



**DUNFERMLINE  
WEST BAPTIST**

**JESUS SAID**

**YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD -  
LIKE A CITY ON A HILLTOP THAT CANNOT BE HIDDEN**

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

(Philippians 4:6-7)

Dear friends,

Last Sunday as we continued our "Choose Your King" series we explored the inconsistencies of Saul during his time as the king of Israel. Particularly, we considered how Saul's fall might be described as the consequence of a fearful heart. Today, many people are understandably anxious and afraid. Certainly, the biggest challenge of this lockdown will be plucking up the courage to come out of it. This will be a struggle for all of us.

A common way to deal with fear is to lock it away behind some form of defence. Towards the end of his reign Saul was so afraid that he slept inside a ring formed by his slumbering warriors and beside his head was a spear stuck in the ground (1 Samuel 26:5-7). Over time such defences will always prove to be inadequate. Saul realised this when one morning he discovered that his spear had been taken while he was sleeping. Other times our defences may be so strong that they can lead to isolation and loneliness.

Philippians 4 suggests that we can experience peace when we live in Christ Jesus. Even more, it suggests that when we live in Jesus God's peace will guard our heart. The word "Guard" can be described as a watchman. A shepherd who knows their voice. A shepherd who calms their sheep when they are anxious. A shepherd who literally sleeps across the only entrance to the pasture. I pray that as we begin to consider going back to some kind of new normal that we will live in Christ, our good Shepherd, so that through him we might experience God's peace in our hearts.

## Sharing In and Out Together

**Update from Andrew** (our intern):

"I thank God for the blessing that I have managed to experience being a part of the TearFund course which has made me apply myself to fundraising. Truly this experience has brought me out of a negative mindset that I was in for a month or two. I have been reminded of the very intrinsic nature of God's generosity from all the donations we have



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received. It's totally moving to know such generosity is rooted in God. I am now on day 8 of my fitness regime you could say by ascending my stairs. I have truly fallen back in love with personal fitness. Only a full week of good exercise each day and I feel so alert and happy. I can say for years I neglected my fitness. God wants us to look after his creation so why was I neglecting his temple which is my body? Overall life is good even when things are down. God always has something round the corner for us which will raise us up. Wish you all a wonderful day and will see you all in the near future God bless."

Find out more about **Andrews Tearfund fundraising** at:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/andrewstheclimb126>

Please do **share any pictures with us** (if you are able) of what you are getting up to. You could share them to our Facebook Page, over What's App, or email them to me.

Below is a photo of Alan hard at work painting his decking, our worship area waiting patiently for us to return and Andrew's most recent step counter as part of his Tearfund The Climb Challenge.



Alan received a thank you letter from **Dunfermline Foodbank** for our recent donation. They wrote 'This will help us to give local people in food poverty a hand up and further pastoral support to help them get back on their feet. Last year we issued 64.1 tonnes of food, the equivalent of 128,200 packs of 500g pasta. We fed 7,669 clients (3,065 of which were children).'

### **World Mission: Barnabus Fund**

In Middle Eastern society, a woman and child on their own, without a man to protect and provide for them, are very vulnerable. Jamile is an example of this. Until the death of her husband in a car accident 2 years ago, they lived a simple, peaceful life in a modest house,



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following the Lord, and content that they could survive despite Lebanon's fragile economy and frequent crises. When she was widowed, she managed to find a part-time job in a factory and her parents contributed what they could, enabling her and her daughter to survive. But when lockdown came her hours were cut and she could no longer earn enough even for food and necessary medicines. But Barnabas Fund was there to assist with a parcel of food and money for medicine. As Jamile said 'The Lord did not leave me alone.' A senior Lebanese church leader told Barnabas Fund, 'Lebanon is passing through the most difficult of times. Not even at the time of the Lebanese war 1975-90 did people feel as much hardship as nowadays. Thanks, Barnabas, for your great help to maintain Christian lives in dignity.

## What's on

At the start of the **weekly prayer session** (Wednesdays 11:00) I will be reflecting from the Psalms and how they might be speaking into our lives today. Tomorrow I will be considering Psalm 9 and God's relentless pursuit of us. I hope that you might be able to join me.

