



Dear Church family,

It was good to see so many of you at the church meeting on zoom this week. Gosh, it reminded me of how much I miss you all and can't wait until we are all reunited. For those unable to attend, we rejoiced at how God had met all our practical needs over the last year and were thrilled to note that last year we were able to give 22% of our income to mission, the persecuted church and Christian relief agencies. We thanked Caroline Adams for seven years of service as a deacon and Church Secretary and welcomed Roger Stevenson as the new Church Secretary and Jamie and Alisha Dickson-Virgo as new members. We also expressed our hope that - government restrictions allowing - we may start some limited church services again in October. We will also continue online until the pandemic is over.

In our online services this week and next we are looking at God's great work of salvation in our lives. Tomorrow we will be looking at ***The lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world*** and next Sunday asking the theological question: ***Why did Jesus have to die - couldn't God just forgive us?*** I hope you will join me and the team tomorrow.

Again, I really want to encourage us to think about inviting others to join us in our homes as we watch online and worship - though remember, no more than six at a time.

I am blown away by Jo's picture. I've meditated on it all week, thinking about how a sunflower follows the sun around the sky, and in doing so, how the

light of the sun feeds, strengthens and brings growth. This is what each of us should be doing, day by day, moment by moment: eyes fixed on him.

I've wondered what the Lord might say to us personally as we gaze upon him, perhaps this:

*“Delight yourself again in My great love for you. Contemplate with wonder the richness of My mercy, and the incomparable riches of My grace. Know that all you have and all that you are is through My kindness. Were it not for My grace to you, you would be lost and without hope. But you have been chosen, along with a great multitude of saints to do good works upon earth, and to be rewarded in heaven.*

*Revel in the revealed truth of my word. Not one human being deserved salvation, so I came born of a woman and born under the law. I have redeemed all of My sheep and you are among that great flock. You are appointed to salvation and to everlasting life. My sovereign will cannot be thwarted, and in Me all things are yours. Rejoice and be glad. Let My peace reign in your heart. Serve Me with gladness; sing, worship and praise Me. For I have done it all and I am worthy of all your praise and every breath.”*

**Father we bow before this amazing truth, which is beyond human understanding. Our salvation is all of grace. We deserve no credit for it. Your goodness to us is beyond expression. You have raised us up and seated us with Christ in the heavenly realms.**

**Truly your grace is incomparable. Any good works which we do, are done because you prepared them in advance for us to do. Truly it is all glory to Jesus. Even our faith is His gift. Yet somehow with all this, human responsibility remains, for you have not made us robots, so help us in our service. We love you with all our hearts. In Jesus' name, Amen.**