

Feltham Evangelical Church *Newsletter: February 2012*

A Bible-based church making known the Christian Faith

Calendar

w/c 29th January

29th 9.30.a.m. - Lord's Supper (Marc Khunan)
 29th 11.00.a.m. - Morning Worship (Philip Venables)
 29th 11.15 a.m. - Sunday School (Trish and Sheila)
 31st 5.45p.m. - Lighthouse
 1st 7.30.p.m. - Prayer / Bible Study
 2nd 6.30.a.m. Prayer Meeting
 3rd 10.00 a.m. to midday - Open House

w/c 5th February

5th 9.30.a.m. - Lord's Supper (Philip Venables)
 5th 11:00.a.m. - Morning Service (Philip Venables)
 5th 11.15 a.m. - Sunday School (Trish and Comfort)
 5th 5.30 p.m. - Together (Walking by the Spirit)
 7th 5.45p.m. - Lighthouse
 8th 7.30.p.m. - Prayer / Bible Study (Robert Goodgame)
 9th 6.30.a.m. - Prayer Meeting
 10th 10.00 a.m. to midday - Open House
 11th 10.30.a.m. - Town Centre Evangelism
 11th 7.00 p.m. - Feltham Bible Focus (Andy Paterson - What is our Mission?)

w/c 12th February

12th 9.30.a.m. - Lord's Supper (Andy Paterson)
 12th 11.00.a.m. - Morning Service (Andy Paterson)
 12th 11.15 a.m. - Sunday School (Sheila and Comfort)
 12th 1.00.p.m. - Fellowship Lunch

12th 2.00.p.m. - Afternoon Service (Andy Paterson - Growing together as a multi-cultural church).

14th 9.30.a.m. - Prayer Meeting
 15th 7.30.p.m. - Prayer / Bible Study
 16th 6.30.a.m.- Prayer Meeting
 17th 10.00.a.m. to midday - Open House

w/c 19th February

19th 9.30.a.m. - Prayer and Praise (Robert Goodgame)
 19th 11.00.a.m. - Morning Service including Lord's Supper (Philip Venables)
 19th 11.15 a.m. - Sunday School (Trish and Diana)
 19th 5.30.p.m. - Equip (Why is there so much slaughter of peoples in the Old Testament?)
 21st 5.45p.m. - Lighthouse
 22nd 7.30.p.m. - Prayer / Bible Study
 23rd 6.30.a.m. - Prayer Meeting
 24th 10.00 a.m. to midday - Open House

w/c 26th February

26th 9.30.a.m. - Lord's Supper (Philip Venables)
 26th 11.00.a.m. - Morning Worship (Philip Venables)
 26th 11.15 a.m. - Sunday School (Trish and Sheila)
 28th 9.30.a.m. - Prayer Meeting
 28th 5.45p.m. - Lighthouse
 29th 7.30.p.m. - Prayer / Bible Study (Phil Symons)
 1st (Mar) 6.30.a.m. - Prayer Meeting
 2nd 10.00 a.m. to midday - Open House

Notes

Feltham Bible Focus this month challenges us to consider "What is our Mission?" Andy Paterson who is Director of Mission at the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches is due to be the preacher. Come along if you can and consider what we are to be about as a church.

Fellowship Lunch Mr Paterson is also due to be with us on the following Sunday, February 12th. On that day we plan to have a fellowship lunch together. This will be on a bring-and-share basis. At the afternoon service on that day Mr Paterson will seek to help us to fulfil our calling to be a multi-cultural church.

Together On February 5th we intend to seek to strengthen one another as we discuss what it is to "walk by the Spirit".

Christianity Explored is a course which seeks to introduce people to Jesus Christ through the study of Mark's gospel. If you would be interested in doing this study course then please mention this to Zach.

Flowers Do you want to contribute to the flowers displayed in church each week? Then please decide which week you want, put your name on the list in the entrance hall and pass your money to Trish at the appropriate time.

Calvary Baptist Church have Dr Bob Jones III from America preaching on the evening of Saturday February 4th at 7.30.p.m.

Equip this month is due look at how we answer the question: Why is there so much slaughter of peoples in the Old Testament? This is due to be on February 19th at 5.30.p.m.

