

Website Reflections

Monday 10th August 2020

Bryan Long



How are things for you on lockdown so far ?

As we hesitantly move to a scaled down version of lockdown, is there anything else we can say after all these strange times ? I guess not, apart from when can we get back to something we might recognise as moving on, with the degree of change as yet uncertain. So let's pick out some different thoughts from all these weeks and see where they might lead.

Has it occurred to you how many experts have popped up from all over the the place ? They have come from universities at home and abroad (and there are lots of those), they been spied in government agencies of all kinds, they live in all sorts of specialist committees, and some have even been allowed to peep out from private business. These people, many of them professors with wide ranging titles, are all pursuing the 'science'. But how can they be, when they speak with so many different views, angles, finely tuned versions of the truth they are pursuing ? Perhaps 'science' is elusive, and must be sought out, like so many aspects of the issues in hand ?

James, writing in the New Testament chap 3,17, has a word for these matters *'But the wisdom from above, is first pure, then pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy, impartial and sincere'*.

Are we finding it easy to recognise people from their eyes only ? As we begin to move in public places, including church in the last week, this is the only glimpse we are allowed. How much emotion and feelings can we communicate, when we only see a pair of eyes ? How do we show interest and animation hiding behind a facial mask ? The reasons for doing so appear sound, but how I miss seeing your whole face ! But faces are not the whole story, are they ? Listen to Matthew chap 5,16 *'Let your light shine in such a way that they see good works and glorify your Father'*.

Those of us who have been attentive to the rules of lockdown may be feeling just a little smug. We are not joining thousands on the beaches each weekend, we are not joining in big BBQ's in local parks, we are not annoying the neighbours by hosting big parties each Friday evening. (Most of these events are unlikely anyway, given the make up of our AFC community !). However, ought we not be showing some understanding, tolerance, and good will to those people, for whom lockdown has been way beyond their expectation, somewhat oppressive, unreal, and a testing experience ? A quiet word of scripture, from Ephesians 4,32, might be in order *'Instead, be kind to each other, forgiving one another, just as God through*

Christ has forgiven you'.

It has been disappointing to hear many people complaining about the past months. Certainly, many cooped up in flats, with young, and not so young children, without access to outside space, are deserving of moans and grumbles, very often tipping over into conditions more serious. And they have our prayers and best wishes as they come out of the recent tight restrictions. But for the rest of us, although we may have experienced a different kind of spring and summer, there is evidence of many kinds of different activities, and there has been some upsurge in community spirit. So, let's try to put a kindly face on the past months, for as the Psalmist reminds us *'Yes, my soul, find rest in God. My hope comes from him, he is my mighty rock, my refuge'.*