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### Letters to the Church during COVID-19: 17th June 2020

To the Church Family at KBC,

I hope you are well and resting in the knowledge that the Lord longs to be gracious to you, to show you compassion and bless you because He is a God of justice (Isaiah 30:18). Hopefully you managed to catch-up with the letter last week because this is part two of lessons from the Book of Daniel. In case you missed it our question was: **what can I start doing now to ensure that I will be better for it later?** The three thoughts from last week were: look after your body, discover and use your gifts and trust God no matter what. So what else can Daniel teach us.

Fourth Daniel does not shy away from difficulty or fear. Throughout his story, it is almost as if Daniel is treating adversity and situations that can envelop a person with fear as a friend to develop his faith in God. I am not sure how I would have responded when Nebuchadnezzar wanted to kill all the wise men in Babylon or having to tell Nebuchadnezzar that he would be humbled or Belshazzar that the writing was on the wall for his rulership and by the end of the night he would be dead. All those things takes courage and Daniel does not shy away from it. He is not praying 'get me out of here!', he is more likely praying, 'God get me through this, stronger and more able to reflect your glory'. It would be a good prayer for us, 'Father, strengthen me in this season so I pass through it well, growing in grace and strength for your glory'.

Fifth Daniel develops a rhythm of life or what some Christian traditions call a Rule of Life. It is seen in chapter 6:10 where we read that Daniel went home and three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to God just as he had done before. From that single verse we can glean that Daniel had a rhythm of life, morning, noon and night, where he got down on his knees and sought the face of God. Although I couldn't prove it from the text I would hazard a guess that this simple practice was the reason why Daniel did not fear and treated adversity as a friend, why his life is a testimony of trusting God and why he was able to discover and use his gifts. It all flows from this place of dwelling in the presence of the Almighty, regularly, three times a day, a rhythm of life. In one sense Daniel is the epitome of the man in Psalm 1 who is planted by streams of water, whose roots go down deep, so that in whatever he does he prospers. It begs the question, what rhythms are you putting in place which will sustain you in the next season to come?

Finally, Daniel ran a good race. He didn't try and do it as a sprint but rather he settled in for a marathon and he ran a good and steady race. It always fascinates me that Daniel went into Babylon as a teenager and as the first six chapters unfold we see kingdoms rise and fall but God's servant stands through it all. His life is in tact, his integrity and character is in tact and his hope and trust in God is in tact. There is a great question that I have been asking myself lately, 'Can you sustain it?' We are constantly bombarded with good ideas and new opportunities and one of the challenges we face is choosing God's best and asking if it is sustainable, for the long run. If we do this, we avoid burnout, becoming disillusioned and are able to run with joy and rejoicing. Again it begs a question: what kind of race are you running, a sprint? Or long distance with your eyes on the prize, a crown of righteousness for those who hope in the Lord.

So all in we have six lessons which require action, if we want to emerge from this season stronger and better for it, then we need to be asking ourselves, what small things can I change now so that I will be better for it later? It's a good question and I pray that God would give you the grace to take the necessary steps.

Grace be yours in abundance!

Stu

#KeepTrusting #KeepConnected #Call4Support

### **Notices and Upcoming events on Zoom:**

Thursday: Unpack the Preach discussion.

Friday: Children and Youth on line for those aged 11+ at 7pm.

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).

Sunday: 7pm, there will be a time of worship until about 8.30pm led by a few of us from the music group. It's very informal, but an opportunity to worship God in song.

Thursday 25 June: Special Church Meeting for members.

**KBC YouTube channel:** Here you will find our new daily mini devotional series 'Therefore..' and back copies of Stu's daily devotional series 'You are....' and our sermons each week. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0IqZEJkxDYGSQCw6onJw/featured>

**Resources:** Do not forget to check out our resources page on our website, which is constantly being updated, including resources for families and activities for children and youth: <https://kingswoodbaptistchurch.co.uk/resources/>