

ADORE TALK 25 NOVEMBER 2023
RIVERS OF LIVING WATER – BEING A CHANNEL OF JESUS' BLESSING

HEARTS OF FLESH, FROM WHICH RIVERS OF LIVING WATER FLOW

TALK BY RUSS FAIRMAN, drawing upon his experience of outreach missions, living prophetically and what he has learned about the need for a heart of flesh

INTRODUCTION

In the context of Rivers of Living Waters - This talk is focused on our hearts, I want us to get in touch with a desire for a heart of flesh, to consciously bring it to a place where it is so full of compassion, that we compulsively love, and through these hearts of flesh, God can pour out his Living Waters to bring life to others, through the power of his Holy Spirit.

There seems to be an unattainable price to pay for a heart of flesh, submission of our will, sacrifice of our self, putting others needs before our own, even loving those who hate us. The world would say...Why would we want to do that?

Well, I believe it's actually a matter of life or death, And in this life, to experience the overwhelming unbearable joy of God's love is to share in his love of others: for that we need a heart of flesh and that takes some refining. And Who's going do that? well, God - if we let him!

Thinking maybe what God uses to form us, are not only the joys and blessings, but the struggles we've been brought through by our Lord Jesus Christ, that can be so hard to see in the moment. Some never accept the good that God brings from the difficulties of life - it can be a stumbling block to faith.

So my prayer for us today is: Lord may we never be tested in the refiner's fire, beyond what we can stand, and through the power of your Holy Spirit, we would dare ask and receive a heart of flesh, bit by bit, day by day. May this day mark our renewed commitment to giving over our lives to you, for the sake of others.

Believe, repent & proclaim. In the name of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit

The Reading Adore have give us for today's session is (John 7:37-39)

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive.

ADORE TALK 25 NOVEMBER 2023
RIVERS OF LIVING WATER – BEING A CHANNEL OF JESUS' BLESSING

Following Fr Gareth's wonderful ADORE talk last Month on discerning God's will for our lives, I want to share a little on what I have experienced stepping into my God Given Dream, and whatever that might be for me or you, it will ultimately be a place of God's continued refinement of your **heart** and to become a channel of His love for others.

What an absolute privilege and joy to be chosen and invited to be little **channels of living water** for others, empowered by The Holy Spirit to do as Jesus did, bringing people ALIVE into His Kingdom, and serving the poor.

A heart full of compassion compels us to love unreservedly, compulsively and leads us to have 'Bold Holiness.' To see and love everyone as a brother or sister, and to get angry with injustice. Heart speaks to heart, this is the channel of living water that brings the Good News to others - *so I am thinking its better to give a homeless person some food or a hot drink, he then might just listen to your prayer after. What use is a clanging gong or an echo as St Paul puts it, we need this heart of flesh.*

I want us to be freed today of any fear or anxiety about the evil around us, or how the world is trying to suppress us. To Stay in the Victory Triumph Parade as St Paul puts it. Step out in faith and acts of mercy; with courage, let the waters of living water flow out of our heart, we have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

You're on this retreat, so its doesn't need prophetic vision to say that you have already been chosen, but have you, **have I**, given an RSVP with a whole hearted YES to the invitation to the banquet, put on appropriate spiritual clothes, and stepped out the door to get on our way to be with the Lord, allow him to refine our hearts of stone into hearts of flesh, and get on with job, the Great Commission, to make disciples of the nations?

Maybe you're thinking about your response to the invitation: "Well yes.. kind of,...maybe not wholeheartedly..." and if you shouted "YES I have," good on you!

