

The Watford Word

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What's on

Sunday 24 Sept - 10:30AM. Malcolm speaking
Sunday 01 Oct - 10:30AM. Stefan speaking
Sunday 08 Oct - 10:30AM. Malcolm speaking
Sunday 10 Dec - 10:30AM. Andy Boakye speaking
Sunday 17 December - 10:30AM. Carol service

Prayers

- For Tanya and family in Ukraine
 - For our local and national government to implement wise policies to benefit all our country's citizens (1 Timothy 2:1-5).
 - For unity between Christians and churches
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"Finding Redemption"

Lessons from a Reunion Weekend

Two weekends ago, I spent a memorable time with some dear old friends—friends I hadn't seen for several decades. The occasion was a reunion of my fellow music students who graduated with me from the University of Birmingham 40 years ago. We reconvened in Birmingham for a weekend filled with walking, talking, eating, and sharing stories. We reminisced about the good old days, told tall tales, corrected each other's fading memories, and, most importantly, we reconnected.

The experience left me feeling thoroughly refreshed and deeply reflective. This weekend, while bringing back a flood of happy memories, also brought me face-to-face with some less-than-positive aspects of my past. My time at university was a mix of highs and lows. I acquired valuable musical skills, made lasting friendships, and,

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perhaps most importantly, met my wife, Penny—an earthly blessing I cherish above all others.

However, I also carried a heavy load of regrets. Some were related to my lack of dedication to my studies, some to unhealthy habits I had developed during that time, and some to how I mistreated and hurt people. Delving into the specifics of these regrets would be too personal and involve others who shouldn't be named. Nevertheless, these regrets have weighed on me for decades.

The most spiritually moving moment of that weekend occurred on a Sunday morning. During my prayer walk, I found myself back at the site of my university residence for the first two years in Birmingham. As I strolled around the halls of residence, I felt a profound spiritual moment develop. I brought to my list of regrets to mind and talked them through with God.

It was then that something struck me. Here I was, 40 years later, and none of those regrets had proven fatal to me or the people I had hurt. In fact, I had the opportunity to reconcile with one of the individuals I had wronged during that very weekend. Certainly, those mistakes and hurts were real, but they did not define my life or anyone else's. I realised that God had been with

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me every step of the way, leading me to a better place. In that moment, I felt overwhelmed by grace—a recognition of God’s grace poured upon me over the decades.

God had not treated me as I deserved. He had not held my mistakes against me or condemned me for my shortcomings during my university days. Instead, He had generously bestowed upon me His grace, mercy, and kindness. He had lifted me from a place of regret to a place of rejoicing, shielding me from the full consequences of my folly, not just then but many times since. I am truly fortunate to have a heavenly Father who delights in me despite my deficiencies, loves me despite my faults, and shows mercy despite my many flaws.

Upon reflection, I realised I had carried these understandable yet burdensome regrets for far too long. Do you find yourself grappling with similar feelings of shame? Perhaps it's worth revisiting a place or memory associated with your guilt and reflecting on the passage of time between those days and today. Recognise that you are still here, still loved by God, and that your regrets have not been fatal. You are under God's grace and wrapped in His love. Remember that He is a God of redemption and second chances, always ready to welcome you back into His loving embrace.

As you navigate your own journey of forgiveness and redemption, consider these two Scriptures that emphasise the power of God's grace and forgiveness:

1. *Romans 8:1 (NIV): "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."*

2. *Psalm 103:12 (NIV): "As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us."*

These verses remind us that in God's eyes, our past mistakes and regrets are forgiven and forgotten. We can find redemption and move forward with the assurance of His unending love and grace.

God bless, Malcolm

Christians and Climate Change

'An evening encounter with our creator God on Climate Change'

Sunday 24th September,
5.30pm, St Mary's church, 1
Church Street, WD18 0EG.

Guest speakers: Dr Martin
and Rev Margot Hodson; Rachel Johnson



Watford Media

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCj9Qa8D9zumJZdoAtARDUww>

Podcast: <https://www.podbean.com/pu/pbblog-aiinq-1aef90>