

The Corona Chronicle

West Worthing Evangelical Church Rugby Road.

Sunday June 28th

www.westworthingevangelical.co.uk

Being Church while the Corona Virus emergency is on

THERE IS NEITHER JEW NOR GENTILE,
NEITHER SLAVE NOR FREE,
NOR IS THERE MALE AND FEMALE,
FOR YOU ARE ALL ONE IN CHRIST JESUS.
GALATIANS 3:28

Black And White – Or Glorious Technicolor?

Have you come across **Talking Pictures**? I don't mean the cinema but the TV channel that resurrects films and TV series from past decades. Some of them are even older than I am (though not very many, I'm afraid!) It can really be a treasure trove and a luxuriating dip into nostalgia (and the language and the sex are generally handled better than in our twenty-first century productions).

Of course, a lot of the content on this channel was filmed in black and white – and they're the only two colours you get. But then comes a less elderly film and it bursts into vibrant Technicolor. Critically, both art forms have something valuable to offer. Maybe that's got something to say to our present society.

Unless we've been living on the planet Zog recently we cannot but be aware of the current situation, not only in our country but in the western nations. The death of George Floyd in the USA was the lit fuse to the explosion of pain and anger which has burst out as black people and ethnic minorities give voice to their frustration at long standing racial and social inequalities in society. That there are genuine issues, reaching far beyond statues, which need to be not only identified but resolved is beyond dispute.

I, however, am not about to resolve them; my estimate of my abilities is not that high. What I do want to do is to ask you to take an eye test. Are you colour-blind? Sadly, it must be confessed that the church at large has not always had a clean record as far as prejudice and brutal treatment of people of a different colour are concerned.

The vile apartheid regime in South Africa was endorsed by a church which regarded non-whites as inferior. Identifying Noah's son, Ham, as the progenitor of the black people, they sought biblical justification for this oppression by claiming that Noah's curse of servitude on Ham's youngest son, Canaan, and his family fell on all black people. Derek Kidner, in his commentary on Genesis (Tyndale Press 1967) wisely states that since the curse is confined "...to this one branch within the Hamites, those who reckon the Hamitic peoples in general to be doomed to inferiority have therefore misread the Old Testament as well as the New."

The Scriptures are crystal clear that **every** human being is created in God's image (however marred by sin that may be) and that all come from a common ancestor: see Genesis 1:26-27 and Acts 17:26.

Some decades ago one of the most influential Christian books I almost read was published. It was called *The Christian Mind* by Harry Blamires and in it he challenged Christians over the blind spot in our thinking. We think Christianly, he claimed, about religious and spiritual matters but often fail to do so when we are faced with "secular" issues. Perhaps the matter of colour is an example of that today. We need to view that which we may regard as secular through a Christian lens, applying Christian truth and principles throughout.

Black and white have something to contribute; we should value both. We can both be proud of our heritage and acknowledge where things have gone awry.

But black and white is not all that there is. There is that glorious Technicolor that is a vibrant and glowing demonstration of what God can do in human relationships, no matter how diverse and challenging the divisions can be. The Apostle Paul exults in it in Galatians 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." He is not saying that these categories do not exist but that there is an overarching wonder, that these distinctions are surpassed by a new and breathtaking relationship we have together in the Lord Jesus Christ. No matter who or what we are, if the grace of God has laid hold on us through his good news then "...in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith" (Galatians 3:26).

That relationship and harmony needs to be demonstrated by God's people to our fragmented world. Black and white – both are valuable, essential, with much to offer one another in human society. But God's solution to the problems, God's vision and achievement for his people is in glorious Technicolor.

And Technicolor trumps all!

Dennis R. Read

Greet one another with a Holy

Kiss. 2 Corinthians 13v12

In these days of lockdown having to stay two metres apart we have been unable to greet one another with an embrace and as social animals we have missed greeting one another not even with a handshake. We emotionally need to hug our loved ones and we miss that experience.