For those who don't know me, I am married to Deirdre, we live in Southampton, and have 5 children, 13 grandchildren, just a regular guy making plenty of mistakes, bumbling my way through life, under the watchful eye and guiding hand of my creator. Falling into rather than seeking all manner of lovely areas of outreach and service... So without calling on wisdom, I have filled my life to the brim, Supporting my Family as Dad and Grandad, Marriage Encounter, CHARIS Charismatic National team, National Network of Intercession, New Carmel Ecumenical Prophecy Hub, helping at the School of Prophecy for the South, Tall Ship Skipper for the Rona Sailing Project (disadvantaged children, severely mentally disabled), Harvester Men's Network core team, HOTs weekly Healing on The Streets Southampton, and lots of other lovely

ADoRE TALK 25 NOVEMBER 2023
RIVERS OF LIVING WATER – BEING A CHANNEL OF JESUS' BLESSING

stuff...which is all wonderful but, back in 2019 the Lord said STOP, time out, spend some focused time with me, in the company of prayerful people, let's go meet and pray for my people together. So I did, and undertook a three month mission for Celebrate, with groups of volunteers, sailing around the coast of Britain, with quayside gatherings and outreach into 60 towns that we stopped in, then I did it again after Covid for Stella Maris, the wonderful Catholic seafarers welfare charity that addresses human exploitation. This has changed everything for me.....giving up my commercial career, and putting myself at the Lord's disposal, seeking to live prophetically. A whole new season in my life has begun.....but the renewal in my life still needs to be made new every day, and today is another day to do just that

God has created us for a life of spiritual ecstasy not mediocrity. In fact there is no spiritual mediocrity: we are either spiritually alive or spiritually dead. My sister Ashley loves dogs and told me that her labrador lives in two states of being: either happy or waiting to be happy. But being spiritually dead sets us against God, ouch !!! But here's a **Spoiler Alert !** The absolute mind boggling Good News is that he loves us equally in either state, and sent his only Son Jesus Christ to pay the price of our sin, which is death, and to have life, life to the full, in him, now and for eternity. So I like to think of my ups and downs as being either Spiritually Alive or waiting to be made Spiritually Alive.

For me, it's living prophetically and being mission minded. That sounds so grandiose and almost pious, but we are in mission simply when talking over the garden wall to a neighbour, smiling at a passerby in the street, talking to parents and grandparents at the school gate, talking about our weekend retreat to pals at work. These impromptu encounters are all opportunities to give life. However, God ups the game with us, he wants more, he places dreams and purposes on hearts to be more intentional in the redemption story of other people's lives, and consequently our own. Some of us are called to religious life, some lay ministries, merciful charities, and communities, most of us however are simply called to love and give witness to the people in our everyday lives, that is especially powerful when we use our interests and passions to connect with people in these communities, in an intentional way.

I believe our encounters with each other are not by chance, and in each encounter, there is a heavenly treasure waiting to be released with a touch of the Holy Spirit, if we allow ourselves to communicate prophetically at heart-to-heart level. Whether that's a smile to a stranger, a caring or loving remark, I want everyone I meet to come away feeling better about themselves or their life. For that I need a heart of flesh, which I don't always have, but I really want and pray for

ADoRE TALK 25 NOVEMBER 2023
RIVERS OF LIVING WATER – BEING A CHANNEL OF JESUS' BLESSING

On the Celebrate Round Britain Sailing Mission, I had reached Oban and was joined by a larger-than-life character, a heavy for the Manchester organised crime gangs, who'd spent many years in prison. We had a two day wait for two others to join us but, rather than wait in Oban, I suggested we sailed up the Sound of Mull to Tobermory and do some outreach there. We sailed up the Sound of Mull in clear open water, looking towards snow-capped mountains on the distant horizon, singing and praying as we went. We sang songs of worship, we prayed for the people we had met in Oban, and we prayed for those that we were going to meet in Tobermory. As we did, a deep grace came upon us: we both became silent, feeling the unmistakable peace and bliss that comes with the presence of the Holy Spirit. It didn't last for very long, but it was a special moment.

Tobermory soon came into view – it is just 27 miles north of Oban, taking us four hours to sail – and my new crew was getting excited. I, on the other hand, was slowing the boat down.

"Come on then, are we going in?" asked my new crew mate.

