

Vicar's Comment

I read this quote the other day which struck a chord with me. It's by Worship leader and songwriter Graham Kendrick. He says this:

'Worship that depends on the externals for its existence is not real worship at all; true worship is what you have left when the externals are taken away'.

That could be a sobering thought: what is my worship when it's just me and God, without all the trappings?

When things are stripped away, we have an opportunity to see what's truly there.

I think for many Christians (perhaps especially those in the West) the COVID pandemic has been a bit like that, and will continue to be. Certainly I've found that things being 'stripped back' has been difficult in some ways.....but ultimately I feel I've been blessed through it. I feel a renewed sense of dependence on God.

When the offering of worship which we call 'life' is exposed more clearly.....what will our reaction be? I hope it will be to push further into God's promises, presence and empowering.

If we've felt humbled by this stripping away, bring yourself before our God - through Christ there is grace and mercy in abundance. Ask Him to make you more like Jesus through his Holy Spirit. But remember: the design for this re-making is His. He is the Lord, not us...and when we seek change we need to seek *His* change.

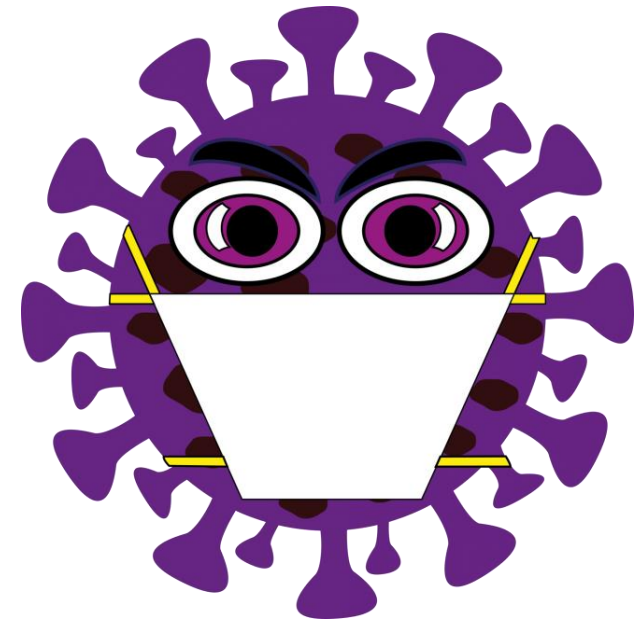
In this season we've been through, be confident that whatever is exposed (however uncomfortable) God already knew about it...and He still loves you! But now for the future, press into God's promises, presence and empowering, and recall Paul's words from Ephesians 2:10 *'we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do'* (NIV). This is our Memory verse for November.

We are God's workmanship! We are those He delights to craft and shape, so that our worship will be pleasing to Him even when the externals have fallen away. Press in and seek God's re-making. Don't let times of being stripped away go to waste.

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Memory verse

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Ephesians 2:10

November 2020