Greeting one another with a holy kiss to many Churches is seen as part of the Communion service where the minister calls the Congregation 'to offer one another a sign of peace' and the congregation offers sometimes nervously a sign of peace to others in the congregation. Either a handshake a hug or a kiss.

But this verse of scripture is not intended as an instruction for a liturgical part of Communion but does go back to the third century to what is known as the **Apostolic Constitution** like the Apostles Creed it was not written by the Apostles. It contained Church discipline, liturgical and Church Law. It was probably written in Syria and scholars suggest by an Arian (One who believes that Jesus is not God but a created being like the Jehovah Witnesses of today) Arianism was rife in the Church at the time So in the Apostolic Constitutions we find the rubric, "Let the deacons say to all, 'Salute ye one another with a holy kiss: and let the clergy salute the bishop, the men of the laity salute the men, the women the women.'" The deacons were to watch that there was no disorder during the act (8:57).

As this was not intended by Paul to be used in a Communion service what is the meaning of this passage of scripture for today?

There are four places in the New Testament that refer to the 'holy kiss'

Romans 16v16, 1 Corinthians 16v20, 2 Corinthians 13v12, 1 Thessalonians 5v16.

In each instance, the Greek words denote a kiss which is sacred—physically pure and morally blameless.

The kiss is called "holy" to distinguish it from a sexual one and from a hypocritical and deceitful one, such as Joab gave to Amasa, 2 Samuel 20v9, or such as Judas gave to Jesus when he cried, "Hail Rabbi," and betrayed Him into the hands of His enemies. Matthew 26v49

In New Testament times, the holy kiss was a sign of greeting, much like the modern handshake. For Christians, it further expressed brotherly love and unity. This is what Paul was pleading for at the end of 2 Corinthians to the divided Corinthian Church.

The holy kiss was especially precious to the new believers

during the early church years, because they were often outcasts from their own families because of their new faith. The holy kiss from a Jewish Christian to a Gentile believer was evidence that the Gentiles were accepted fully into Christian fellowship.

God has kissed a guilty world of sin in His love for us.

The cross of Calvary, where Jesus Christ died 2,000 years ago, was the place where the greatest ever act of love was shown.

Certainly no love was shown by the man who betrayed Jesus, falsely accused, unjustly condemned, and crucified Him. He was betrayed by the kiss of Judas. It was God's love that sent Jesus to the cross. And it was love in the heart of Jesus that moved Him to submit, willingly, to the suffering of the cross

The Bible says:

'This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.'

1 John 4 v 10

Atoning means paying for, and covering over, sin. Our sin cuts us off from God. We cannot be at peace with Him. But out of His perfect love God planned a way to pay for and cover our sin so that He can accept us.

He sent His own dearly loved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the atoning sacrifice.

The Welsh hymn writer wrote the lovely hymn:

*Here is love vast as the ocean,
Loving kindness as a flood,
When the Prince of life, our ransom,
Shed for us His precious blood.
Grace and love, like mighty rivers,
Poured incessant from above,
And heaven's peace and perfect justice
Kissed a guilty world in love.*

On the third day after Jesus died God raised Him to life again. This proved that Jesus' sacrifice had been accepted. Now we can know forgiveness and peace with God. We can know and enjoy His love – 'vast as the ocean.' It is found only in Jesus.

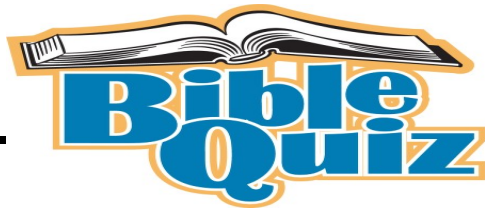
Psalm 2v10-12 says

"Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. **Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way, for His wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in Him"**

We are told in Psalm 2v10 to Kiss the Son lest He be angry with you. We kiss the Son of David our Lord Jesus Christ by responding to Him and taking refuge in Him.