"No," I replied. Despite sorely wanting to go into Tobermory, I had the sense that the Lord was saying something. That ability to hear him, which I had long prayed for, seemed to be kicking in.

"Come on, it looks beautiful," insisted my new crew.

"No, I think the Lord is saying we need to hold off and pray."

We stopped by a waterfall at a cliff outside the bay, we looked towards Tobermory, and we prayed. Once again that deep grace came upon us, but even more powerfully and for longer. This time we weren't silent. I was no longer conscious of my own words as the Holy Spirit guided my prayer. We went deep into prayer for Tobermory, Mull and Scotland. It was amazing.

And then, as the grace lifted and we both recovered our self-awareness, my new crew said: "This has been wonderful. I can't wait to get into Tobermory and go into one of those quaint-looking pubs... it looks so pretty!"

"I'm sorry, but the Lord is still saying no."

And I don't know why, but I said: "We're going to sail out and anchor overnight on the other side of the Sound."

"But we're here now. We came all this way to go to Tobermory..."

Despite protestations, I told him we would instead be going to an isolated cove on what looked like an island in the Sound. The 'island' I was referring to was Oronsay, a tidal island that is actually more of a peninsula. There's a crack in the rock on this peninsula that is large enough to sail through, and it opens up into a cove called Loch na Droma Buidhe.

ADoRE TALK 25 NOVEMBER 2023
RIVERS OF LIVING WATER – BEING A CHANNEL OF JESUS' BLESSING

We sailed in through the rock to balmy calm stillness. “Ah Russ, what a great call. This looks amazing.” I thought, ‘no this looks a bad call, a very bad call indeed’. If you have ever been to Scotland in balmy calm, it's both pretty and terrible: midges are everywhere, and they have the nasty habit of descending and covering you in bites. I could see all around the loch were clouds of midge. Perhaps I didn't have a newfound ability for hearing the Lord after all – or if I did something had definitely been lost in translation.

“We're not gonna stay here,” I said. “We'll get eaten alive unless we lock everything down and tape up the gaps to stop them coming into the cabin.” It was my new crew's turn to be the one trusting the Lord with our movement: “Well, let's just pray first.” We got in the cockpit and we started to pray. Strangely, the midges didn't descend into the boat. He smiled at me, but with a nervous laugh I blurted out: “Seriously... forget cooking dinner, we are going to be the evening meal if we stay here any longer.” But even as I said it I thought, “Something's going on here.” You don't just sit amongst a cloud of midges and not be lunch, dinner and tea all together.

We pressed on with our prayer. The grace that we had received in Tobermory came back on us. And then, all I can say is that the Lord got into the boat - physically got into the boat - with the two of us. He said: “I love you boys. I love you. I love the friendship you formed. I love what you're doing. I love you.” And then the sun, slowly setting, shone through the crack in the cove and lit up the cockpit. We'd stopped praying by that point as we just couldn't speak. The sun passed, the light that had flooded the cockpit ebbed away and we came to our senses. We looked at each other and just cried. Like so many other profound experiences on this mission, I don't think it was really for me. I was just a happy bystander, a witness to the Lord's work. No, that was all for this amazing man who had come through a brutal and violent existence to find a life of peace with the Lord. It was the Lord confirming to him that there was an old self, but he has gone and there's a new man now. The Lord was saying, “Don't listen to the lies, you're completely worthy of a life with me.”

Prophecy has come my way through staying in prayer, listening and acting on what he tells me. Another powerful example for me was this. On this same trip Deirdre came up to meet me in Bristol Dock, which was the only time we would be together over the three months I had been away on this mission. She hugged me and handed over a large shaft bearing that she had brought up with her, for me to try and repair the broken autopilot steering mechanism that would have prevented continuation of the voyage. We were moored up on the Arnolfini Centre Quay to get ready for the Bristol Quayside Gathering in four hours time and I was excited to get the new bearing fitted onto the

ADoRE TALK 25 NOVEMBER 2023
RIVERS OF LIVING WATER – BEING A CHANNEL OF JESUS' BLESSING

shaft of the self-steering gear and enjoy more time with Deirdre who had come all this way from Southampton to see me.

