

Breaking Bread

Newsletter –

The Brisbane Society of The New Church,
Brisbane and South-East Queensland

April, May, June, July 2021



Art Work By Lenore Sandow

EASTER FAMILY SERVICE



**Looking up, they saw that the
stone had been rolled away,
although it was extremely large**

Mark 16:4

The Brisbane New Church Community will be holding an Easter Sunday message for 2021 on Sunday the 5th of April at 10:30am. This will be a family message directed towards adults and children which means that we will not be holding children's church as we do most family services. We will explore why it is that the Lord seems to leave us in times of difficulty and how our heart's affections have the power to hold us.

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How Do I Love Myself?

Self-Esteem Verses Self-Acceptance

*There is no cure for illusions.
There is only the opportunity for discovery.
Daniel J Boorstin (Historian).*

I grew up in an era where ‘*self-esteem*’ or the pursuit of a healthy self-image was often talked about and sought after. This conversation really began to take off back in 1969 with the publication of the international bestselling book ‘*The Psychology of Self-Esteem*’ by psychotherapist Nathaniel Branden. His theory went something like this – every psychological issue or problem that an individual can endure has a strong connection to self-esteem. He believed that low self-esteem was at the root of all manner of disorders with depression and anxiety at one end of the spectrum and behaviours such as child molestation at the other end. It is no understatement to say that concepts surrounding a healthy or low self-esteem have impacted all our thoughts and ideas. But was Nathaniel Branden correct?

Thousands of experiments and five decades later have led to the discovery that low self-esteem is not the root of all our internal troubles. In fact, research conducted by psychologist Roy Baumeister found the very opposite (see ‘*Exploding the Self-Esteem Myth*’, 2005). He and other researchers discovered that people with a high self-esteem were more violent and aggressive, more likely to abandon long-term relationships (over small things too), and more likely to drink excessively, take drugs and cheat in relationships. Furthermore, in general, many people today suffer from feeling too good about themselves without any reasonable evidence or achievements.

On the other hand, many of life’s highest achievers, greatest leaders or successful go-getters do not ‘feel’ good about themselves and do not depend on a high self-esteem to accomplish their goals and dreams. The pursuit of a high self-esteem will tend to block good relationships and our overall success in life. Organisational psychologist Tasha Eurich says it this way ‘*It is easy to feel good and not so easy to be good*’.

Self-esteem is not the answer we have been looking for. ‘*How can this be?*’, you might say. ‘*Doesn’t feeling good about myself help me in life?*’ Strangely, the answer is ‘no’. Often the goal of ‘feeling good’ about ourselves clouds our ability to self-examine and thereby make improvements. There are times in life where we need to push through all the obstacles before us and a dose of ‘feel good confidence’ can help us persevere. But in general, trying to always be ‘super positive’ about ourselves can and will block the very insights we need to overcome and achieve our personal growth, individual goals, and ambitions.

Self-acceptance verses self-esteem

So, what are our options? In comes ‘self-acceptance’. This virtue allows us to make mistakes and not always have to be ‘perfect’. It allows us to not have to always ‘feel’ good about ourselves but gives us room for pain and growth. Equally, when we learn to see and acknowledge our own imperfections, we become much more gracious on others. Self-acceptance is not an excuse to be lazy or just accept my shortcomings with no intention of improvement. That is just another subtle way of falling into the ‘feeling good about myself’ pit from a different direction. Self-acceptance needs to be coupled with a willingness to become a better and more loving person who seeks to grow and give back in life.

Three Steps to Help Develop Greater Self-Acceptance.

1. Accept the gift of imperfection.

When we go through battles and struggles, we groan. 'Not this again,' we might say. But without resistance the weightlifter knows that the muscles will not grow. Without resistance the kite cannot fly. And without resistance we cannot become more like our Lord – in His image and likeness.

