**Grace Forever**

**Day 36 - Monday 30th March**

***Psalm 23.6b, “And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”***

Jesus didn’t understand forever, or eternal life, to be something that could only be enjoyed after death. ‘Forever’ is present reality as well as a future certainty for the people of God. “...this is eternal life,” Jesus says in John 17.3, “that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”

This isn’t about knowledge of God – even demons have that – it’s about knowing Him as a Father, dwelling with Him in His grace, enjoying His presence now and forever. Jesus said “I have come that [you] may have life, and have it to the full.” (John 10.10)

So God’s intention and desire for us is that we “dwell in the house of the Lord” through a trusting relationship with Him. This relationship begins now and continues after death into eternity. Jesus says “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.” (John 14.1-3) So now, through faith, we dwell in the house of the Lord and we will do forever.

* *How does this reality inspire you today?*

* *Write down a list of ways that you expect to enjoy “dwelling in the house of the Lord” throughout this week (particularly as we can’t gather as a congregation)*

**Day 37 – Tuesday 31st March**

***Psalm 23.6b, “And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*”**

**Please read Romans 8.1-13**

Yesterday we reminded ourselves of Jesus’ promises to us about eternal life - it’s about knowing Him, dwelling with Him in His grace, enjoying His presence now **and** forever.

For **now,** we all experience hindrances in enjoying the fulness of this life now. We have all experienced the destructive consequences of our sin, the fear of God’s condemnation and the destabilising of the security of our relationship with Christ that our battle with sin brings.

* How have you experienced this recently?

**Please read 2 Corinthians 7.8-10 & 1 John 1.5-9**

As Christians, our sin affects the quality of our relationship with God. But…

* what is the difference between being convicted of the sin in our lives **now**, and feeling condemned by God **forever**?
* How does this help you deal appropriately with sin in your life **now**, and the fear of God’s condemnation **forever**?

**Day 38 – Wednesday 1st April**

***Psalm 23.6b, “And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*”**

Even in the midst of opposition, loss and personal failure, the psalmist David had a profound sense of security. It was rooted in the reality that he would dwell with God – and God would dwell with him – every day on earth and throughout eternity.

The apostle Paul echoed that same sense of deep security in Romans 8.

David uses the image of sheep being cared for by The Shepherd, but Paul presents a different picture in Romans 8.14-17.

* What is it?
* What does this say about the security of your relationship with God in Christ?

**Day 39 – Thursday 2nd April**

***Psalm 23.6b, “And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*”**

Please read Romans 8.18-25

Today, along with the whole of creation, we experience common frustrations and bondage to the brokenness in creation.  We feel this currently very powerfully in the worldwide coronavirus pandemic.

In addition, Christians experience the frustrations and suffering of battling against the influence of the old nature, against sin and against the evil one in our lives.

* How do these verses help bring a sense of perspective and hope for our present frustrations and sufferings?

In vs 18-19, Paul says, “I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.”

* What do you think that might mean?
* How do you feel that one day the glory of the Lord will be revealed in you?

How do you feel today that one day you will witness the dawn of the new creation?

**Day 40 – Friday 3rd April**

**(Please note – we’ll have one final daily devotion in Psalm 23 tomorrow before starting on new Daily Devotions for Holy Week and beyond)**

***Psalm 23.6b, “And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*”**

Please read **Romans 8.31-39**

Let’s personally respond to the questions Paul asks in this passage in our daily journaling today…

What, then, shall **you** say in response to these things?

* If God is for us, who can be against us?
* If the Father gave up His own Son for us, will He not give us all things?
* Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen?
* It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns?
* Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?
* Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword separate us from the love of Christ?

Give God thanks today for His enduring commitment to, and love for, His children, **now** (all the days of our lives), and **forever.**

**Day 40(+1) – Saturday 4th April**

**Psalm 23**

**A psalm of David.**

***1****The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.* ***2****He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,* ***3****he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake.* ***4****Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.* ***5****You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.* ***6****Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

How have your meditations and journaling and discussions and the teaching on this Psalm…

* Grown and developed your relationship with your Good Shepherd?
* Given you perspective during this unfolding pandemic crisis?
* Shaped the way you ‘follow’ the Shepherd?

What’s God been saying to you during these 40 days?

What are you going to do about it?

Please share any brief encouraging reflections with the church family on the Hill Cliffe Prayer and Support Facebook group, or with Stuart & Katharine to circulate via Email.