

## 4 Fruitfulness on the frontline

18/10/20

### 4 Ministering Grace and Love

#### Pray

Today we are continuing with our series on Fruitfulness on the frontline  
Based on Mark Greene's book of the same title

#### So what is our frontline?

= a time or a place where we meet people who are not yet Christians

So **if you are in paid employment**

your frontline will be where you work

And **if you work from home or are retired**

One of your frontlines will be the 8 households who live nearest to you

#### And what do we mean by Fruitfulness?

Book proposes there are 6 M's = 6 different ways to be fruitful

M1 = Modelling Godly character

M2 = Making Good work

And Today **M3 = Ministering Grace and Love**

And I have 4 points I would like to make

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## I Lets Speak Peace

and I have taken this heading from Luke 10.5 which says

<sup>5</sup> ***When you enter a house, first say, "Peace to this house."***

And the idea is simple

Let's speak positively about everyone

with the hope that they will rise to our expectations

and a great place to find this in the bible is **Proverbs 15**

so please turn with me to **Page 649**

Proverbs is a collection of wise sayings probably collected by Solomon

**Proverbs 15.1**

***A gentle answer turns away wrath,***

***but a harsh word stirs up anger.***

<sup>2</sup> ***The tongue of the wise adorns knowledge,***

***but the mouth of the fool gushes folly.***

<sup>3</sup> ***The eyes of the LORD are everywhere,***

***keeping watch on the wicked and the good.***

<sup>4</sup> ***The soothing tongue is a tree of life,***

***but a perverse tongue crushes the spirit.***

Let's think about this is practice

and I guess we all go to the supermarket

And going to the supermarket is NOT = Get in – get the stuff – get out

But rather **Let's do life at Holiday speed**

So what I do =

I google how long is the journey

Then I add 5 minutes to leave the house

And then I add 5 minutes **Margin**

So that I have 5 minutes to speak to people on the journey

I allow extra time for the chance encounter

And as I walk I pray – **who do you want me to speak to?**

And I look at people as I pass them

And I smile at the people I see

**Let's do life at Holiday speed**

And here are a load more examples

So lets be friendly to the mum with a noisy child  
Lets be friendly with the person at the check out  
Lets be friendly with our neighbours when they are in their gardens

Lets say thank you to the postman  
Lets say thank you to the school caretaker  
And this is a great one  
Lets phone up the council to say thank you when they sweep the street

And lets Praise people when they do something right  
It is called **one minute praisings**  
you catch someone doing something right  
and then you tell them what they have done right  
eg Sophie the prayers last week

## **I Lets Speak Peace**

## **2 Lets Practice forgiveness**

We all know the Lord's Prayer  
And so we know it says  
***Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us***

And so I need to **forgive Thames Water**  
Who after three phone calls  
still cannot set up a standing order during covid

And we need to **forgive the shop assistant**  
who goes off to find us something  
and seems to take ages before they come back

the reality is especially at the moment **many people are overwhelmed**  
by the uncertainty of what will next weeks rules be

and many people are off work shielding  
trying to keep themselves and their families safe from covid  
and we need to forgive the few  
who are left answering the phones and the emails  
**they are simply overwhelmed**

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and **let's be quick to say sorry and ask forgiveness** as well  
Last week I forgot to add a name to the prayer list  
Of someone who passed away at this time of year  
And so had to say "I am sorry, it was my fault"

And the same is true for all of us  
We are human and we make mistakes  
**To let's be quick to say sorry**  
**And let's practice forgiveness**

### 3 Lets eat and drink together

One of my favourite verses in the bible is **Luke 10.7**

Which says **<sup>7</sup> Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you,**

And for me this is a fundamental part of **Jesus second commandment** to **Love your neighbour as yourself** just look at how often in the gospels Jesus went into someone's home to eat

Its really frequent

And it is even easier for us

because we have a home to which we can invite people and I know many of you do this already

Or another way to say this is

**Use things to love people and do not use people to love things**

And we had some great examples of this in Eversley church

So for example

the Mums who took their children to school every morning made a rota

and they supplied the school staff room with **cake every Thursday**

and the staff loved it

and they knew it was the mums from church who were giving them cake

**Let's eat and drink together**

Eg when **Ali had an operation** to remove her cancer

I knew I wasn't great in the kitchen

and so I asked the church to make evening meals for us

and for a month we had supper delivered to our door each day

in the end I even had to say no puddings because there was just too much

**Let's eat and drink together**

and here in Hungerford

we have invited the neighbours for Christmas and Easter drinks

and for summer BBQ

and that has not been possible this year

so we have had 4 households round for Friday supper or Sunday lunch

**3 Let's Eat and Drink together**

### 4 Let's Care for and pray for the sick

And this comes in **Luke 10.9**

Where Jesus commands his followers to

**<sup>9</sup> Heal those there who are ill**

And there is a great illustration of this in the book

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or another example was **Elaine** who was a member of St Andrews Eccles

she had the best job in the world

she was a secretary in a company who imported Belgium chocolates

and when one of her colleagues had a difficult pregnancy

Elaine offered to pray for her and put her name on the prayer list

In due time her baby was born and all was well

But from then on

we usually had one person from Elaine's work on our prayer list

because they kept asking Elaine to pray for them

and I try to do much the same - **so if you want me to pray for you**

email [Prayer@StLawrencesHungerford.org.uk](mailto:Prayer@StLawrencesHungerford.org.uk)

and it will get to me and the prayer team - and what I do is

I have a pile of emails in my prayer place

And every day I read every email to God

And after about a month – I reply to the email saying

What would you like me to pray for now

And very often people ask me to keep praying

But to pray a slightly different prayer

### 4 Let's Care for and pray for the sick

**Let's pray for ourselves now**

**That we might Minister Grace and Love**

**On our various frontlines**