

# The Corona Chronicle.

Being Church in Partial lockdown.

Sunday May 30th

West Worthing Evangelical Church.

Rugby Road

Acts 2

When Jesus ascended into heaven He told His disciples not to depart from Jerusalem but to wait for the **Father's promise** (Acts 1 v4 ) for the baptism or the **receiving of power of the Holy Spirit.** (Acts 1v8.)

They were ordered to stay together in Jerusalem but then to scatter because verse 8 Jesus states 'that they will be My witnesses to Me in Jerusalem and in Judah and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.'

As it says in **Ecclesiastes 3 v1 there is 'a time and purpose under heaven.'** Later in that chapter it says **'A time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones together.'**

What might seem contrary to each other will in it's time happen. As the moon waxes and wanes so in this age there are times to be together and to receive the Lord's word into our hearts, to praise and worship Him and give Him the glory, to fellowship with each other and to receive the encouragement from each other. So too there is a time **of scattering** to go out with the gospel..

## Coming together or togetherness

Coming together or togetherness can be **either positive or negative** based upon the reason for it.

A good example of togetherness in a **positive context** is the togetherness of **Adam and Eve.**

It was not good for the man to be alone (Genesis 2:18), so God created Eve and brought her to the man (verse 22). The principle of a man leaving his parents and cleaving to his wife was **thus established**, as two become one flesh in marriage (verse 24).

An early example of togetherness in a **negative context** is the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11. After the flood (Genesis 6–8), people began to repopulate the earth. But rather than spread out and fill the earth as God had instructed (Genesis 9:1), they stayed close together and became a law unto themselves. Genesis 11:4 records the leaders saying, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth." Most likely, the togetherness required to build such a tower was related to some sort of idol worship as the people were actively disobeying God. This is a story of how a Community steps out of the Will of God.

To everything  
there is a season,  
A time for every  
purpose under heaven.

-Ecclesiastes 3:1



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The Community had one language v1 they migrated to the valley of Shinar (Babylon) so they could be close together as they started to build a tower thinking that it was able to reach to the gods.

But the exercise was pointless because we cannot reach up to God by our own efforts.

It is by Grace we have been saved not of ourselves it is a gift of God. Eph. 2v8.

But God allowed the start of the building in order for the people to see what they were doing was wrong and repent.

We were born in sin we might try to reach for the god's through our own ideas and philosophy but we cannot reach God through our works.

Because they were so unified in their rebellion against God, the Lord destroyed this unity by confusing their languages (Genesis 11:7). This resulted in God's plan being accomplished, as people finally did spread out across the earth and subdue it.

## **The New Testament Church**

Through persecution the church was scattered after Pentecost and **The Church grew.**

Acts 3v40 states that 3000 were added to their number, they met together for the breaking of bread, for fellowship and for prayers meeting in their houses.

**But there were times to 'scatter the stones.'** In Acts 8 we read after the death of Stephen the Church, apart from the Apostles, were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. We read of Philip going to Samaria preaching the Word accompanied with healing and casting out of evil spirits. His message was heeded by the Samaritans and there was great joy in the city.

It is ironic that for many months we have not been together that we are NOT together in one place although through modern media some element of that togetherness has been taking place.

### **It is a time of scattering.**

These things are in the providential hand of God. **The devil might seek to rid the Church by persecution.** But one of the main instigators Paul was converted and the gospel spread to the four corners of the earth.

**Matthew Henry said** *'Wherever the established believer is driven, he carries the knowledge of the gospel, and makes known the preciousness of Christ in every place. Where a simple desire of doing good influences the heart, it will be found impossible to shut a man out from all opportunities of usefulness.'*

The Lord has put us in this place He is Sovereign. We have the responsibility to share the good news in whatever situation we find ourselves in. Paul was in Prison but it did not stop him writing letters and sharing the gospel with the guards and prisoners. There are many examples of Christian prisoners sharing the good news

But being scattered means also the love and compassion we can share in the community.

Of course we should do it all the time but particularly at this time there is a keener edge to what we do.

During this lockdown we have got to know our neighbours and as we are showing acts of kindness to them, they are showing acts of kindness to us.

# Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

W A R Z S K E E P D Z N P A B N C  
B Y P L A N T J L U P R O O T T B  
U L I J Z D G H X N G C B X S O R  
I J K L O V E E N X P J B R A C U  
L I I Q Q C Y M P E A C E V Z Z X  
D D L N V F B B L V Q F B S W D G  
S D L S Y A C R D F A S J P M P U  
W S B E K B K A U D I G W E H C S  
P U B A D A N C E G H D E A T I F  
M I O R K C Q E B S M I E K J X A  
O B R C T D E V F O C E P B N C W  
U T N H Q W K B O Z H I S L W F U  
R J L A U G H B X S T O N E S A K  
N K F H W H P W T H R O W L T A L  
M T B A T E M R D X M E N D N P P  
G C B T N A V J N V N G A T H E R  
E M I E F L S J Y P Y S I L E N T

PEACE	HATE	SPEAK	MEND
THROW	GATHER	DANCE	LAUGH
BUILD	HEAL	UPROOT	DIE
WAR	LOVE	SILENT	KEEP
SEARCH	EMBRACE	STONES	MOURN
WEEP	KILL	PLANT	BORN

# Hymns ,Prayers and Bible Readings

Especially for those unable to get to Church.

## Hymn

1 O Thou who camest from above  
The fire celestial to impart,  
Kindle a flame of sacred love  
On the mean altar of my heart!

2 There let it for Thy glory burn  
With inextinguishable blaze,  
And trembling to its source return  
In humble prayer and fervent praise.

3 Jesus, confirm my heart's desire  
To work, and speak, and think for Thee;  
Still let me guard the holy fire,  
And still stir up the gift in me.

4 Ready for all Thy perfect will,  
My acts of faith and love repeat;  
Till death Thy endless mercies seal,  
And make the sacrifice complete.

Charles Wesley

## Bible Reading.

2 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. <sup>2</sup>And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup>Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. <sup>4</sup>And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

<sup>5</sup>And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. <sup>6</sup>And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. <sup>7</sup>Then they were all amazed and marvelled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?" <sup>8</sup>And how *is it that we* hear, each in our own language in which we were born?

<sup>9</sup>Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, <sup>10</sup>Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome,

both Jews and proselytes, <sup>11</sup>Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God." <sup>12</sup>So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?" <sup>13</sup>Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine."

Prayers (Praying for God's Spirit to stir up faith in us, from John 3)

Holy Spirit of God, invisible like the wind,  
We do not see You moving among us, but the effect we see -

Come to our hearts:

That we may be renewed and reborn.

Open our minds:

That we may perceive Your kingdom.

Lift up our eyes to where the cross of Christ stands

For our healing:

So may we believe,

And in believing not die

But have eternal life;

Through Him who

In Your love for us

You sent into the world,

Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Written by Michael Perry

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## Prayer for a Task Unfinished

Lord of the Harvest, You gave Your disciples the mandate to be Your witnesses around the world and empowered them with Your Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost to accomplish this task. Today, we ask that You help us to refocus our attention, as we face a task unfinished. You have blessed us with the power and the gifts of Your Holy Spirit. Help us to use these for ministry and witness. Amen.

## Prayer for Boldness in God's Work

God of Wind and Fire, we celebrate today the indwelling of Your Holy Spirit, which You sent upon the believers on the day of Pentecost, and which is our blessing today. Lord, we thank You for the transforming work of Your Holy Spirit in our lives and through our lives toward others. We thank You that You have given us boldness to proclaim the Gospel. Remind us to use Your power to do the work You have given us. Amen.