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### Letters to the Church during COVID-19: 22 July 2020

Dear brothers and sisters,

I hope this finds you well and keeping safe. I wanted to share a promise from God's Word with you this morning. The promises of God are so good and an incredible encouragement to us in times of uncertainty and there are loads of them in scripture. Even more incredible is that Paul assures us in 2 Corinthians 1:20 that every single promise that God has ever made in His Word, has been credited to our account, when we put our trust in Jesus and were adopted into His family. This means that we can scour the Bible for promises and when we find the one that speaks hope, life, peace and joy to our hearts, for today, we can hold it with confidence knowing, 'this is God's promise for me today'.

So, the promise I want to share with you today is found in Isaiah 26:3-4. Perhaps you know the verse instinctively but if not go ahead and grab your Bible and have a read and then read it again. It is pretty cool right? So, what's the promise exactly?

Well God promises to keep you in perfect peace. In Hebrew the words 'perfect peace' read '*shalom, shalom*', the repetition communicates intensity. As one commentator from a previous generation put it, 'Understand dear soul, that it is thy privilege to live inside the double doors of God's loving care. He says to thee, 'Peace, peace'. If one assurance is not enough, He will follow it with a second and a third'. I guess the equivalent New Testament expression is the promise Paul captures in Philippians 4:7 where he guarantees that the peace that passes all understanding will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Of course, if we are paying close attention to these promises we will notice that they are conditional. God is promising to bless us with peace, but it requires our participation. In the Philippians passage the condition is to not be anxious about anything but in everything with thanksgiving, present our requests to God. In short, worry about nothing and pray about everything.

In the Isaiah passage the condition is slightly different. The promise of 'peace, peace' is for those whose minds are steadfast or stayed upon the Lord. There are two things we need to pay attention to here. Firstly, it is our minds that need to be steadfast, not our souls or heart or spirit but our minds (Matthew 22:37, Romans 12:2, Colossians 3:2). The idea of steadfast and stayed here comes from the root word, 'to prop' and the Strong's Dictionary puts other words alongside it such as lean upon, take hold of, uphold, rest self, set self,

stand fast, stay and sustain. When you put these two ideas together it begs the question: What is sustaining your mind? What is filling your mind these days? What is your mind established upon these days? Don't rush at this point but take a moment to answer those questions - what has been occupying your head space lately?

We are living in a season of turmoil and a lot of uncertainty, experiencing things that are new and this can be unsettling. I would say it is impossible not to experience worry, concern or be a little fearful. The question is when these emotions and concerns fill our minds, what will we do with them? Allow them to run amok? Or will we stay our minds, lean our minds, rest our minds, set our minds on the goodness of God. The One who has promised to never leave nor forsake us, the One who has called and adopted us into His family, the One who says, 'surely I am with you'. If we can do the latter, and it will take discipline and practice, lots of discipline and practice (trust me I know!), then we will lay hold of this promise and know a perfect peace that transcends all understanding, even though we are surrounded by turmoil.

I am praying for you, each day I am praying for you and today my prayer is, 'May you set your mind on things above and know shalom, shalom'. I am missing you all greatly and looking forward to the times when we will go up to the house of the Lord together to worship.

Grace be with you!  
Stu

#KeepTrusting #KeepConnected #Call4Support

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

Thursday: Unpack the Preach discussion from 7:45pm.

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).

**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/UC0lqZEJkxDYGSQCw6onJw/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/>

### **Advance notices:**

**Keswick Convention** are taking part in a new five-day online event. The event will feature online teaching, sung worship and seminars for children, youth and adults. It takes place from 27-31 July. For more details click here: [Virtually Keswick Convention](#)

**DREAMING STREAMING THE IMPOSSIBLE** for *Ages 12-18, Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020 from 7pm and Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020 from 12pm.* Gathering online with worship, talks, time of prayer and a bunch of fun stuff featuring speakers such as Mike Pilavachi (Soul Survivor). To find out more and to book, visit <https://dreamingtheimpossible.org/>

**LIMITLESS FESTIVAL** for *Ages 11-17 and 17-30, from Friday 8<sup>th</sup> August 2020 from 8pm to 9pm and Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2020 from 10am to 9.10pm.* The online festival for youth and young adults includes 3 main session messages, songs from the worship band and a range of live seminars including topics such as life with God, life Online and life at Uni. To find out more visit [https://www.elim.org.uk/Groups/341609/Limitless\\_Festival\\_2020.aspx](https://www.elim.org.uk/Groups/341609/Limitless_Festival_2020.aspx)