

the use of social media to attack & abuse people. Can this nation be changed? Can this nation be saved? Absolutely it can be. By God acting through people who call upon Him in the day of trouble. If you look you can see it has been done before. Who knows perhaps you are the one or two or three through whom God will act to do so again.

It happened in Ireland. In 1857 4 young Irishmen, James McQuilkin, John Wallace, Robert Carlisle and Jeremiah Meneely began a weekly prayer meeting in a village school near Kells, not far from Ballymena. McQuilkin prayed for a spiritual companion with whom he could pray and God gave him one. Those 2 became 4. And then a network of prayer meetings spread over the district, praying in deep solemnity, yet with a bursting earnestness for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and for the saving of many. Over the next months from Belfast to Dublin the whole nation was touched. Pubs closed. Horse racing lost supporters. Judges found themselves with no cases to try. Children were saved and saved other children.

We do not have time to speak of John Knox; George Whitfield; the Wesleys; William Booth; John Perry, Daniel Rowlands, Howell Harris, Richard Owen, the Joshua Brothers, Evan Roberts, William Seymour who were all used by God to change churches and save nations. All Christians depending only on God, having a sure hope to obtain what they are asking for. Nothing, as Knox preached, offends God more than when people ask doubting whether God will grant their petitions. In so doing they are doubting if God is true, if He is mighty, if He is good. Christians whose hearts are grief-stricken for the state of the world and the church. People who are willing in days of trouble to call out to God that He would deliver. People who will persevere, even if God does not come in the speed of their desiring. People who know that this is the good work God has prepared in advance for them to do. Maybe you are such a one, maybe God has been shaping your life to make you ready for this purpose; maybe He is waiting and wanting to work through you to deliver us, to deliver the children, to deliver the nation.

I pray that God is speaking into someone's heart and soul and spirit stirring you to call upon Him, I pray He will strengthen you with power through His Spirit, filling you with Christ with the fullness of God so you will trust Him to revive the church, save the children, and restore our nation to Himself. By your partnership with Him may the name of Jesus Christ no longer be an expletive expressing shock but once again be revered as the name at which every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. May God's Kingdom come, may His will be done on earth as it is heaven, even today. Amen.



**Polesworth**  
BAPTIST CHURCH

Sharing JESUS in  
*word and action*

**From Marah Bitterness to  
Berakah Blessings**  
Psalm 50 v1-15 and 23

### **Reflection [1] Intro**

God is in utter control of His universe. God needs nothing from us. Yet God calls us to play our part. There's a strange thing about God strange yet comforting, God deliberately limits His intervention in the world to partner with us. God gives us works to do to achieve His purposes. In Psalm 50 we see that God is not a God who stays aloof from us in distant holiness, He gets involved in our lives, for His purposes and for our blessing. But He comes or stays away according to His will, not ours. And when He comes, as Kraus says, He may bring salvation – or downfall. Which of these it will be does not depend on our religious good works. What does touch God's compassion is our confession that we have forgotten Him and leant upon ourselves rather than Him. A turning back to Him, with praise & thanksgiving, for we have not yet perished. And a calling out to Him, seeing Him as the One who alone can help us in the day of our trouble, in the face our worries. And doing so without regard for our respectability and worthiness. But only trusting Him, seeking His delivering, saving care.

And 4<sup>th</sup> in our blessing we honour Him, by offering our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to Him, no longer living as everyone else does for we have found the way of salvation. In facing our days of trouble, let the Father's promise to us be central to our living as His people.

### **Reflection [2] Call upon the Lord in the day of change!**

Church, comfort and change. When we find a church where we feel we can be comfortable we stay, we continue and we become a part of the comfort of the church. We become the familiar face, the fellowship companion, the warm welcome who helps others grow into the comfort of our church.

Then one day we face changes that we did not see coming and very likely do not want to make. Coronavirus comes along and we lose our weekly fellowship, our connection with each other, our place and people and style in our worship. Through time and circumstance, treasured people and beloved activities and the comfort they gave us cease to be. We find ourselves moving into the strange position of being comfortable in a place made more and more uncomfortable by change.