However, try as I might, I couldn't get this new bearing onto the shaft of the reconditioned unit. I tried warming up the bearing on the stove, I tried whacking it on with a piece of wood, but whatever I tried it just wouldn't align with the shaft. Three hours came and went, meanwhile Deirdre was becoming increasingly irritated as this was the first time we had seen each other in over a month and I've spent all my time fussing over a little metal box. And I'm becoming increasingly anxious, as I know we have some long days of sailing ahead of us around Devon, Cornwall and the Scilly Isles that would be nigh on impossible without functioning self-steering.

I pleaded silently with the Lord: "You've done the whole thing for me, I've done nothing, I've just been a witness to the miracles of the bearing being in Fareham, a stranger lending me the tools that I needed. You cannot have taken me this far for it not to happen? But maybe this is it. Maybe this is the end of the mission, because I keep banging and nothing is happening." Deirdre said pray again - she's kind of wise like that, so I did. Instantly the Lord said: "Go to that bar and ask for a piece of wood that will fit through the slot, that is machine cut 90 degrees to the end that will fit perfectly into the hole in the bulkhead to force that bearing onto the shaft."

Seriously? I walked into that packed bar that the Lord showed me, half in faith, half in sheer disbelief. This is Saturday afternoon at the Arnolfini Centre, in the height of the summer, and it is 10-deep at the bar. I wait patiently to get to the front, and a manic barman snaps: "What do you want?"

"I don't want a drink, I'll come back for one later. This is going to sound strange, but the Lord has just told me to ask for a piece of wood of specific dimensions, and it has to be perfectly square at the end with a machine cut."

He stayed silent for a moment, that seemed like an age, and as I was about to walk or run away, he said: "Funny you should ask; there is a woodworking class that uses our store room next to the art college behind us. Let me see if they can help with what you're looking for."

Within 45 seconds he had disappeared then returned with a machined piece of wood that was the exact size I was looking for. I thanked and blessed him profusely, returned to the boat and put the piece of wood into the bulkhead hole onto the steering unit. I tapped it once and the bearing slid gracefully onto the shaft. Just ridiculous! Yet again, the Lord had taken me to the point of dismay and despair. But instead of giving up hope, he showed me that what I needed to surrender was my fear, and my need to be in control. Even when all seemed lost, he was there working things out for us.

ADoRE TALK 25 NOVEMBER 2023
RIVERS OF LIVING WATER – BEING A CHANNEL OF JESUS' BLESSING

Staying in prayer was transformative**I was finding a heart of flesh**people I was meeting ashore seemed like long lost sisters or brothers. I was experiencing overwhelming joy, and compelled to engage and offer prayer for people, we had so many beautiful encounters, tears on the street. The same was happening to me on the next round Britain sailing mission for Stella Maris. It seemed so natural and effortless.

This has led me to reflect about how God can use our passions and interests, and the opportunity to witness with the communities that share our interests: already we are in some way a kindred spirit, a familiar, **potentially trustworthy** person to engage with at a deeper level. Heart to heart encounters are more readily available. The living waters flow and bear fruit, like seasons over a period of time.

Another example of this was a mountain biking trip I was on in Wales with a tough old bunch of unchurched lads from an impromptu group from Southampton. We'd had a full day of some exhilarating riding, and were seated on a long table in a large busy pub, restaurant, the food was served and as more of joke I said "are you OK if I say a grace?" They went quiet and put their heads down so I went for it, thanking God for keeping us safe, for the beauty of the mountains and for the food, those less fortunate. I prayed that we'd have a cracking day on the trails in the morning, then we all tucked into the grub. Simon*, one of the group, followed me to the bar and said "Russ that is the first prayer I have ever heard in my life."