Spiritual Notes **Heaven is not the issue**

As Christians, we have marvellous things to look forward to. Heaven is our destiny and that is incredible. But when we are thinking of what we have to look forward to, are we right to concentrate on our expectation of being in heaven? When looking at the Scriptures it appears that the great longing of the people of God was not to be in heaven, but rather to be with the One who is our LORD and Saviour; Jesus Christ. To put it another way we can truly delight in looking forward to being in heaven. However, heaven is **no** heaven if there is no Lord Jesus there. So desiring to have heaven, but not longing to be with Christ is to fail to grasp the fullness of what God has in store for us.

As Christians we are now possessors of eternal life. John says **He who believes in the Son has eternal life** (John 3:36a). Eternal life is, in a sense, not something we look forward to, but something we have now. The essence of this new life is summed up by our LORD, in words used as He spoke to His Father, as being **that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent** (John 17:3). Eternal life is about us knowing God and Jesus Christ in a living relationship. Now through the life of faith we can know

Jesus more and more. This relationship develops and strengthens through prayer and study of the Word, Thereby we can grow stronger and stronger in the possession of eternal life.

But one day this life of faith will be transformed into a life of sight. One day we will be caught away to be with our Saviour. Life now is about growing **in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ** (2 Peter 3:18a); this is how we enjoy eternal life now. When we are taken to glory the experience changes, but the goal does not. Although, in glory we will see our Saviour the goal of growing to know Him still remains. The fact that Jesus Christ should be the focus of our lives now and will be then is seen as wholly appropriate given that Peter continues by saying that **to him be glory both now and forever! Amen** (2. Pet. 3:18b).

When we look at the worship scene in heaven in Revelation 5, we see there the confirmation that Jesus is the centre of attention. John says: **I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the centre of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders** (Rev 5:6a). And the massed ranks of redeemed sinners and glorified angels are all singing His praise (see Rev. 5:6-12).

Jesus Christ is described by Paul as being our hope (see 1 Tim. 1:1). Everything we have to look forward to is in Him and because of Him. He releases all the blessings of God into our lives. Accordingly, it makes sense that what we are looking forward to is not heaven itself, but rather being with Jesus Christ our LORD.

Consider then some of the things Paul says. He says **I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far** (Phil. 1:23b). He would prefer to be **away from the body and at home with the Lord** (2 Cor. 5:8b). He reminds the Thessalonians that the return of Jesus will mean **we will be with the Lord forever** (1 Thess. 4:17b). Further, in respect of the Thessalonians he records that they **turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven** (1 Thess. 1:9b-10a). John also concurs with Paul when he says; **we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is** (1 John 3:2b). These scriptures relentlessly drive us to focus on the glorious expectation of being with our LORD Jesus and not just in heaven.

This is a great corrective to all sorts of false notions that we can have about our future and heaven itself. When we start to think about our future we can too easily:

- think about heaven as some kind of ultimate holiday location. If this is the case then we are thinking of heaven a wonderfully pleasant place to experience, but nothing beyond that.
- think of heaven merely as a better option than going to hell. Truly we should flee from the wrath to come and that wrath is real. But if this is all we think about then heaven is merely a “pew” place. It is a place where we just think “Phew I am glad I’m here and not in hell!”
- get involved in pondering upon who we will know in heaven. Will we recognise our relatives? What about recognizing Paul or Spurgeon or Lloyd-Jones?
- think about what we will be doing there. Will we have this job or that job? Scripture says **his servants will serve him** (Rev.22:3b). What a privilege! Do we need to know more than that?

We must emphasize that the Scriptures never dwell upon the four issues mentioned above. Rather, the focus in scripture is that we will be with our Saviour. We will be worshipping Him and glorifying His Name and that of our great Father God.

Given these things are we really helping a fellow believer, as they approach death, when we say “You will soon be in heaven and we will meet again there?” In saying this are we really encouraging them? Rather, what we should be focussing on is the great anticipation of being “with the LORD”. That is what the New Testament encourages us towards. Moreover, it is what our Saviour encouraged us to think upon. He said to his disciples **“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am** (John 14:1-3).

These words of our Saviour not only comfort us as regards to being in His presence, but they delight us with strong hints that he wants us to be with Himself. Sometimes we can long to be with someone, but we are not sure that they want us to be with them! John 17:24 removes once and for all any doubt that He wants us to be with Himself. Here our Saviour says to His Father concerning us **Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory**. Being with the one we love and knowing He wants us there; now that is surely something to long for.

For the true believer it is our everything to be with Christ Jesus our LORD. Let us then seize our Saviour's exhortation and resist being troubled. We are going to be with our great Saviour and to be with Him forever. And it does not get any better than that!!