

REVIVE!

***So then the Lord Jesus,
after he had spoken to
them, was taken up into
heaven and sat down at
the right hand of God.
Mark 16:19***

All things royal have been at the forefront of our minds recently as our nation, and indeed the world, celebrated Queen Elizabeth's 70th year on the throne – her Platinum Jubilee. (At least we now know what she keeps in her handbag – marmalade sandwiches anyone?)

This is also the time of year when another coronation is celebrated – the ascension of Jesus into heaven, as witnessed by His astonished disciples. The Bible presents this occasion as THE most momentous event in history, when Jesus, who had defeated sin, death and the powers of darkness, took His place on the central and ultimate throne of the universe, far above all other rule, power, might or authority (Ephesians 1:19-23). And yet we struggle to find even one 'Happy Ascension Day' card in the shops!

For this Revive we want to reflect on this reality of **JESUS BEING ON THE THRONE**, and what impact that can make on our lives.

But maybe we have some questions? Why, for instance, if this is true, does the world continue down the same road of conflict,

suffering and rebellion against God? Why doesn't He intervene in the world or in my own painful circumstances – NOW – and in the precise way I would like Him to?

The early disciples also lived in perplexing, tumultuous and difficult times, under a brutal and godless empire, without a social security blanket and where disease was often fatal.

So what gave them the strength and courage, to not only survive, but to boldly step out to do God's will, regardless of their circumstances, and preach a message of great hope?

Simply put, they **LOOKED UP** and saw the One who is on the throne. **NOW!** Through the eyes of faith they knew His reign would one day be visibly established on this earth. In the meantime, God encouraged them to work and pray that His will would be done on earth as it is in heaven. He also empowered them to preach the Gospel that gives people the chance to repent, be forgiven and be transformed.

Do your eyes need to be opened to look afresh at the One who is on the throne, even now? I know mine do!

With love, *David*

Open our eyes Lord!



There are many things we **THINK** we see, but do not **ACTUALLY** see.

As Elizabeth Barrett Browning has famously said, *'Earth is crammed with heaven, and every common bush afire with God. But only he who sees takes off his shoes; the rest sit round it and pluck blackberries'*. Similarly, G.K.Chesterton: *'What could be more mystical or magical than ordinary daylight coming in through an ordinary window? Why should not that wonderful white fire, breaking in through the window, inspire us every day like an ever-returning miracle?'*

John's Gospel has been presented in Celtic and medieval art with the symbol of the eagle. The eagle is an incredible bird with amazing sight. It can see a snake on the ground, as well as another eagle soaring 50 miles away. It can soar up to 10,000 feet high, and whereas other birds fly away from a storm, it will fearlessly fly into it!

John seeks to **open our eyes to truly see who Jesus is**. Read John 1 and note how many times the word 'see' or 'look' appears! Ask Him to give you a bigger and clearer vision of Jesus. Take a moment to ask God to give you the sight and courage of an eagle, and to see His goodness all around you.

'We have seen his glory, the glory of the One who came from the Father, full of grace and truth' (John 1:14).

Peace ... Be Still!

In Luke 24:36-49, the disciples were experiencing many of the emotions we are going through in these **difficult times**. They were *frightened and startled* (v37, literally 'out of their minds' in the original Greek), *anxious and distressed* (v38), *doubting and disbelieving* (v38,41) and not seeing Jesus clearly *'thinking they saw a ghost'* (v37).

What did Jesus do? He gave them a new revelation of who He was, inviting them to *see and touch his hands and feet* (v39). He opened their minds to understand the truth of the Scriptures in a deeper way (v45). And He spoke peace, deep peace, into their souls (v36), the very words He had spoken when He appeared to them in the Galilean storm.

So prior to the disciples arriving in Bethany, where they would catch a glimpse of heaven and see Jesus ascending to His throne (Luke 24:50-53), they were seriously struggling, despite it beginning to dawn on them that He had in fact risen from the dead.

Are you currently experiencing similar emotions to those of the disciples? If so, **bring them to the One who is on the throne**. He knows and understands your weakness (Hebrews 4:14-16) and even at this very moment is praying and interceding for you (Hebrews 7:25). Let Him speak 'Peace' over your life today!

*Before
the throne of
God above, I have
a strong a perfect
plea. A great High
Prince whose name is
love, whoever lives
and pleads for
me!*

Holy Anointing

When Elizabeth was crowned Queen in 1953, she asked to be anointed with oil for service.

