



Weekly Newsletter: 14th March 2023

Reflection: The Benefits of Mentorship

By Joe Barnard

We don't realise the extent to which we are shaped by historical influences. Somewhere around two hundred years ago the stereotype of a hero radically shifted. Gone were the days of viewing the hero as embedded in the tribe, as depended upon a traditional code of behaviour, and as looking to external guidance for help in completing a quest. A new model was introduced: one of the lone individual relying upon internal strength in order to complete the task before him. Most action films are built on this model. James Bond doesn't need any friends. His innate wisdom and instincts are enough to make sure that mission impossible is mission accomplished.

As Christians, we need to appreciate the extent to which pop culture influences our lives. While our moral compasses may be more fine-tuned than that of Mr. Bond, our attitudes toward life are often dangerously similar to that of 007. Too many of us think that we can get through life just fine on our own. We may indeed attend prayer meetings and small groups with clocklike regularity. Nonetheless, a lot of us have mastered the art of editing out all self-disclosure from prayer requests. Our poker-faces are impenetrable.

Such an I-can-cope-on-my-own attitude is a grave spiritual liability. The truth is that each one of us needs other people in our lives who can help us in the dangerous journey of life. Tolkien knew what he was doing in *The Lord of the Rings*. The true model for living a heroic life is not a *him*, but a *them*. We all need be in a fellowship of diverse gifting if we are going to overcome the challenges and obstacles that are the inevitable path of Christian discipleship.

Now, in order to escape the individualist mindset, one type of relationship we ought to pursue in life is that of mentorship. Mentorship is a unique type of friendship that is based on wisdom rather than pleasure or affection. Whereas most friendships are based on a kind of symmetry of status, mentorship is intentionally asymmetrical. A mentor is not like a mentee. There is an important gap of experience and wisdom which makes the one a suitable guide and counsellor for the other. If the one is a wise and seasoned Paul, the other is a youthful and uncertain Timothy.

There are several benefits that come to both a mentor and a mentee in such a relationship. On the side of the mentee, three benefits, in particular, stand out.

One is the opportunity to avoid unnecessary pain. The fact is that a lot of stumbling blocks in life can be avoided if we just take some time to talk to people who have travelled more extensively in life than we have.

No small part of sharing wisdom is being honest about past foolishness. To hear the testimony of a prodigal son is a good way to avoid the detour of eating in a pigsty.

Another benefit on the side of the mentee is the exposure of confirmation bias. This bias is the innate human tendency to look for confirmation of what we have already decided is good or true. It's important to know that a good mentor is not present to affirm so much as to advise. The whole point of the relationship is to distil wisdom, not to recycle opinion. Mentors are there to help filter foolishness out of the decision-making process.

A third benefit for mentees is the ability an adept mentor has in drawing forth deep counsels of the heart. Proverbs tell us that the springs of life flow from the human heart (c.f. 4:23). Now, extracting these subterranean waters is no easy task. Often, it takes a skilled friend who is proficient at asking questions to bring forth thoughts and desires that an individual could not tap into by themselves.

Yet, it's important to note that the benefits of mentorship are not one-sided. If the relationship is healthy, the mentor can be just as blessed through the friendship as the mentee.

How is this? Here are two points to consider. First, mentorship is a way of redeeming past mistakes. Rather than be frustrated by choices that cannot be undone, mentorship allows a person to use their experience – the triumphs and the tragedies – in order to help another person who is at an earlier stage of life. By becoming a companion in the unfolding journey of another, a mentor is able to glean life-lessons and use them to help encourage a needy soul.

In this way, mentorship is an act of love. Just as love might lead a wealthy person to give money to the poor, love equally prompts a mature person to share wisdom with someone else who is struggling to find a path through life.

Finally, with mentorship, there is the joy of intergenerational friendship. In life, it's easy to get stuck in a silo of contemporaries. The young keep to the young, and the old, to the old. It shouldn't be this way. There is a special joy that comes from the mixing of generations. Such mixing reminds us that age is less significant than we often think. Although we each start the journey of life at a different time, the final destination of all Christians is the same. We are all headed to the banquet of the Lamb. Mentorship is good way to remind ourselves that we are on one great pilgrimage *together*.

SASRA Prayer Meeting – this Thursday

The Prayer Meeting will be held on 3rd Thursday of each month. The first one will be this Thursday, 16th March at 2pm at the home of Scripture Reader Paul Curd and his wife Karen. The address is 5 Latch Park, EH13 OCD.