David Page

Bible Quiz



Where were the disciples first called Christians? (Acts 11:26)

Nazareth Jerusalem Antioch Bethlehem

Which disciple was killed by King Herod? (Acts 12:2)

Matthew Simon James Luke

Who was the sorcerer that Paul encountered on Paphos? (Acts 13:6)

Cleopas Shemaiah Manaen Mattathias Bar-jesus

Who was sent to Antioch to oversee the new church there? (Acts 11:22)

Stephen Mark Philip Barnabas

Who was the travelling companion that Paul and Barnabas fought over? (Acts 15:37)

Philip Timothy Silas John Mark

What was this sorcerer inflicted with by the Lord through Paul? (Acts 13:11)

leprosy consumption blindness palsy

Who was the centurion that Peter was to contact in Caesarea? (Acts 10:22)

Cornelius Lucius Sergius Justus

Paul was beaten and jailed for healing a damsel of what? (Acts 16:18)

Consumption blindness epilepsy leprosy demon possession

What affliction was the man in Lystra healed of by Jesus through Paul? (Acts 14:10)

epilepsy crippled leprosy blindness palsy

Hymns, Prayers and Bible Readings.

Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD;
Let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before Him with thanksgiving
And extol Him with music and song.
For the LORD is the great God,
The great King above all gods.

Pray for people who are infected with COVID-19 or facing quarantine.

Jesus, during Your ministry on Earth You showed Your power and caring by healing people of all ages and stations of life from physical, mental, and spiritual ailments. Be present now to people who need Your loving touch because of COVID-19. May they feel Your power of healing through the care of doctors and nurses. Take away the fear, anxiety, and feelings of isolation from people receiving treatment or under quarantine. Give them a sense of purpose in pursuing health and protecting others from exposure to the disease. Protect their families and friends and bring peace to all who love them.

Pray for protection for people at higher risk of developing the disease.

Dear Lord, we lift to You our concern for people who are more likely than others to become severely ill from COVID-19 — the elderly and people with chronic health conditions. Protect them from harm and be their comfort in this time of uncertainty and, for many, preventive isolation from loved ones.

Pray for medical professionals, caregivers, and researchers responsible for fighting the new Coronavirus.

God, as more people get sick, healthcare workers and first responders are working longer hours with fewer supplies and with more risk of contracting the new Coronavirus themselves. Renew their energy and sustain them on long shifts. Bring Your protection upon them as they work with patients. Multiply their supplies so they have the protective items needed to stay safe on the job.

Inspire and invigorate the research doctors developing better tests to diagnose the virus, create vaccines to prevent it, and identify protocols to eliminate the disease's spread.

1 Here is love, vast as the ocean,
Loving-kindness as the flood,
When the Prince of Life, our Ransom,
Shed for us His precious blood.
Who His love will not remember?
Who can cease to sing His praise?
He can never be forgotten
Throughout heav'n's eternal days.

2 On the mount of crucifixion
Fountains opened deep and wide;
Through the floodgates of God's mercy
Flowed a vast and gracious tide.
Grace and love, like mighty rivers,
Poured incessant from above,
And heav'n's peace and perfect justice
Kissed a guilty world in love.

3 In Thy truth Thou dost direct me
By Thy Spirit through Thy Word;
And Thy grace my need is meeting
As I trust in Thee, my Lord.
Of Thy fullness Thou art pouring
Thy great love and pow'r on me,
Without measure, full and boundless,
Drawing out my heart to Thee.

Bible Reading

2 Corinthians 13v11-14

Greetings and Benediction
11 Finally, brethren, farewell.
Become complete.
Be of good comfort,
Be of one mind, live in peace;
And the God of love and peace will be with you.
12 Greet one another with a holy kiss.
13 All the saints greet you.
14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
And the love of God,
And the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
Amen.