A month later He was shopping in Bournemouth with his wife who was having a big operation on Tuesday. And the surgeon had told that we're going to cut a lesion off an organ and I have to take the risk that we could damage the organ. So, to distract her as she was getting anxious, Simon took her shopping in Bournemouth for clothes and a chap came up to see them in the shop, walked out again, came back again, said I'm a Christian. I just want to tell you something that the Lord has put on my heart to tell you.

Simon, recalling the conversation we'd had, said Yeah, what is it? He said, you're gonna have something big done on Tuesday, but don't be anxious. It's going to be fine. They couldn't speak. And he walked out. So this was a Christian that gave a prophetic word to them in a shop. So of course Simon and I have been meeting ever since then and now he has a relationship with the Lord. Prophecy is powerful for breakthrough - we all need to use and grow it.

**Not his real name*

ADoRE TALK 25 NOVEMBER 2023
RIVERS OF LIVING WATER – BEING A CHANNEL OF JESUS' BLESSING

The consequence of a new heart will be obedience to God's commands, hearing his voice and prophesying: A change of heart toward God requires a supernatural transformation. Jesus called it being "born again" ([John 3:3](#)).

I am very humble with where I stand with Jesus. I am on my knees, literally, "Lord are you serious? Do you know who I am? the guy who struggles with lustful self centred sin, who failed English Language GCSE 4 times, who keeps getting lost, the one you keep having to bring back. Your love and sacrifice for me is painful, I am so ashamed. BUT I DO KNOW THAT I AM NEVER GOING TO STOP TRYING TO BE THE GOOD NEWS, UNTIL MY LAST BREATH. I don't have much in my tool kit, but what I have is yours to use, I don't want to see a single soul lost to the devil."

Even the swaying tree and waves on the sea around my little boat are evangelists to me, then even I am able to bring the Good News allowing the stream of God's Living Water, The Holy Spirit to flow through me.

What sustains me is HOPE, Hope in heaven to be forever with Jesus, puts a smile on my face in this life, the root of my Joy through which love passes. Heaven is so close and totally interested & involved in my life - right at this moment - issues of ultimate importance for us not just on earth, but in heaven as well. That is because, as believers, we are united with Christ's exaltation, his resurrection and enthronement at God's right hand in heaven. It's so close, it's pressing down on us, we get glimmers of it in up-the-mountain moments as much as our earthly bodies can stand, before we must come down.

And of course there are people in heaven that will intercede for us: Mary and the saints too intercede for us, that is impactful in our lives. ...I want to recount what I can only describe as a small miracle that I believe St Columba interceded on for us. Our electronic wind vane and wind speed gauge packed up off Montrose from Dundee on the last sailing mission. It's a slight issue for the sailing, especially down wind to avoid an involuntary gybe - it's also £400 for a new one. in Lochboisdale, South Uist, in the Outer Hebrides, Fr Ross Crichton presented us with a bottle of blessed holy water from St Columba's miraculous well in Ardnamurchan, to be carried for protection in the prow of the boat.

We arrived on 31st May at the start of the 9 day novena to St Columba. We fly the Holy Spirit Dove at the top of our mast and we were told it was also the sign of Columba. We honoured the gift and had been following the Novena. After departing the Outer Hebrides, then sailing east back through the Inner Hebrides and Small Isles we started our rounding of Ardnamurchan point, the most westerly part of mainland Britain, asking

ADoRE TALK 25 NOVEMBER 2023
RIVERS OF LIVING WATER – BEING A CHANNEL OF JESUS’ BLESSING

St Columba to intercede for us and thanking The Lord for this wonderful man who helped bring Christianity to Britain, asking that the spirit of evangelisation he had would in some way be given to us on this mission, then finished by saying “St Columba pray for us.” Instantly, miraculously, the electronic wind instruments, and graphic readout display, sprang back into life off Ardnamurchan Point - HOW UTTERLY AFFIRMING. The WIND Instruments remained working for the remainder of the voyage - THANK YOU LORD, THANK YOU ST COLUMBA!

