



STUDY NOTES FOR INDIVIDUALS & GROUPS

Vision Sunday occurs this year at an unusual and unique moment: in the midst of the global disruption caused by the Covid19 pandemic. This disruption:

- Is like the tide washing over and submerging our everyday lives. We won't know how we've been changed as individuals, households and a society until the tides goes out again;
- Is a forced 'pruning' for many of us, though not all. We can't live as we used to.

Responding to the call of God this year begins with acknowledging this unique moment, then trying to see what the Lord is doing and saying and how we might respond.

For this year's Vision Sunday, we're using Jesus' teaching in John 15.1-8 as a guide to living through 'in-between' moments. In it, we see Jesus' encouragement to use moments of pruning as time to PREPARE for future seasons. We want to do this in 3 ways:

1. 'Remain in me and in my love'
2. 'Let my words remain in you'
3. Prepare to be 'even more fruitful'.

The response that God calls forth from us, by the Holy Spirit, is a renewed commitment to trusting and following Jesus. It is simply saying 'yes' again to his invitation to follow.

For Individual and Group Study

Watch (or rewatch) the Vision 2021 talk. You can find a link to it here:

<https://youtu.be/8kXWVwPqTm8>

Questions:

1. To 'remain' in Jesus requires a regular habit of prayer, meditation and 'practising his presence'.

How do you do this at present? What new prayerful habits could you try in 2021?

2. We are going to 'let his words remain in us' this year through studying Matthew 5-7, the Sermon on the Mount.

Have you read the Sermon on the Mount before? If so, what do you remember? What struck you – either negatively or positively – about it? (If you haven't read Matthew 5-7 before, why not try to read the whole thing this week before we start on Sun 17 January?)

3. As we journey through 2021, it is likely that the restrictions we live under will start to be loosened. This is an opportunity to 'start over' as individuals, households and as a society.

At a personal level, what might 'starting over' mean for you and your household? What might you like to be different?

As a church, we will be 'starting over' too, especially in our new partnership with the parish of North Gosport. Spend some time in prayer for the parishes of Crofton and North Gosport.