But the Lord reigns forever,  
executing judgment from his throne.  
He will judge the world with justice  
and rule the nations with fairness.  
The Lord is a shelter for the oppressed,  
a refuge in times of trouble.  
Those who know your name trust in you,  
for you, O Lord, do not abandon those who search for you.

(Psalm 9:7-10)

**On Sunday** we will be gathering again online at 11:00am for a time of worship together with Scottish Baptist College as they look back on the last year. We will be hearing from some of their current students, lecturers and principle Ian Birch will be bringing us God's word.

On Wednesday at 7.30pm Luke will be leading the **weekly evening prayer and bible study**. The study will look at the questions below and the Choose your King booklet if there is time. This would be over zoom via the standard meeting details.

Next Monday 1<sup>st</sup> at 8:00pm the **Women will be zooming together for their study group**. Speak to Rachel if you would like further information on joining in.



## Study Questions from 1 Samuel 14-16

If you haven't had a chance to watch the message from Sunday or would like to watch it again you can watch it at: <https://youtu.be/B-tbGwOfyUc>

1. 14:24-31. Read Saul's Rash Vow:
  - a. Why was Saul's vow rash? (v30-32)
  - b. Jonathan's innocent confidence (v27) and instinct stands in contrast to Saul's rash vow. What might we learn from the difference between Saul and Jonathan here?
  - c. Discuss Jonathan's ransom by Saul's people (v36-46)

2. 15:1-12. War with the Amalekites
  - a. Discuss God's command to Saul that he completely destroy the Amalekites (v3). How might we reconcile such passages with Christ who died on the cross - a remarkable act of self-sacrifice?

**Note:** there is no easy (or perhaps even right) answer, however, I would be reluctant to dismiss the tensions in the passage too lightly (as Tim Chester does in the study guide). God will, and does, exercise his justice, but what we learn about God's justice through Jesus seems to stand in contrast to this seeming genocide. I have been particularly compelled by scholars who have looked at how instances like this may reflect humanities propensity to violence in their relationship with each other and God. Is such violence a reflection of God working within a fallen humanity with fallen desires?

In light of the cross, would God ask of us today what he asked of Saul? How has the cross fundamentally changed our relationship with God as it forces us to recognise and come to terms with the violent potential of humanity?

- b. God's instructions seemed to test the obedience of a man of war who so far had been largely inconsistent. How might God test the obedience of us today?
3. 16:14-23. Saul's evil Spirit.



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- a. Discuss what you make of this evil Spirit? Do you have any difficulties with this?
- b. James 1:12-15 makes a distinction between testing and temptation. Why is this important?
- c. On Sunday I suggested that we are ultimately responsible for our own hearts. What actions might we take to guard our hearts against temptation and evil?

## **Buddy groups and prayer items**

Andrew has been contacting the buddy group leaders weekly to update our online prayer area at: <https://dunfermlinewest.org/prayers>. Please do view the document regularly to keep up to date with how we can pray for each other. You can also add your prayers to the document or update us on the progress of other prayers.

## **Connecting with us**

You can connect into each of these services via <https://dunfermlinewest.org/online> and also via telephone using our latest stay connected details.

### **Subscribe, Like and Invite.**

Please do regularly keep up to date with the churches news on Facebook and YouTube and interact with its content. Subscribe to both YouTube and Facebook. Like the posts and comment on them. Invite your friends to be a part of our community.

### **Our YouTube Channel** ( *To subscribe click on the red subscribe button* )

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7BuBS\\_TUKDMvu5Wcpg9PAg/](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7BuBS_TUKDMvu5Wcpg9PAg/)

### **Our Facebook Page** ( *To Like click the like button below the Page's cover photo* )

<https://www.facebook.com/dunfermlinewest>

## **Worship music**

I am sure we have all really appreciated the worship music that Amy, Beth and Rachel have been creating, please do offer them your encouragement. As we are creating new songs we are adding them to a YouTube playlist which you can listen to whenever you like at: <https://dunfermlinewest.org/worship/playlist>

Let us continue to stay in touch, to pray for one another and to not lose hope.

**Your brother in Christ, Anthony**