

PSALMS OF HOPE

@UnitedChurchFerdown

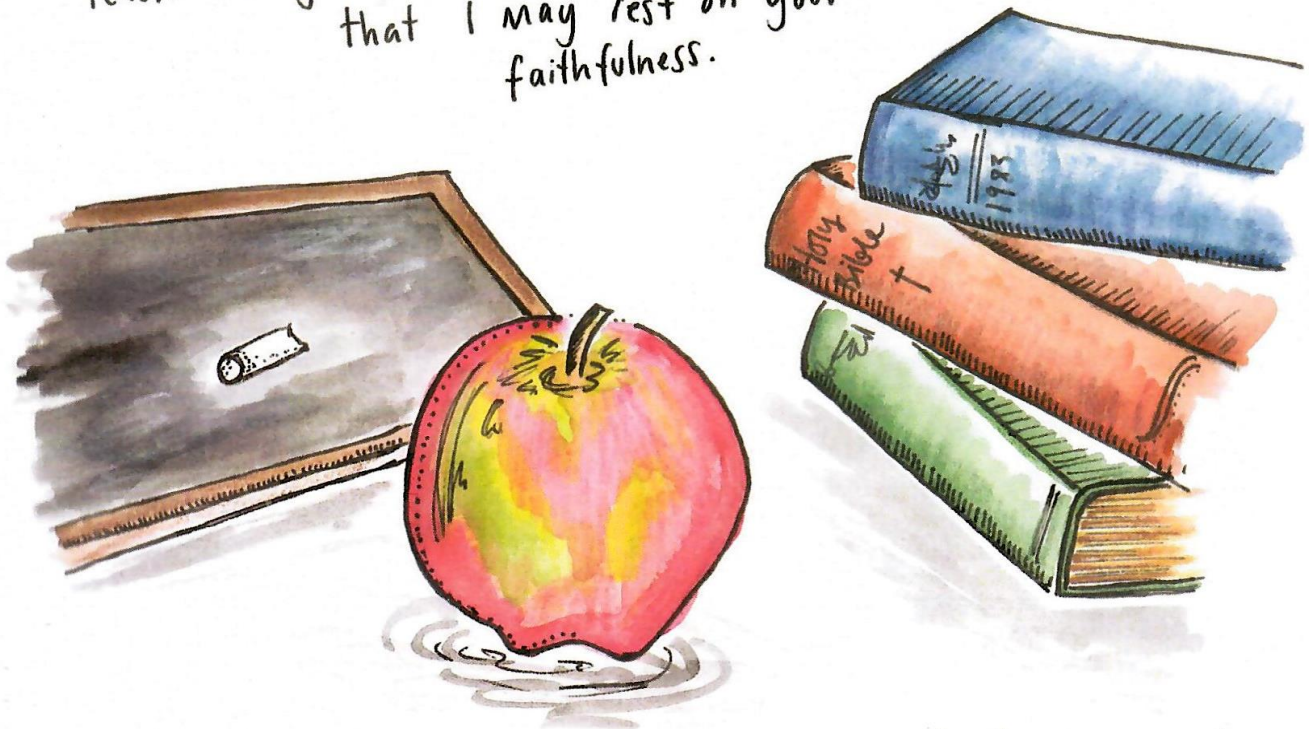
United Church Ferndown's 2023 Lent Programme

Tuesday 21st March

Reflection #28

MAKING GOOD IMPRESSIONS

Teach me your way, Lord,
that I may rest on your
faithfulness.



lmo. kate 86 10/8/15



Pray:

Lord, let everything I do in this season of Lent come from you, be inspired by you. I long to be closer to you. I long to receive the hope that you offer. Help me to remember that nothing is more important than you in my life. Help me to rely on you for help. I want to walk in your footsteps, Jesus. I confess that I have often felt I knew better and ignored your presence. Heal me, Lord, and help me to find you in the darkness of my life. Let me reach out and feel your hand and love there to guide me. Speak to me in this moment, Lord God. **Amen.**

Introduction:

Before I started training to be a minister, I was a husband, a father, a very active member of the church and an intensive care nurse. It was hard to give all four of these areas the focus that they deserved.

Where was my true heart? I felt my heart was divided. Where was my hope? It was difficult because of work pressures. The psalm writer seems to have had a similar experience. He says 'For you are great and do marvellous deeds; you alone are God' (v10), then asks 'Teach me your way, Lord' (v11) – it's good to read the whole psalm. During those times of working under a demanding and difficult management it was ultimately good to know that God alone was my guide and my teacher, always there to keep me on the right way even in my struggles. Also. God can ask you to do more than one thing.

**Read: Psalm 86:11-12 (NIV)**

¹¹Teach me your way, Lord,
that I may rely on your faithfulness;
give me an undivided heart,
that I may fear your name.

¹²I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart;
I will glorify your name for ever.

Consider:

Are we sometimes divided up in all directions when the world tugs at our hearts? If so, we won't make a good impression on those around us. The psalmist asks God for an undivided heart. Likewise, we need to ask, 'Teach me your way, Lord' and 'give me an undivided heart'.

Teach me: four of the Bible translations that I have read all start with the same expression. God is faithful amidst the struggles of life and he will give us a heart that is centred on his ways and focused on knowing his name ('fear your name') as verse 11 says. We will be able to praise God with all of our heart, not a divided one, and that will lead to making good impressions on our world, God's world.

There is no other way, so it's good to consider that we also now have the fulfilment of David the psalmist's prayer: Jesus said, 'I am the way and the truth and the life' (John 14:6). Following Jesus, our teacher, surely is the only way – there is no other way. There is our hope. Stay in God's one-way street, completely focused on Jesus, so people can see clearly where our hope lies. Having a whole heart of hope will make a good impression on the people we meet and as a result God will be glorified.

Pray:

Ask God for the ability to choose his way not the way of the world – and that by being obedient to his will we may show God's love to the world.

Try it out:

Try to be open with God if things are difficult. Ask him to teach you his way so that you can make a good impression for the hope you have in Jesus.