

'GATHERED TO GO'

St T's Weekly Devotional || Wednesday 13th May 2020



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Things are crazy at the minute, aren't they? We're all desperate to get out of our houses, but, at the same time so many people are filled with fear at the thought of interacting with others. On Sunday I found myself sitting in front of the T.V. watching the PM's statement with very mixed emotions. Were we going to be plunged back into normal life and risk a 'second peak', or almost even worse was nothing going to change and we'd have to continue in lockdown with no sign of hope or light at the end of the tunnel? At the end of the PM's address I found myself feeling just as conflicted. Relieved but also angry. Mostly angry though, I have to confess, and purely for selfish reasons. I mean who wants unlimited exercise? My increase to 1 hour a day was making me feel like Chesterfields answer to Joe Wicks (the fitness Guru). What I really wanted to do was reunite with family, friends and once again to gather in person with my church family to worship God.

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."- Matthew 28:16-20

Later that night, as I fed Caleb his night time bottle, I decided to catch up on some of my devotional viewing. Since lockdown started I've made a bit of a habit of watching KXC's weekday worship during this night feed slot, but I'd gotten a little behind. As I watched an episode from earlier in the week in which Pete Hughes interviewed his sister-in-law Rachel, I found myself massively challenged. She spoke about how God had been showing her the positives in the difficult time, how He was using this time to force their church out of their gathered space and into their community, and how He was at work in their area and in the UK. As she spoke it was like a light was switched on, I found I'd been too focused on the challenges and difficulties of ministry and life during lockdown and had become completely blinded to seeing God at work. As I began to open my eyes I began to see more and more amazing stories. One paper contained the headline 'British people turn to prayer as one in four tune into religious services online.' It continued to say 'young people lead resurgence in faith.' The Christian bookstore Eden reported 55% increase in Bible sales.

Coincidentally, the passage that I felt led to base that week's kids and youth @ home services on was the great commission. I've continued to contemplate this passage and the words of Rachel Hughes since, and feel challenged to look for the kingdom possibilities in this time, ways to continue to reach out in love to others with the Good News of Christ. Jesus prayed 'Your Kingdom come, Your will be done.' Is that our prayer too? Are we seeking His Kingdom in this season; in our own lives, in our families, but also in our community? Jesus told His disciples to GO and make more disciples. It's easy, especially in this strange and challenging season, for our gathered times of worship to become the highlight of our spiritual week. But perhaps as we find new ways to **GATHER**, we can also find new ways to **GO**.

Off the back of this I made 3 pledges to myself.

- To pray each week for (the same) 3 people who do not have a relationship with Him yet.
- To let these people know I'm praying for them in this crazy time, asking if there's anything specific I can pray for.
- Each week to invite at least 1 person to tune into Church @ Home, come along to Alpha, or join us for a quiz night.

Perhaps this week you might like to join me in taking up all or 1 of these pledges?



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