In prayer ask the Lord to give you a heart of flesh, call on Mary and the Saints to intercede for you, be inspired by their lives and loving hearts, where they acted without fear.

Find increasing more little steps of kindness each day When you step out and give witness intentionally, ensure you have got prayer cover, supported by people with an intercessory gift and believe in what you are doing.

So what holds us back, why do we often feel bashful in sharing our faith, how can we find ‘Bold Holiness’ as its been described at the CHARIS event in Rome?

Are we seeing obstacles all around us, fumbling around in the dark/ Maybe we are in a cave frightened, like Elijah, maybe we’re facing the wrong way into the back of the cave, and need to turn around - there’s an opening behind you where the light is flooding in, and there is the still calm voice of the Lord calling you. Keep your eyes on Jesus, take his outstretched arm, walk out of the cave away from the rocks.

Do you have the motivation to do this? Is the compassion for others strong enough to step out, and make yourself vulnerable? Do you doubt that God is on your side and that Jesus has defeated death? The Victory is already won, the battles are surely just an opportunity for us to claim that Victory for ourselves and others.

Lets take a look at how St Paul sees confidence in this Victory in 2 Corinthians

*Paul had a special place in his heart for the Church in Corinth, it was bringing him to depression that there were individuals there, pulling him down, poo pooing him, poo pooing his Gospel Message. He laments about how down this was making him. THEN he flips in TON:, wait a minute, the Victory is already won by Christ, I don’t need to be justified or qualified in letters, look at my life, the way I live, the fruits born in those around m..., **has living water flowed from me?***

In Paul’s mind is the picture of Roman Triumph and of Christ as a universal conqueror. William Barclay said: *The highest honour which could be given to a victorious Roman general was a Triumph. To attain it he must satisfy certain conditions.*

ADoRE TALK 25 NOVEMBER 2023
RIVERS OF LIVING WATER – BEING A CHANNEL OF JESUS' BLESSING

He must have been the actual commander-in-chief in the field. The campaign must have been completely finished, the region pacified and the victorious troops brought home. Five thousand of the enemy at least must have fallen in one engagement. A positive extension of territory must have been gained, and not merely a disaster retrieved or an attack repelled. And the victory must have been won over a foreign foe and not in a civil war.

In a Triumph the procession of the victorious general marched through the streets of Rome to the Capitol in the following order. First came the state officials and the senate. Then came the trumpeters. Then were carried the spoils taken from the conquered land. For instance, when Titus conquered Jerusalem, the seven-branched candlestick, the golden table of the shew-bread and the golden trumpets were carried through the streets of Rome. Then came pictures of the conquered land and models of conquered citadels and ships. There followed the white bull for the sacrifice which would be made. Then there walked the captive princes, leaders and generals in chains, shortly to be flung into prison and in all probability almost immediately to be executed. Then came the lictors bearing their rods, followed by the musicians with their lyres; then the priests swinging their censers with the sweet-smelling incense burning in them. After that came the general himself. He stood in a chariot drawn by four horses. He was clad in a purple tunic embroidered with golden palm leaves, and over it a purple toga marked out with golden stars. In his hand he held an ivory scepter with the Roan eagle at its top and over his head a slave held the crown of Jupiter. After him rode his family; and finally came the army wearing all their decorations and shouting lo triumphe! Their cry of triumph. As the procession moved through the streets, all decorated and garlanded, amid the cheering crowds, it made a tremendous day which might happen only once in a lifetime.

That is the picture that is in Paul's mind, He sees Christ marching in triumph throughout the world, and himself in that conquering train. It is a triumph which, Paul is certain, nothing can stop."

Oh my Gosh, I am living my faith in the ultimate Triumph Parade with Christ, wherever I go and with whomever I meet. We are part of a mighty Triumph Parade. I may be puny on my own, but not in this Parade: there is no sign of being bashful about who is the Victor, in this ultimate fight for souls.

