

## **FBC Devotion Thursday September 30 2021 Surprise Surprise**

When I was preparing this devotion, little did I know what lay around the corner for Wyn on Wednesday morning.

**From time to time life can throw up the odd surprise.** An unexpected good turn, an act of kindness, a letter (remember those things), or an email from a friend completely out of the blue. Then there's the surprise that comes in a softly spoken cautionary tone, and a knowing look, followed by a, 'I think you better sit down...' **Not all surprises are welcome.**

While we have to factor in the unknown, actually knowing what is round the corner is somewhat reassuring. The rhythm of life on the farm, governed by the seasons, season-by-season, reminds us that, "He made the moon to mark the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down" (Psalm 104:19).

With Wednesday's equinox, this week saw the start of the Fall or Autumn season, and as we move into this 'Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,' as Keats put it, farmers across the countryside will be working long hours, gathering in the harvest of corn and soya beans.

Thanks will soon to be given in many a harvest service in rural churches up and down the land. Hopefully there will be no surprises weather wise, and it will hold until all is safely gathered in. **Like life itself, the Bible is also full of 'surprises' and 'wow' moments, as we would see them.**

For example, God promised Abraham that He would make him "...into a great nation..." (Genesis 12:2). An old man with no children? But we learn that "...*From this one man came as many descendants as there are stars in the sky, as many as the numberless grains of sand on the seashore*" (Hebrews 11:12).

Surprising? Not for God, for as we read in Genesis 18:14, "*is anything too hard for the Lord.*"

One of the greatest surprises visited upon someone in the Bible, outside of the news carried by the angel Gabriel to Mary (Luke 1:26-38) was probably Jesus appearing to his disciples after the resurrection, or Lazarus, having died - with his family grieving around his tomb - found himself miraculously brought back to life by Jesus (John 11:1-45). Just imagine him walking out of that tomb to the astonishment of all gathered.

In my life, one of the greatest life changing surprises to ever happen to me, was hearing the Gospel on a cold December night and realizing my need to be saved.

Or think of Saul's conversion on the Damascus Road in Acts 9, or his prison door swinging open in Acts 16 at midnight as they sang praises to God, and his chains fell off.

**What great surprises have you had in your life? Were any of them life changing?**

But the greatest surprise of all, is that regardless of who we are, or what we have done, just as autumn follows summer, God loves us with an everlasting love. It is a fact, and He offers us forgiveness, demonstrating it in this way "...*While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*" (Romans 8:5).

**Surprises can sometimes be fun, but the ones we remember the most are life changing.** Who knows what surprises the Lord has in store for us.