622013 then #

The meeting password is 1893

### **Prayer Meetings:**

There will be daily prayer meetings at 7.30am every weekday morning and 9am on weekends and bank holidays – using the new Zoom details:

Meeting ID: 899 0084 1018

Password: 1893

### **Wednesday Drop-In:**

There will a drop in via Zoom this Wednesday at 11.30am. All welcome.

### **Food and Community Hub:**

Hope for Belper give their thanks for the continued support of the Hub. People's generosity has kept it well stocked. At the moment there is a shortage of:

- Tins of fruit, potatoes, carrots and meat meals
- Toothpaste, shampoo and conditioner
- Biscuits
- Sugar
- Toilet roll (packs of 2 or 4 please)

If you are able to donate any of these items, it would be much appreciated. All of the Co-op stores in Belper have donation points.

### **Churches Together in Belper**

The Belper Churches are hoping to bring a blessing to the people of Belper again, as we have done previously with angels and stars. This time we feel that a gift of handcrafted doves, with an added message of HOPE, will bring a sense of God's love and reassurance at a time of great need. We do not know at which precise date we can begin to distribute them, but we need to be creating them NOW. So, please, in your spare pandemic time, can you begin to make simple bird shapes from fabric, wood, cardboard etc and attach a hanging ribbon as well. Painting birds on to pebbles is also a good idea. Ideally the colours of the doves would be gentle ones but there are not really any rules. In the past years you have all been wonderful in helping to make thousands of these gifts. I hope you can do so again. For the present please keep your doves safely at home and when it is the right time we can attach labels ready for distribution. If anyone needs some fabric I have a lot which has already been donated, please ring me, 01773 824149. Angela Thomas (Chairman CTIB)

## Diary : 13th – 19<sup>th</sup> September 2020

All this week's activities are being held online. These use the normal church Zoom meeting ID unless indicated otherwise. The Zoom meeting is usually open 5-10 minutes before the stated start time.

### Sunday

- 09:00 Prayers (online) – [Meeting ID 899 0084 1018]
- 10:30 Morning Worship (online) – [Meeting ID 343 162 2013]

### Monday

- 07:30 Prayers (online) – [Meeting ID 899 0084 1018]

### Tuesday

- 07:30 Prayers (online) – [Meeting ID 899 0084 1018]

### Wednesday

- 07:30 Prayers (online) – [Meeting ID 899 0084 1018]
- 11.30 Drop In (online) – [Meeting ID 343 162 2013]
- 19:15 House Group (online) – [Meeting ID 343 162 2013]

### Thursday

- 07:30 Prayers (online) – [Meeting ID 899 0084 1018]
- 20:00 House Group (online) – [Meeting ID 343 162 2013]

### Friday

- 07:30 Prayers (online) – [Meeting ID 899 0084 1018]

### Saturday

- 09:00 Prayers (online) – [Meeting ID 899 0084 1018]