

Text: Psalm 148 (NIV)

Sunday 28th June 2020

Brightons Parish Church

Let us take a moment now to pray before we think about God's Word once more. May the words of my mouth, and the meditation of all our hearts, be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, our strength and our redeemer. Amen.

Boys and girls, do you know what happens **when you take** a packet of Mentos and drop them into a bottle of Coca Cola? If we were to do a science experiment, taking these Mentos and putting them into a bottle of Coca Cola, what do you think might happen? Will the sweets simply drop to the bottom? Or will something else also happen?

Let's watch this quick video.

(VIDEO PLAYS)

I don't know about you, but that made me laugh so much! There is a way to do that experiment so that the Coca Cola shoots up in a tall fountain of juice, rather than into your face! So, we'll put a link up this afternoon on Facebook if you want to try that experiment for yourself.

The reason that the Coca Cola shoots up and out of the bottle is because of a chemical reaction inside the bottle between the juice and the Mentos. We know this because of science; science helps us understand the world and even the universe. **Some people think science** and faith are opposed to each other, but actually both science and faith seek to help us explore life and the world around us.

When I was at school and university, I loved to learn about science – at university I particularly...

enjoyed organic chemistry and the process of how molecules reacted and combined with one another. I was going to be a Chemical Engineer before God called me into youth ministry.

I think it's great fun to do experiments and discover new things about the world through science. **Many of us enjoy** this, scientists especially, because we have a thirst for knowledge – we want to know how things work and how we can make things better.

But I also think it's amazing to learn more about God as well, and by learning about God to learn about our world too. The Bible encourages us to seek God, to thirst for God, and so to grow in wisdom and knowledge.

Over 3,000 years ago in the country of Israel there was a king called Solomon. His father was the famous King David. At the beginning of his reign, Solomon, like his father, loved God. Just before he died, David told Solomon to follow God and so that's what Solomon tried to do. One day he went to a special holy place to worship God and he gave God all sorts of precious things to show how much he loved God, and that made God very happy.

That night God appeared to Solomon in a dream and said to Solomon, 'Ask for whatever you want me to give you.'

(v5) Imagine that! Imagine being told by God that you could have anything you want? You could have asked for money or to be the most famous singer in the world; you could have asked for a big car or all the marshmallows you could eat....

I wonder what you would have asked for? Take 30 seconds to think or talk about that at home. (PAUSE)

Let us know in the Live Chat what you would have asked for but Solomon knew what he needed. Without hesitation he said, 'I am King, but I am very young. I don't know very much, particularly about being a king, and now I have to rule over so many people. Please make me wise and teach me the difference between right and wrong. Then I will know how to be a just and honest ruler. I can't do it without you.'

God was so pleased with Solomon, after all, Solomon could have asked for anything: pots of gold, lots of children, the biggest army, the most power. But he didn't. Solomon was humble enough to know that he didn't...

know everything, and so God made Solomon the wisest person that had ever lived.

Being wise and discovering new things is great! We can uncover so much about the world through exploring chemistry, zoology, astrophysics and the rest. We can also uncover so much about the world by exploring who God is, what he has done for us, and what that means.

Being curious and being wise are both essential to making new scientific discoveries and discoveries about God and our relationship with him. When we start following Jesus, we don't know everything about Him immediately. Being a friend of God, is like being a scientist, for it is a lifetime of exciting exploration and discovery. There's always something new to learn about Jesus and He invites us to know Him better.

So, over the next few weeks we've got a few ideas to help you know Jesus better and help our children and young people know Jesus better. **The first is this Tuesday Evening when we will have a question and answers time about the interaction between science and faith. If you've got a question you want to ask our local scientists, then get it in today before 2pm, and then join us on our YouTube Channel at 7.30pm on Tuesday.**

Then, **the following Tuesday, we will have an evening with a speaker from an organisation called "Parenting for Faith" – but their name is misleading because what they will share is important for everyone to know. Again, it'll be a bit of a question and answer night, with stories shared as well. Whether you live with children or not, this evening is for everyone because we all...**

need to be involved in nurturing the faith of the children and young people in our congregation and organisations, helping them to know Jesus better and encouraging them on that lifetime of discovery. So, join us on the 7th July.

Finally, in 3 weeks' time we have our next Testimony Tuesday, when I hope we will hear some more stories about how people have journeyed with God – either in the past or the present. As I said some weeks ago, it's important that we tell our stories, helping others, near and far, to hear something of the life of faith, the adventure with Jesus that we are called to. At this time, I don't have anyone signed up to tell a story, so if you would be willing to share something, it can be anything in relation to your faith, then please get in contact with me as soon as possible.

So, there are three ways we can learn more about Jesus and help others learn more about Jesus. When we stop wanting to learn, and stop wanting others to learn, about Jesus, then there's something missing in our faith. **It's no longer** a childlike faith, rather it's been tamed, maybe dulled, because a childlike faith has a risky curiosity – it asks the awkward questions; it thirsts for knowledge “why, why, why”; it longs to experience life no matter the risk, just like the scientists in our drama today. If you are no longer curious about Jesus, then your hunger for Jesus is waning, and your faith is maybe lessened.

The goal of faith is not to have a set of right beliefs that are precisely defined. Rather, faith is about recovering a relationship with God, a God who shows up in startling ways, changing lives and transforming history...

just like He did with Solomon. **This same God invites** each of us to have a relationship with Him, a relationship marked by risky curiosity, a curiosity which fuels a lifetime of learning about Him, and His purposes and design for the world in which He has placed us.

This summer, I wonder what you will discover about Jesus? Will you pursue Him with a risky curiosity, and will you commit to helping others to do so as well?

I pray it may it be so. Amen.