

Feltham Evangelical Church

A Bible-based church making known the Christian Faith

Newsletter: March 2017

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Calendar

W/c 26th Feb

Sun 26th 9.30.a.m. - Lord's Supper (Marc Khunan)

Sun 26th 11.00.a.m. - Morning Worship (Philip Venables)

Sun 26th 11.15.a.m. - Sunday School (Sheila)

Tues 28th 9.30.a.m - Prayer Meeting

Tues 28th 5.00.p.m. - Young People's Bible Study

Tues 28th 6.45.p.m. - YY Group

Wed 1st 7.30.p.m. - Prayer / Bible Study (Is. 48:1-11)

Thurs 2nd 6.30.a.m. - Prayer Meeting

Fri 3rd 10.00 a.m. to 12.00.p.m. - Open House

Sat 4th 11.00.a.m. - Evangelism

W/c 5th March

Sun 5th 9.30.a.m. - Lord's Supper (Philip Venables)

Sun 5th 11.00.a.m. - Morning Worship (Philip Venables)

Sun 5th 11.15.a.m - Sunday School (Trish)

Sun 5th 5.30.p.m. - Together.

Tues 7th 9.30.a.m. - Prayer Meeting

Tues 7th 5.00.p.m. - Young People's Bible Study

Tues 7th 6.45.p.m. - YY Group

Tues 7th 8.00.p.m. - Elders Meeting

Wed 8th 7.30.p.m. - Prayer / Report (Istvan Salanki)

Thurs 9th 6.30.a.m. - Prayer Meeting

Fri 10th 10.00 a.m. to 12.00.p.m. - Open House

Sat 11th 7.00.p.m - Feltham Bible Focus; What is an Evangelical? (Graham King – Stanwell Congregational Church).

W/c 12th March

Sun 12th 9.30.a.m. - Lord's Supper (Philip Venables)

Sun 12th 11.00.a.m. - Morning Service (Philip Venables)

Sun 12th 11.15.a.m - Sunday School (Sheila)

Sun 12th 1.00.p.m. - Fellowship Lunch

Tues 14th 9.30.a.m - Prayer Meeting

Tues 14th 5.00.p.m. - Young People's Bible Study

Tues 14th 6.45.p.m. - YY Group

Wed 15th 7.30.p.m. - Mission Prayer / Bible Study (Is. 48:12-22)

Thurs 16th 6.30.a.m. - Prayer Meeting

Fri 17th 10.00 a.m. to 12.00.p.m. - Open House

Sat 18th 9.00.a.m. - Cleaning and Maintenance

W/c 19th March

Sun 19th 9.30.a.m. - Prayer and Praise (Marc Khunan)

Sun 19th 11.00.a.m. - Morning Worship including Lord's Supper (Philip Venables)

Sun 19th 11.15.a.m - Sunday School (Sheila)

Sun 19th 5.30.p.m. - Equip (Sanctification)

Tues 21st 9.30.a.m. - Prayer Meeting

Tues 21st 5.00.p.m. - Young People's Bible Study

Tues 21st 6.45.p.m. - YY Group

Tues 21st 8.00.p.m. - Elders Meeting

Wed 22nd 7.30.p.m. - Prayer / Bible Study (Is. 49:1-13)

Thurs 23rd 6.30.a.m. - Prayer Meeting

Fri 24th 10.00 a.m. to 12.00.p.m. - Open House

Fri 24th 9.00.p.m. to Sat 25th 1.00.a.m. - Revive

W/c 26th March

Sun 26th 9.30.a.m. - Lord's Supper (Paul Biddle)

Sun 26th 11.00.a.m. - Morning Worship (Paul Biddle)

Sun 26th 11.15.a.m - Sunday School (Diana)

Tues 28th 9.30.a.m. - Prayer Meeting

Tues 28th 5.00.p.m. - Young People's Bible Study

Tues 28th 6.45.p.m. - YY Group

Wed 29th 7.30.p.m. - Prayer / Bible Study (Mark Henderson)

Thurs 30th 6.30.a.m. - Prayer Meeting

Thurs 30th 7.30.p.m. - Feltham Journey Discussion

Fri 31st 10.00 a.m. to 12.00.p.m. - Open House

Sat 1st (April) 11.00.a.m. - Evangelism

News

Saturday Seminar On April 1st a seminar is due to take place at Amyand Park Chapel on the subject of 'The Holy Spirit'. This is from 10.30am to 12.30pm. The speaker is Geoff Thomas. We are invited to join with them on this occasion.

Equip On March 19th we plan to look at sanctification. What is it to be sanctified? Does sanctification matter at all or is a big word we can just ignore. Come and find out at 5.30.p.m.

Fellowship Lunch On March 12th we are planning to have a “bring-and-share” fellowship meal.