And we may forget that once the good old days were new days for us and the good old people were new faces to us and that those days were also days of trouble. When we reminisce about the good old days may we recall that it was in coming through their trouble in togetherness in God's safe keeping that we found our comfort, making them the good old days. In this world, Jesus tells us in John 16:35 we "will have trouble." Then He adds "But take heart! I have overcome the world." How did He do that? By facing His day of trouble through prayer and obedience.

Hebrews 5 tells us "During the days of Jesus' life on earth, He offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the One who could save Him from death, and He was heard because of His reverent submission. Although He was a son, He learned obedience from what He suffered and once made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

And going on to c7, as our permanent priest Jesus is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them. And on to c10, since we have such a great priest let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, and let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds. And on to c11 through faith God's OT people conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and became powerful in battles, both physical & spiritual, submitting to the Father's discipline, producing a harvest of righteousness and peace. And on to today for we are now God's instruments for doing good, called to imitate Christ in carrying out God's Kingdom will, people blessed to be a blessing to others. A vacancy is a time of change, a day of trouble, and therefore a call to trust in God's promise that He will deliver

### **Reflection [3] Call upon the Lord over the children!**

Have you heard of the Christian charity: Operation Mobilisation. George Verwer was one of its 3 founders and the man whose vision drove it along to become an international agency aimed at evangelising the world. [A short video on what OM does.] Why am I telling you about OM? Because of Dorothea Clapp.

According to her obituary in the Evangelical News 1990 she and her husband Robert lived in Ramsay, some 4 minutes from the local High School, which George Verwer attended as well as their own 5 children. Robert had been the Sunday School superintendant at their church until he was sacked, because he was considered to be too focused on the Bible!

These were WW2 years. Petrol was rationed, so rather than driving to another church, Dorothea and Robert started a church in their home. Dorothea also had a

great burden in her heart for overseas missions and prayed specifically that some children from the school and her home church would become missionaries. All of which she did as a house-wife and mother, and caring for her own mother, sick with a longterm illness. Dorothea's son Daniel, knew George Verwer at school. Daniel openly kept his bible on top of all his school books. That intrigued George. His sister began to attend the Bible Club that was led by Daniel, that led to George joining the club and to his mother putting George on what she called her 'Holy Ghost Hit List'.

In an interview in later years George observed: There I was enjoying my sin and this prayer warrior turned my life upside down! This Woman of Prayer put me on her Holy Ghost hit list and sent me a spiritual hand grenade with the pin pulled out – the Gospel of John in the post! This led to me surrendering my life to Christ at a Billy Graham meeting in New York in 1955. As I was the student president, I was able to speak to the entire student body of my High School and over 120 fellow students came to Christ. I began witnessing on the streets of New York City and then the Lord laid Mexico on my heart. [and later OM]

Many Churches today and soon it may be the majority of Churches have few if any children aged under 16 in regular attendance. The majority of children in the UK today only know 'Jesus Christ' as a phrase for expressing emotions. Does that distress you? When lockdown ends and we re-start the cafe, we're also making a new start with reaching out to children and their families, setting up a toddler group in the Hall, calling it Sonbeam – spelt with an O.

Would you be willing to pray for the leaders so they are helped, led and enabled by God to share the good news of the gospel with the children?  
Would you be willing to pray for the children, adding your prayers to the prayers of the leaders, so that the children may come to know Jesus as their Saviour and Lord?

This is a day of trouble for the children of our land. Will you cry out for the Lord to deliver them? Ask who the children are, ask the leaders what is needed. Could you in prayer be a kingdom blessing to the children of our communities?

You may never see what God will do for them but you can look forward to one day seeing and greeting the results in the new creation. And what a joyful day that will be.

### **Reflection [4] Call upon the Lord for the nation**

Can a nation be changed? Can a nation be saved? Yes. But not by us. God saves. With Christian eyes we see a nation deep in trouble. Look at the number of divorces; look at the knife crime; look at the reality of modern slavery; look at