



BIRD'S EYE VIEW

Call to me and I will answer you (Jeremiah 33 verse 3)

At 04:17 yesterday morning, somebody in our house, who shall remain nameless, checked the time on their mobile phone. Somehow, in this process, they succeeded in dialling our home number which rang in my ear. This nameless person is blessed with efficient hearing and, despite the time of day, quick wits, realised what was happening so hung up quickly. Unfortunately, with relatives on other continents, who have been known to mix up time zones, my brain clicks into operation mode when the phone rings at strange hours and it took quite a while before I got back to sleep, after checking 1471 to rule out Australia, Zimbabwe and Switzerland... Well I needed sometime to think about my Twinspire article I suppose!

Modern communications technology has enabled us to be instantly in touch in a wide variety of ways. You can speak to people near and far by telephone (and with a videocam set up at both ends - you can see each other while you talk.) If the person you want to speak with is not there, or tied up with another call, you can leave a message for them. With mobile phones you can get hold of people any time and anywhere (I have heard an estate agent doing business behind a toilet cubicle door!). The written word can be sent via post, fax, email and text (depending how agile your fingers are!) to computers, laptops, and phones. The internet is available pretty much anywhere and 'social networking' sites like face book and twitter seem to be the latest addictions.

A movie called 'Bruce Almighty' starring Jim Carrey as 'Bruce' was made a few years ago. I don't think it would spoil the story too much for you if I said that 'Bruce' ended up having to be God for a few days. One of 'Bruce's' responsibilities during this time was to answer prayer. The continual stream of prayers got on his nerves a bit, so he turned them from prayers he could hear to emails. With his supernatural powers, he was able to deal with a huge number of email requests in a short space of time, but he found that this was too time-consuming and as he was continually faced with millions of requests, he just clicked on the 'Yes to all' option. The main result of this was that there was a record number of lottery winners – but they only won a few fractions of a cent each!

With all the communication media available, particularly of the instant kind, one gets to expect everything to happen at lightning speed. If someone contacts you by email, they sort of expect a reply by email (hopefully the next time they log on) and you really don't want to know what happens if you don't reply to a phone message. It often means that you rush to get back to them, without perhaps fully thinking through what they have said, or how your reply is going to make them feel. Email is an uncomfortable media, things you could have said face to face but you would never dare put in a letter you happily type in an email. Often, without the mitigation of your facial expressions and tone of voice, you end up with a written record of something that the recipient may find insulting. Christians, take care!

It seems to me that all this modern technology provides us with an accessible image of our heavenly father. He is always at the other end of a prayer – His mobile is never on silent. His webcam is set up to see us at our best and most shameful moments. Whenever you log on to <http://where2or3aregatheredinHisName.com> you will always find him ready to chat and share special moments with you.

God has always used the media of the time – He wanted to be friends with Adam and Eve and spend time with them – walking with them at the end of each day. He met with Abraham and shared his plans and ideas for Abraham's descendants. He gave Moses the Ten Commandments. He sent so many prophets and judges and leaders and kings. He sent His Son Jesus. Jesus spoke with people wherever he found them, by the lake, from boats, by a well and in the temple. He told them stories and parables to explain God's love and showed them what He and God were trying to do by performing miracles. The Holy Spirit came upon the apostles and disciples with tongues of fire and they spoke in other languages and performed miracles for themselves. Jesus is the Word which was 'with God in the beginning' and the Word which was 'breathed into' the Scriptures. The motto of the City of Glasgow, 'Let Glasgow flourish', is through the preaching of this Word, which is still the same yesterday today and forever.

My prayer for you as individuals, for us as a congregation and the nation of Scotland, is that we may make contact with God and experience the life changing effects of His Spirit as we flourish in this place.

***With all love
Tracey O'Brien***