Food Preparation It is good for us to be able to share meals together as a church. We thank the LORD for His good blessing upon us during these times. One caution we need to continually have in mind is that of making sure the food we share together is appropriately prepared. Let us therefore make sure that any cooked food is thoroughly cooked.

Feltham Bible Focus is due to take place on March 11th. Graham King from Stanwell Congregational Church is due to be with us. He will be preaching on the issue of “What is an Evangelical?”

Clocks change On 26th March, the clocks go forward one hour. So please make sure that you alter yours so that you can be in church on time on that day.

Mobile Phones Please make sure these are turned off during the services so there is no unnecessary disturbance.

Spiritual Notes

The Older Son

The older son is a puzzle to many who look at the parable of the lost in Luke 15. Many see him as being justified in being miffed at the big reception given for his wayward brother. But is this the right assessment? What are we to make of him?

We must notice, initially, that there are not three parables here in Luke 15 (note the singular in v3). It is all one parable. That parable is all about lost-ness. Further, by way of introduction let us establish who the Lord is addressing in Luke 15. In vv1-2 we have two groups, namely "the tax collectors and sinners" and then the "Pharisees and teachers of the law". They were all there listening to what the Lord was saying. Tellingly, the parable is going to teach us that both are lost. The tax collectors and sinners are lost in a "far-off" way and the Pharisees and teachers of the law are lost in a "near-to-home" way. But they are both lost; both groups are totally lost.

The first two parts of the parable are about the lost sheep and the lost coin. Both of them are lost and need to be found. The sheep is lost out in the far country (far-off) and the coin is lost at home (near-to-home). But again both of them are lost. We then have two sons (v11). The first son clearly follows the pattern of being lost as is demonstrated by him going out into the far country. Like the sheep he is lost far away from home; in the far country. Wonderfully he was found as he came to his senses and returned home. Which all sets us up for the second son. Everything has been lost so far and so we should expect that he is lost too. From what we have established thus far, the suggested anticipation would be that he is lost close to home, like the coin.

We ask then the question: how is the elder son lost? There are four issues that I want to point out to show his lost-ness:

1. He has no delight in being in the father's presence. He says to his father concerning his time with him: "**Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders....**" (Luke 15:29a). The time which he had spent with his father he considered to have been drudgery. "*Slaving away; keeping the rules*" is the best he can say about it. He makes no mention of how wonderful it was being with his father. When we see this we start to discern how the older son represents the religious mindset which just focuses on keeping the rules so that the deity they serve will be happy with them. This is just like the Pharisees and teachers of the law. It can also so easily be us.
2. He has no appreciation of how wonderful it is to be at home with the father. To the complaining son the father says in v31: "**My son,**" the father said, "**you are always with me, and everything I have is yours.**" To be with his father and have all that belonged to the father should have been utopia for him. Instead he was thinking not about what he had but what he did not have. This attitude is revealed when he says that **you never gave me even**

a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends (v29b). Again here is the religiously lost person grudgingly going to church and always feeling that they are missing out through this religion thing. They have no appreciation of how wonderful it is to be with God.

3. He has no appreciation of grace. Religion as represented by the older son (and seen in the Pharisees and the teachers of the law) is about keeping the rules to keep God on-side. There is no appreciation of how grace can be shown to the far off. If the older son appreciated how wonderful the presence of the father was he would have:

- realised how terrible it was for the younger brother to be away from home because he was missing out on being in the father's presence.
- pitied the younger brother for going off wasting his life in such a pathetic way.
- been thrilled to see him come back.
- delighted in his brother coming back and in the father receiving him back.
- thought that a big party to celebrate his brother's return was the least that could be done

A delight in the father's presence is what drives evangelism. We don't envy those who are consuming their energies in sin. Rather we pity them because we know how much they are missing out on with God. So we long for them to know grace and come back to the Father who is our God.

4. He has no appreciation of the heart of his father. It seems from v20b that the Father had continually been longing for the younger son to return. He wanted the joy of a returning son who had come back to his presence. It is interesting to note that verses 7 and 10 both speak of rejoicing in the presence of God (heaven / angels of God). The older son has no appreciation of the heart of the father. So when the younger son returned he refused to join in the celebration of grace. In v28 we read '**The elder brother became angry and refused to go in.**' Here is the religious mind who cannot appreciate how a messed up sinner could be received by God. He has no appreciation of the heart of God. He may seem to spend time with God, but the fact that He does not know the heart of God shows that he has no relationship with God.

The second son is lost in the sense that he has no affinity with his father and the grace and goodness of his father. This is reflective of the religious person who does not appreciate that there is a God who is gracious and good Father. The religious person just wants to keep the rules.

The second son was as lost as the sheep, coin and prodigal then. He is a picture of all religious people who appear saved, but are completely lost. Are you like that? If so you need a Saviour.