Try to reframe your next internal struggle as the opportunity for you to grow and move further down the road of imperfection towards His perfection. The faults we have do not mean that we are irreparably broken but are just opportunities for His Glory to manifest in our lives. That is why Isaiah 1:18 tells us that our 'sinfulness' is really an opportunity for the Lord to heal us and that we need His higher Wisdom to see ourselves in this new way –

Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

And the Apostle Paul, as if seeing the 'age of self' to come, warned us 2000 years ago by saying –

For by the grace given to me I say to every one of you not to think more highly of yourself than you ought to think, but to think with sober discernment, as God has distributed to each of you a measure of faith. (Romans 12:3 NET)

And

Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. (Philippians 2:3 NKJV)

2. Become comfortable with criticism.

Criticism hurts. It has that stinging quality to it. And that makes it a very useful tool for spiritual practice. There is a saying 'I had to pinch myself to be sure I was awake'. The sting of criticism can awaken us out of a 'feeling mighty good about myself' sleeping moment. It is important that we become comfortable with painful feedback and even welcome it as a tool for growth. Hebrews 12:7 contains this very idea -

As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? (NLT)

Swedenborg describes in Secrets of Heaven 5036:2 the essential need for us to endure 'internal' criticisms and spiritual battles if we are to be regenerated -

As for temptations themselves, they are going on while a person is in the actual process of being regenerated, for no one can be regenerated unless he also undergoes temptations; and the evil spirits around him are the means through which those temptations are brought about. In temptation the person is brought into a state in which the evil that possesses him, that is, possesses his own essential self, is dominant. Once he enters this state evil and hellish spirits surround him, and when they realize that inwardly he is protected by angels those evil spirits reactivate the false ideas he has previously contemplated and the evil

deeds he has committed. But the angels defend him from within. This conflict is what the person experiences as temptation...

Note – Spiritual discipline is different from the traditional idea of punishment and involves a love to see the one being disciplined and brought through trials succeed in life.

3. Do not judge!

The Lord warns us against passing a judgment by saying ‘*Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:*’ (Luke 6:37).

It is important that we apply these verdicts from the Lord towards our inner life as well as toward those we live and interact with regularly.

To not pass judgement on another begins inwardly by not passing judgement on ourselves. Self-acceptance means that I can acknowledge and accept my faults(forgiveness) without needing to sentence(punish) myself. In fact, the very act of acceptance through acknowledgement means that I can give myself enough room to reconsider my actions and choices and thereby summon a new resolve to resist such choices in the future. This is what a lot of psychologists are referring to when using terms such as ‘self-compassion’ or ‘self-kindness’. It is not the permission to ‘go on’ acting inappropriately but instead, the grace and kindness to give oneself room to learn and grow into what is appropriate. It also gives us the space to seek for the Lord’s help, kindness, intervention, and support in our internal struggles.

In conclusion, self-acceptance gives us the power of humility and honesty so that we may see ourselves more clearly and thus receive the necessary insights to grow and change. It gives us all the benefits often associated with a ‘high self-regard’ but few, if any, of the negative qualities veiled by an overly positive societal view of high self-esteem.

Be strong, Soul Warriors,
Rev Darren Brunne
AMEN



The Months Ahead Unpacked

An explanation of the upcoming events from April to July and a little beyond

There is a possibility that the air conditioning on the ground floor at Dutton Park will have been restored by Easter and we are all looking forward to that!

A booklet of quotations from the Teachings of The New Church on the subject of “Temptations”, only up to now available in English, has been translated into Chinese by Guang bin Liu. 1,000 copies have been printed, 600 remaining in China and 400 have now arrived in Brisbane to be made available to interested Chinese speaking people across Australia..

And Guang’s Wednesday evening Chinese Swedenborg Study Group moves on to a study of Swedenborg’s “Divine Providence” at the beginning of April.

Its great to have Nathan Brunne permanently back in Brisbane following the years he spent in the A.C.T studying at The University of Canberra.

FIRST SUNDAY FAMILY LUNCHESES

We are greatly looking forward to resuming our tradition of celebrating together over lunch following first family Sunday Services.

As we move forward on this front, we continue to find conflicts in satisfying Covid19 compliancy. I suggest that we continue our current policy of BYO lunch so that we may engage times of fellowship. A sandwich and thermos of coffee or tea may be all that is required. Looking forward to being able to fellowship once again around the sharing of a meal...

Rev Darren Brunne

MARK AND THE MESSIAH

The family service in May will see us continuing the series – *Mark and the Messiah* – *Chapter One – Part Two*. In this series, we explore the Book of Mark progressively each month, discovering the personal internal sense of Sacred text while drawing out a number of practical goals for us to work on.

