

Kingswood Baptist Church,
Codenhall Straight,
Kingswood,
Basildon,
Essex,
SS16 5DH.



Telephone: 01268 271707

Email: admin@kingswoodbaptistchurch.co.uk

Website: www.kingswoodbaptistchurch.co.uk

Registered Charity: 1131656

Senior Minister: Stuart Elmes
Associate Minister: Nick Braithwaite

Letters to the Church during COVID-19: 12 August 2020

Dear brothers and sisters,

I hope this finds you well, keeping safe and not melting in the heat of the last week or so. It rained briefly last night and the brief coolness and refreshing that it brought into the house was a real blessing. Which got me thinking about the presence of God and how often in Scripture the Lord promises to be with his people. It is a promise worth meditating on and savouring particularly in a season like this. There are so many things which are uncertain, but of one thing we can be sure - the Lord of all creation has promised to be with us through it all. Go ahead and grab your Bible and check out some of the occasions where God promises to be with His people. A promise made to Moses when he was face with the mammoth task of leading God's people out of Egypt (Exodus 3:12), to Joshua prior to taking hold of the Promised Land (Joshua 1:5), to the people of God as they came out of exile (Isaiah 43:2), to the church as the risen Lord Jesus commissioned His disciples (Matthew 28:20) and as an encouragement to the church to live content (Hebrews 13:5). So, what refreshing does the presence of God bring into our lives as we set our hearts and minds upon Him? I can think of at least four things.

The first one is refreshing peace which according to Paul in Philippians 4:7 has the power to guard our hearts and our minds. It is a sense of wholeness, well-being and contentment because we know that God is in control and present in our circumstances, no matter how dire they may seem.

The second is refreshing joy which comes to us because we know that the Lord who is with us, is the Lord who has redeemed us. Isaiah 35 describes the joy of the redeemed returning to Jerusalem saying, *'They will enter Zion with singing, everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee'*. I love that idea, that gladness and joy will run ahead of me, because I have been redeemed by the Lord and He is with me.

The third is refreshing protection. It can be utterly exhausting to try and counter and combat all the threats we may encounter in life and to live in constant fear that 'something' may go wrong. But when we know God's presence it gives us courage and faith to face life's uncertainties. Even though we may pass through rivers and fire (Isaiah 43:2), just knowing He is with us will sustain us.

The fourth (and there are probably loads more) is refreshing security. When Jesus said, *'surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age'* He meant it. But that 'age' is not just a promise for our earthly life, rather it is a promise which extends to the life to come. As a follower of Jesus, we have refreshing security because our lives are hidden in Christ with God. It is eternal security. One day we will pass from life to death and into new life and at every moment, He will be there. He truly will, never leave us or forsake us.

Grab your journal for a moment and answer this question, 'What refreshing does the presence of God bring into my life?' You will be surprised at the list you come up with and it will no doubt encourage you to seek His face more and more. It has just started raining again and it is cool and refreshing. May you know the even greater refreshing of His presence in all you do.

Grace be with you friends!

Stu

#KeepTrusting #KeepConnected #Call4Support

Notices and Upcoming events on Zoom:

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 back copies of Stu's daily mini devotional series 'Therefore..' and 'You are....' and our sermons each week.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0lqZEJkxDYGSeCQCw6onJw/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:

CAP Student Money Course: Starting university this year or returning? Sign up for a free course, held on Zoom, to help you manage your money better and learn to budget, save and spend well. To register contact Lyn Knowles/Paul Dorrington. Details: 6:30-8:30pm, Friday 7th August, Wednesday 12th August and Friday 4th September.