We are made adequate by God, through The Holy Spirit, The VICTORY PARADE was smothered in a fragrance, to the defeated it was the smell of death; to victors, God's chosen, it was the smell of life, hope, joy. **Some will hate you, some will love you STAY IN THE TRIUMPH PARADE.**

ADoRE TALK 25 NOVEMBER 2023
RIVERS OF LIVING WATER – BEING A CHANNEL OF JESUS' BLESSING

So lets be Prophetic, and speak prophetically into people's hearts. Guard against the desire for comfort and security; intentionally seek vulnerability in the service of others...its OK to be scared, but don't let fear stop you. You are Men & Women, Children of God. You are strong enough to be meek, humble enough to stand up in Christ to protect the poor, speak out the Truth.....if not you then who.....?

THE HOLY SPIRIT is on a mission in our lives, he wants you and me to follow the dreams and purpose that God has prepared for us, so we might prosper.

Ephesians 2:10 says that "we are God's handiwork, created to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." No two people are the same, but each one of us are His workmanship. ... God has a unique purpose for your life.

I want to invite you, Just for a moment, to imagine you've arrived at a well, and standing there is Jesus - he asks you.... 'Will you give me a drink from this well'

Anointing & Charisms have been poured into you over many years and have permeated and soaked the very ground of your soul - why is He then asking you, to give back to HIM what he has already given YOU, after all he is the creator and can do anything for anyone. He is holding humanity together, He is Humanity, he asks us to share the living water he has given us with our brothers and sisters who are in need of a drink. He wants us to be in communion with Him which means being in communion and relationship with each other. To be loved, and to love, is life itself.

Through stepping into our God-given dreams and purposes we will be refined and given hearts of flesh, we will prosper and drink living waters and be channels of this life source for others.

Jeremiah 29:11 says: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Once discerned, we need to take responsibility and trust in this plan and move with the Spirit, prophetically - It's sometimes hard to accept not seeing the full detail of this plan from the outset, but that's OK. In my experience I can be trapped by endless or unclear discernment, staying in my prison, whilst the door has already been burst open, not stepping out into the light, fearful of what's outside, what direction I should go in.

I have found that holding onto Jesus' outstretched hand and going through the door, with The Holy Spirit, in any direction, gives HIM the opportunity to steer me in the right direction, even if its 180 degrees opposite to the direction I set off in.

ADoRE TALK 25 NOVEMBER 2023
RIVERS OF LIVING WATER – BEING A CHANNEL OF JESUS' BLESSING

Our choices and actions also really matter, but as long as we always make the choice to love, in each situation or place, we will find our way back to the Plan God has for us.

BUT HERE'S THE THING, LOVING OTHERS REQUIRES LOVING OURSELVES.

Luke 10:27...“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,” **and** “your neighbour as yourself.”..

.....as yourself (Jesus quotes Leviticus 19:18)) .

Oooh What's that added extra bit,... “as yourself” ... **To love God is to love Jesus which is to love our neighbour - the Jesus within (the new Adam).... but as yourself.....?**

We can often cry out..... But Lord I hate myself or *Lord I adore myself!* look how good I've become,..... if I try to love others out of either of these positions, what use is that to anyone or me?

Well here's the rub, Jesus adds that last little direction, I believe, **to challenge us, as to who we have placed at the center.** If we have placed ourselves at the centre of our being and consideration, we are not living as beautiful vessels of the Holy Spirit centred on God. We are then empty vessels with ourselves at the centre, which we attempt to adore and self serve, self worship in God's place. Or we self loathe as we look at our inner selves to see God and only see ourselves there, in his place, and we don't measure up, we're not God - either way we are placing ourselves at the centre, which leads to depression.

God knows all this, he knows our struggles, which is why he sent his only Son to die for us, taking our sin onto himself, and sent his Holy Spirit to empower us to serve in our brokenness - He wants us to submit our will, surrender ourselves to him, make ourselves fit enough that HE can **'enter under our roofs'** and love us from the inside out - out into the world, to love and serve others, and share in his joy, giving God the Glory in humility, gratitude and praise.

