

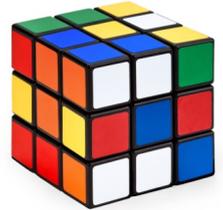


Mid-week Bible Study - week commencing 18/01/21

Christmas Fragments - Homegroup Notes

Prepared by Angela

I often think of God as the great creator and designer. Particularly with regard to the senses – seeing, hearing, smelling.....nature, countryside, skies and seas, music and so on. But also in language & mathematics. Patterns. He must surely be the mastermind behind word play, Rubik's cube, linguistics, Sudoku, chess etc. There are some interesting patterns and designs within the Bible, such as the use of numbers, chasms... I guess that's why I got so excited about 2 relatively simple words, **be** and **am**!



Contemplating BE & I AM

To be is a regular verb and we use it all the time in its past, present and future tenses, spoken and written. But sometimes, as we read scripture, God breathes new life and revelation in all sorts of ways. It can even be by reminding us of what we already know, but renewing it in a fresh way. In fact, "**behold**" springs to mind, which is to do with looking more intently rather than just on the surface. That was how I felt as I contemplated these passages over Christmas. Do you find that happens to you, too? Maybe share some of those experiences now.

BEFORE, BECAME, BEGOTTEN, BEHOLD

These were the four "B"s that stood out to me in **John 1**. An interesting link to Jesus' controversial statement to the Jewish leaders in **John 8:58**

"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"

John's gospel is well-known for its 7 "**I am**"s. If you have time, look up the verses below and **behold** them afresh. Make a mental note or jot down anything that stands out to you. These are great names of Jesus. Do you have a "special" one or is there one that particularly touches you at this period of time? Why?

BREAD OF LIFE (*John 6:35; 41-55*)

DOOR (*John 10:7-10*)

WAY, TRUTH & LIFE
(*John 14:6*)

GOOD SHEPHERD
(*John 10:11-16*)

**I AM
the...**

TRUE VINE (*John 15:1-5*)

LIGHT OF THE WORLD
(*John 8:12; 9:1-7*)

RESURRECTION & LIFE (*John 11:23-27*)

BE STILL

The other **Be** word I focused on comes in the sentence from **Psalm 46**:

BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD

Some days finding those still times in God's presence seems natural and easy. Other times God may have to command our attention to stop and listen. Either way, being still can bring almost a weighty sense of God's presence. Here are some words from **Gloria Gaither** (Christian, wife, mother, singer, song writer, author, speaker)



Stillness is more audible than any sound, not tinny like so many sounds I hear today. The silence is full and rich, insistent.....demanding that I listen and suggesting that I'd be foolish not to. Only fools refuse the counsel of the wise, and this silence seems to know everything. It seems I've been a prodigal, traipsing along behind the band just like a thoughtless gypsy anywhere the living was easy, stealing morsels when I could have had the loaf.....The earth is calling me home to the simple and eternal things. It persistently calls me to reject the glitter of the transient and return to Father's house.

Can you relate to any of those sentiments, either now or in the past?

Have you ever been content with the morsels when you could have had the loaf?

Besides **BE STILL**, are there any other significant passages where God urges us to **BE** (or **NOT TO BE!**)? eg **Joshua 1: 6, 7 & 9**; & **Matthew 5:1-12** (including subtitle!!)

The Beatitudes

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

