

Dear all

Summer in Scotland is a hit and miss affair but we sometimes say 'In Scotland we know when summer has come because the rain is warmer!' In Faroe, the weather is even more variable and it deserves its nickname (given by soldiers resident there in WWII) of the 'land of maybe'. My time there seeing family was lovely, not least because of Laura's company and her obvious delight in my grandsons!

Summer is always a time for taking stock and I am enjoying a brief respite from the immediate demands of preaching and teaching and I am very grateful to the brothers who are preaching in TCF during July and August. Our series in Daniel is actually taking forward our Strategic Aim this year of putting Jesus at the Centre and the underlying theme of 'Dare to be Different' has this thought at the core of our thinking. A 'made-up' mind...

Of course, the series in the parables of Mark's Gospel from January - March 2017 really focussed on the teaching and service of our Lord Jesus and the series on Psalms 22-24 helped reinforce this perspective as we thought of the Psalms of the Cross, the Crook and the Crown. Our little series in the evening on various topics to do with the person and work of the Lord Jesus (Christology) also led us on to a comparison of the Kings of Judah as preparation for the Glorious King - the Messiah of Israel. I hope you are able to see some connections emerging from the teaching series and our planned reviews and developments. Maybe this will be clearer from our Vision Sunday planned for 27 August 2017.

Remember that you can check-out preaching here: <http://tcfperth.org.uk/teaching-zone/> and copies of the slides can be seen here: <http://tcfperth.org.uk/multimedia-archive/>

However, I am very much looking forward to the new series we have planned for the Autumn and Winter – the Gospel in Acts, the Autumnal Levitical Feasts and Spiritual Gifts.

The pastoral care dimension is demanding in such a diverse and growing church. and I hope to do more visiting over the holiday period. I have seen God working in individual's lives and transforming them by His love and power. It is of immense help therefore to have a number of good resources to turn to and engage in mutual reading.

Helpful books include:

- For Marriage: *This momentary marriage*, John Piper, IVP, 2009
- For slavery to sin: *You can Change*, Tim Chester, Crossway, 2010
- For uncertainty in guidance: *The Call*, Os Guinness, Thomas Nelson, 2003
- For spiritual growth: *Renovation of the Heart*, Dallas Willard, IVP, 2002

Remember that you can always have one-to-one time with me by request - I love this aspect of my role and I was encouraged when I was approached with a request after my last Pastor's Update.

You will also know by now that my future personal journey will include Laura as my wife. We became engaged to be married on 3 July 2017 in the ancient church of Kirkjubøur in the Faroes. I had planned to ask her as it had become obvious over the last four months that this was the way the Lord was leading us. The first thing we did as we knelt in the church (there were no other tourists who visited) was to pray and seek God's blessing. Your continued prayer for us would be enormously appreciated and especially that I would continue to seek the Lord's face in weekly preparation as I serve Him and keep Jesus at the Centre of my own life - and our life as a couple.

An aspect of my developing relationship has been facing the issue of my role being a very public one - at least in the church - and I have tried to be appropriately open and transparent by sharing things with my son and daughter in law, my fellow elders, my late wife's brother and fellow Trustees at Echoes as well as a number of close friends. I did this on the biblical basis of *Proverbs 15:22* 'Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed.' This truth was something that was reinforced to me in secular employment, and that 'vulnerability based trust' comes with great reward in greater clarity of action. I would also encourage you to do the same with your own issues - to share them with trusted friends and family especially so that prayer can be offered. Also, I am available for you at any time.

One other cause that has particularly gladdened my heart in the first half of 2017 is the number of children added to the church family (I recall with delight the birth of my second grandson Sámuel on 1 January 2017) and to have Nathan, Aaron, Sophia, Cassie, Daniel and Kimberley and Rosie with us is delightful. As family life expands, how much more do we need to focus our prayers as we go forward! Praise God that all were safely delivered and are healthy.

Praise God...

for His grace...

in all our relationships...