So as I draw to a close I would like to share some learnings in my life, that have helped me and maybe helpful to you, to be more Spiritually Alive with a heart of flesh, acting prophetically to share my faith and be a channel Living Waters

- Be open to the Lord working, stretching, and changing your heart. This may bring out some things you need to address and work on, but it will be worth it! He can change your heart, soften the edges, helping you to love others with kindness

ADoRE TALK 25 NOVEMBER 2023
RIVERS OF LIVING WATER – BEING A CHANNEL OF JESUS' BLESSING

and compassion. Reflect on the character of Jesus in scripture, seek to emulate him and his decision to love in every situation.

- Take a look at your schedule. Are you doing too much? Is your to-do list bigging **up your sacrifice to the detriment of your mercy** - where's the space for a spontaneous act of kindness prompted by the holy spirit?
- Are you keeping things on your list because of appearances? Allow Him to free up your time. Ask Him to show you, each day, what actually needs to be done and what can be set aside.
- Begin placing others first in your day, TODAY! God wants to trust us with little things first, to prepare us for the big stuff . Do you see a struggling mum at the supermarket? Let her get in line before you. Does your neighbour need help with his lawn, or child care? Take care of it for him or her.
- Listen to God, and Mary, do whatever He tells you – Don't get caught in an endless loop of discernment. MOVE with the spirit (only when you are moving does the water flow over the rudder giving steerage to the boat). Move and if needs be the Holy Spirit will direct you even 180 degrees back the other way. GO! KEEP MOVING!
- Staying in prayer, praising and thanking God changes everything. We learn to hear God's voice over the noise and recognise direction from the Holy Spirit.
- Seek ways to step out in faith, beyond your perceived strength, where you are going to have to lean on the Lord to help you, don't fear making yourself **intentionally Vulnerable for the Lord**. Avoid seeking comfort or security over doing God's will or loving others. You dont need God to help you do the things you can do on your own, which is unlikely to be doing His will.
- Move our mindset from seeking to do occasional missions to BEING mission, let it become who you are, not what you do.

And lastly

Smile, don't be ruled by your feelings, it's OK to feel: angry, fearful, sad, happy, but let your 'heart of flesh' love over these feelings, it's a CHOICE. Choosing to LOVE is a conscious decision.

A heart of flesh changes everything: the world turns upside down, sorrow turns to joy - your life will be transformed.

Before I close, Let's prepare ourselves before we pray.

I invite you now to recognise who you are....see yourself as God sees you and is looking at you right now, with his heart burning

ADoRE TALK 25 NOVEMBER 2023
RIVERS OF LIVING WATER – BEING A CHANNEL OF JESUS' BLESSING

Let go of you, move yourself out, let the light shine in.

Give over any lust, envy, self loathing or feelings of unworthiness.

Give over your desire for security and comfort - let your compassion make you vulnerable.

Give over any anger at the equal blessing of the 11th hour worker, the returning wayward son.

What's at the centre of you? Is it still you, or have you allowed the Lord to make his home there?

Let's repent of any unforgiveness now, Mum, Dad, brother, sister, friend, Priest, work colleague.

So Let's Pray

Come Holy Spirit. Fill us anew, fill us with bold holiness, increase our prophetic gifting to share our faith, help us to keep our gaze on you, walking with our heads held high in the victory, your Triumph Parade, listening to your voice, stepping out in faith into the dreams you have placed on our heart. Show us how to use our passions and interests to bring rivers of living water to others, so they may know you personally, and give over their lives to you.

If you are struggling to love others, and to be a channel of Living Water for them, as you feel you could or should, ask Jesus for a heart change. Lord please give us the strength and faith to dare to pray for a heart of flesh - Come Holy Spirit, take away our fear and selfishness, pour your love into us, to overflowing, that we would give up our hearts of stone and receive a heart of flesh.

In Jesus precious name.... Amen

Close

Lord This is the first day of the rest of our life, help us to choose to love and make this day something special for somebody else.