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### Letters to the Church during COVID-19: 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020

To all the brothers and sisters at KBC,

I am sure you are all waiting with bated breath to hear further announcements about the lockdown and the Government's plans to ease this. I wonder if you are any good at it, waiting that is? Are you able to wait patiently, persistently, and perseveringly? David says confidently in Psalm 40, "I waited patiently for the Lord, he turned to me and heard my cry". But what happens when that spiritual fervour to wait for the Lord is just not there? There is so much encouragement around at the moment to seek the Lord and rightly so. For many people (not all because some are working harder than ever on the frontline) they have never had so much time on their hands to seek the Lord. But what if the desire to this is missing? What do we do when our spiritual fervour is gone?

The first thing to do is recognise the signs and they will be easy to spot. There will be little desire to read the Bible, pray and worship. You will find that you don't really want to connect with people in the church and make easy excuses for missing the various gatherings that are on offer at the moment. You will find you become easily offended and defensive. And you will sense that your spirit is just not at ease. I have been in this place at various times in ministry and I know it is not comfortable and very unsatisfactory, especially when you read Romans 12:11, 'Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord'. At this point you want to say a little sarcastically, 'Gee thanks Paul! Just the encouragement I need when I feel like this!'. But maybe it is, maybe these strong words are just what we need to nudge us out of our introspection into doing something about it.

Take a moment to read Revelation 2:4-5, they have some other sharp words which, perhaps in this case, give us a bigger push in the right direction. All done reading? How did the words make you feel? Annoyed, angry, sad, even worse or hopeful and ready to start stoking the fires of your heart and fervour for the Lord? The words 'do the things you did at first' reminds me that even if we don't feel in the mood for seeking God if we practice this, the fervour and passion will follow. Remember what James said, 'Draw near to God and he will draw near to you'. So how can we do that? Here are some practices to put into place whether we feel like it or not.

1. Turn up: in other words, make a rendezvous with the Lord **every day** and preferably at the same time. Mornings works best for me (but not for everyone) but the point is make the appointment, fix the time and turn up.

2. Remember how you have experienced the Presence in the past: the heart of the matter is that through the cross we have access to the Father, we approach Him in no other way. But the manner of approach will differ from person to person. For some it will be being still, others putting on some praise music and for others kneeling or bowing down. Remember what you did previously and start practicing those things again.
3. Learn to be a lover of God: it may be a little challenging (particularly for guys) but write down all the things you love about God and reasons why you love God. Maybe capture it in writing a love poem for God, a private prayer of devotion to the Lord.
4. Immerse yourself in the Bible: in other words, learn to meditate on Scripture. Read portions of Psalm 119 and pray the words as your own (even if you don't feel like it).
5. Repent: allow God to search your heart, through His Word and by His Spirit, and thus reveal things that need confession and turning away from. Then ask forgiveness and move on into the freedom of following Jesus. Repentance leads to times of refreshing from the Lord (Acts 3:19)
6. Learn to pray: from scratch. Go back to what you did when you first became a Christians and follow the patterns of ACTS (adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication) or the model for the Lord's prayer. All the while asking God the Holy Spirit to breathe His breath into you.
7. Ask for a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit and wait for Him.

Then keep following steps 1-7 attentively every day. He will not forsake you; He will not ignore you; He will not turn a deaf ear and blind eye to your seeking and pleading. Rather He will come with Holy Fire and you will find your heart strangely warmed, you will find the beauty of communing with the Lord and you will know His living water flowing through your life bringing renewing and refreshing.

I am praying for you daily, that every one of us, young and old, within the faith family at KBC would have hearts ablaze with love for the Lord and we would not be lacking in zeal serving the King.

May His grace be with each of us.

Stu  
#KeepTrusting #KeepConnected #Call4Support

### **Notices:**

#### Upcoming events on Zoom

Thursday: 7:45pm, Monthly cooperate prayer meeting.

Sunday: 10:30am, Sunday Morning Service (we will open the room at 10am for people to gather to chat and leave it open after the service for people to chat as well).

Wednesday 13 May: GEMS (ladies) Prayer evening from 7:45pm.

Tuesday 19 May: Fellowship (Men's) Prayer evening from 7:30pm.

Thursday 21 May: Church Member's meeting for whole fellowship.

**KBC YouTube channel:** Here you will find Stu's daily devotional series 'You are....' and our sermons each week: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0lqZEJkxDYGSeCQCw6onJw/featured>