At the feast of Pentecost, the disciples were also anointed for service, not with oil, but with the Holy Spirit. Previously they had been struggling with all kinds of doubts, uncertainty and fear, but this Holy Anointing gave them a courage and strength that they had never known before.

After witnessing the Lord's ascension, the disciples returned to Jerusalem where they waited for the Holy Spirit to be poured out (Luke 24:50-53). After ten days, this anointing came, giving them new power as well as new gifts of preaching and sharing the good news of Jesus' kingdom. Their difficult circumstances hadn't changed – they would still incur terrible opposition – but they knew that the One with ultimate power and authority was also releasing that power onto them: **'You will receive power (literally *dynamite*) when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses ...'** (Acts 1:8).

This is His anointing for service that the ascended Lord Jesus wants to pour out onto us. His ascension to the throne is the detonator which takes all that Jesus was and did on earth, releasing it into our lives with all its healing, restorative, renewing and reconciling power. Take a moment to receive His anointing now, with a simple prayer such as:



Gaze in wonder!



There is something very powerful and transforming about stopping to take time to look deeper. It has been said that *'to gaze is the lost art of adoration'*. Do you remember when you last stopped to gaze at the beauty of God's creation; the flowers and insects, with all their depths of variety, colours and textures? With our busy lives, it can be so easy to overlook such wonders of the natural world and we are impoverished for it!

When the apostle Stephen was being falsely accused and condemned for speaking the truth about Jesus (Acts 7:54-60), the furious crowd picked up stones to kill him. Where did he get the strength to trust his life to God in these terrifying circumstances, to stand firm and even forgive his oppressors? What did he do? He looked deeper than his situation, gazed up to heaven and saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God. In so doing, he was transformed and filled with a new power, as the Holy Spirit filled him.

Take time to **gaze deeply and intently** into the powerful reality that Jesus is on the throne. Meditate, for instance, on Matthew 17:1-8 where Jesus' stunning glory is revealed on the Mount of Transfiguration, or on 2 Corinthians 3:16-18 where we are invited to be transformed as we contemplate who Jesus really is. **Looking deeper you will be changed. ... AND filled with His power!**

CCHC News

The Lord continues to be very present at the Centre. Recently we have enjoyed a Teaching Day, two Quiet Days, and a delightful and lively ladies prayer fellowship group, who filled the house one weekend with laughter, prayer and conversation.

We are SO grateful for the ministries of Steve Clark, Colin Crook, Julia Lewis and Denis Smith during Steve's sabbatical, which have enabled the chaplaincy cover to be available across the whole week, and provide a variety of voices for the guests to hear.

The grounds look beautiful and alongside his usual gardening duties, Trevor has been busy with plans for the **Jabez gardens** to grow vegetables for the Centre. The project involves repairing and moving the polytunnel to make it more accessible to the **Jabez gardens** and developing our facilities to provide work placements. Jempsons of Peasmarsh have graciously given £250 towards the project, so together with other gifts we are well on the way to our £1500 goal.

Our kitchen too has provided work placements within the last year, which has not only helped us, but has also been part of God's healing to the local community!



Prayers of Intercession

Let us continue to bring our world before the One who is on the throne. There is so much upheaval in many places, including the Ukraine, which is causing such hardship and pain to so many people.

Please pray:

- ▶ for the Lord's covering and protection of CCHC's ministry, staff, volunteers and supporters. We know that the enemy of our souls resists God's work here. Last month, for example, our means of communication was difficult due to our Facebook page being locked, but praise God for His victory and the launch of our NEW Facebook page;
- ▶ for the residential Healing Spaces, as well as Quiet Days coming up on 'Joy' (July 6th) and 'Enjoy the Presence of God' (July 29th);
- ▶ for Steve and Veronica's on-going sabbatical, for refreshment and journeying mercies as they travel in Africa.

"Forgive us, Lord when we are rooted to the earth, unable to see beyond the present, blind to the glory of your presence. We become engrossed in what is happening now and forget all that you have in store for us. Lift up our heads, that we may see Christ in all His glory and all things in their true perspective.

We give thanks that mountain-top resources lie waiting in the valley, that you are as near in the busy streets as in the quiet garden, that you are the guest at every meal, and heaven has come down to earth, as one day earth may be as heaven. Risen and ascended Lord, travel with us."

**Because Jesus is on the Throne ...
Our present reality is not the ultimate reality; the ultimate authority in this world rests in Him!**

PERSONAL DETAILS

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