

# Devotional Blog

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2020

As I am sitting at my desk preparing to write this blog I am struck by the peace all around me. It is so quiet. The only sounds are the birds twittering away and the sound of neighbours chatting. There are hardly any cars driving up and down the road and the sound of aircraft overhead is nearly non-existent.

The change from just over two months ago is remarkable. The “sound” of the twenty-first century suburban Britain we have become so used to has been replaced by a much more tranquil way of life.

Peace and quiet has become the “new normal”, in this part of the world. Unfortunately, that is not the case in other parts of the globe. Despite the outbreak of covid-19 conflicts have continued and life is anything but peaceful in those parts.

Across “the pond” there has been widespread violence following the death of George Floyd. Whilst his family understood the anger that was erupting on the streets across America, they pleaded for peace and not violence.

Peace is more than about the cessation of conflicts or the lack of sound that is around us. Peace is also a state of mind. Although the world may be silent our minds can be anything but.

The dramatic and sudden change in our life style has caused a lot of minds to be troubled. There has been a sharp rise in folks suffering from depression and anxiety attacks due to lockdown. There has been more of a focus on the mental health of our nation, than usual.

The bible has a lot to say about peace, in the physical, mental and spiritual senses. In the Old Testament, we read of many conflicts, which are followed by periods of peace, when war was no more and tribes and nations lived in peace with one another. For example, after the Israelites had defeated the Moabites, we read in Judges 3:30 “and the land had peace for 80 years”.

The story of Job gives an insight of the lack of mental peace. Job3:26 “I have no peace, no quietness, I have no rest, only turmoil”. I wonder if these words strike a chord with anyone during this current situation we find ourselves in?

We can all play our part in helping to create a peaceful environment by trying to live in harmony with one another and those around us. This current pandemic has taught us how to appreciate some of the different, quieter sounds in our world.

There is a cure for the turmoil for folks who find themselves in a similar state to Job, those who's minds are troubled. Philippians 4:7 And the peace of God which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus.

This is just one of many examples from Paul's letters. Paul often finished his letters with a message on this note. So, I will end this blog with the words at the end of his 2<sup>nd</sup> letter to the church at Corinth v 11, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

Amen

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