Come along at 1pm to meet Paul and Karen and share a lunch of soup and a roll. See Norma C. or Moira for details of lifts and/or how to get there.



Litter Pick with Friends of Montgomery Street Park – this Sunday

This Sunday we have the opportunity to serve the local community by helping litter pick in the park. We'll head over to the park after the service, about 12 noon, and all the equipment will be provided. Please come for as long or short as you're able and let's hope the weather is dry!

Book Group

The book group meets this month on Saturday 25th March at 3.30pm and we are reading Weight of Glory by C S Lewis. Or you can watch it on YouTube instead apparently.....For further information, speak to Anncris.

Scripture Union Easter Adventure



We are hosting the **Scripture Union Easter Adventure** on Saturday 25th March from 2-4.30pm.

It is open to all P4-P7 children. 'Join us to explore the Easter Story together and discover why it's so important. The afternoon will include games, crafts, snack, songs and time to look at the Bible together.' If you would like any more information, please contact edinburgh@suscotland.org.uk and go [here](#) to book'.

Easter Events

As Easter approaches there are a number of events to highlight –

- Christ Church, Britwell Crescent are organising an **Easter Event** for kids on Saturday 1st April from 2-5 pm. Come along for games, crafts, drama and stories of the first Easter. For all primary aged kids and contact liz@holyroodevangelical.org for more info.
- We are all warmly invited to join with **Meadowbank Church for a Communion Service** on Good Friday (7th April) at 12 noon. It will be conducted by their Interim Moderator, Rev Bill Wishart.
- **Origin Scotland** have their annual Easter concert 'Resurrection' on Easter Sunday (9th April) at 7.30pm in the Usher Hall. The concert brings together Christians from all over the central belt to celebrate the greatest event in history. Special guests Allan McKinlay, Steph Macleod, Fiona Crow, and guest speaker Peter Anderson (City on a Hill). Tickets can be bought [here](#)



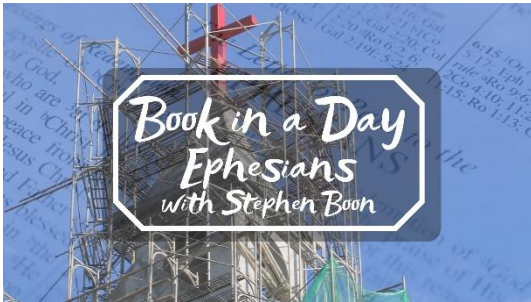
Church Maintenance

As Ken is not able to attend church in person for the foreseeable future, all matters relating to the building maintenance should in the first instance be referred to Roy Tatton. He will be able to decide how best to deal with the situation and contact the relevant contractor if required. Thank you for your cooperation.

CARE for Scotland – Pray for Scotland

On Tuesday 28th March, from 7- 8pm, CARE for Scotland invites us to join with them on Zoom to *Pray for Scotland*. 'There is a shifting taking place in Scottish politics at the moment and the focus this month will be on praying for the newly appointed SNP leader and Scotland's First Minister. Regardless of who is selected, let's pray that God would work His kingdom purposes in and for Scotland through this person's political leadership'. Go [here](#) to register.

Cornhill Book in a Day - Ephesians



On Tuesday 25th April (from 09:30-16:30) we are invited to join Cornhill (Bath Street, Glasgow) for the day to spend time digging deeper into the book of Ephesians together.

Stephen Boon will be teaching and he is the Associate Vicar of St. John's Tunbridge Wells, Kent and also a tutor at Cornhill London. He is a terrific Bible teacher and the day will be stimulating, stretching and helpful in sharpening our ability to hear the message of this dynamic Pauline letter.

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All light refreshments will be provided as well as all the teaching material. The cost of the day is £20 per person or £10 for students or unwaged. **Please contact Liz (Liz@holyroodevangelical.org) if you are hoping to come and we'll book a group ticket.**

Church Calendar

For your prayers and info –

- Monday:
 - Baby & Toddler Group from 10am – 11.30am
 - Warm Space from 12.30 – 4pm
- Wednesday: Prayer Meeting at 7pm on Zoom
- Thursday:
 - Men's Discipleship in person at 7.30am or 10.30am
 - Session Meeting at 7pm on Zoom
- Sunday:
 - Worship Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Joe Barnard preaching.
 - Litter Pick Up with the Friends of Montgomery Street Park after the service
 - Equip at 6pm



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