SACRED CIRCLE

UNLOCKING THE POWER OF SACRED LANGUAGE - 40 PARABLES

We are now in the process of exploring the final parable ‘Abiding in the Vine’. As we continue with *Unlocking the power of Sacred Language* we will move through the Seven Days of spiritual work using those seven categories (one for each of the seven days of the creation story) to study the Lord’s parables. Thus, moving forward with Sacred Circle, our time of exploration over the parables will equip us with revelation and wisdom to help us move forward through any of the seven stages we may find ourselves in –

1. New Light to help us travel – **Day One** (light-bearer/lamp)
2. Power to separate from the ‘ego’ and observe – **Day Two** (Seer/eagle)
3. Re-engage with the ‘new’ earth. Same activity, new level – **Day Three** (traveller/map)
4. Receive special guidance – **Day Four** (navigator/compass)
5. Nurture, expand & cultivate our inner promised land – **Day Five** (Merchant/pearl)
6. Defend against and concur negative states within – **Day Six** (warrior/sword)
7. Relaxing into and delighting in loving encounters – **Day Seven** (watchman/cup)

ABIDING IN THE VINE

MANIFESTATION SUNDAY – 100 VIRTUES

I would like to remind everyone about our third Sunday Service - the *Abiding in the Vine* project. Each month we study a different virtue and focus in, especially for that month, on manifesting more of this virtue in our lives. We have recently finished the virtue **Friendliness** and on April 19th we will be working on **Gentleness**.

This project allows us to focus in on **Day Three** spiritual work – ‘New Earth’ – re-engaging with daily life but from a higher plane of existence and **Day Five** spiritual work – Cultivation of the Promised Land.

NEW CHURCH DAY

Our New Church Day Celebration date every year is June 19th. This year the 19th falls on the Saturday right before the third Sunday of June. Therefore, our Society, the Lord willing, will celebrate New Church Day on the 20th of June, 2021.

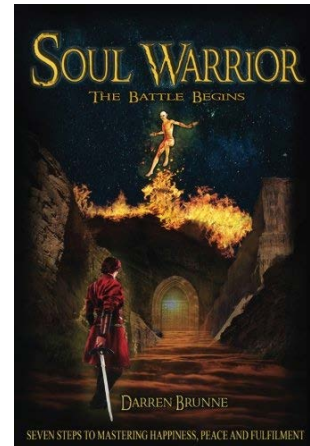
SOUL WARRIOR

Late in the year of 2017, I completed the novel 'Soul Warrior' in which you, the reader, are taken on a journey of discovery into the practice of spiritual warfare. Follow apprentice Mathetis on his own awakening as he learns to use the whole armour of God. You will be introduced into all seven stages of the armour through a part story, part parable approach. These seven pieces of armour support our journey through the Sacred Seven Days of the Creation Story.

You can purchase the book through Amazon for \$15.99 US

https://www.amazon.com/Soul-Warrior-Mr-Darren-Brunne/dp/1981445838/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1514376979&sr=1-1&keywords=soul+warrior+darren+brunne

or pick up a copy from our Brisbane Centre for \$20.00 when attending one of our services. Alternatively, you can contact me via drbrunne@gmail.com and I can post you a copy of 'Soul Warrior' for \$20 AUS + postage.



Birthdays

To all our friends celebrating birthdays throughout these months, we wish you birthday greetings and blessings.

May

4th Alexis Evans, Oliver Barns, 7th Helen Arnold, 13th Darren Lawler, 15th Tasha Lee, 18th Kevin Attwater, John Sandow, Susan Heldon, Marna Heldon

June

5th Rachael Arnold, 16th Shane Heldon, Glenn Alden, 20th Ainsley Heldon, 23rd Tori Barns, 24th Georgie Duff, 28th Benedict Barns

July

3rd Ben Arnold, 3rd Elijah Brunne, 4th Jayden Heldon, 19th Angus Glenn, 20th Amy MacFarlane, 25th Saxon Heldon.

CHURCH CONTACT DETAILS

Our services are held at our Centre – 1/24 Railway Terrace, Dutton Park.
Always check the last page of the Calendar for services.

Pastor: Rev. Darren Brunne, contactable on 0421 319 252

Treasurer: Mr Paul Evans, contactable on 0428 796 471

Secretary: Mr Darren Lawler, contactable on 0402 086331 or darren@inneractivelearning.com.au
Address: 53 Leslie Parade, Slacks Creek, Qld, 4127

For activities on the Gold Coast and Mt. Tamborine meetings contact Mrs Gaye Heldon on 0419 778 717
Sunday School Co-ordinators: Bev Sheppard, contactable on 07-3844 7187 or revshep@tpg.com.au

CALENDARS

April 2020

Sun 4th

Easter Service/Sermon
led by Rev. Brunne at 10.30 a.m.

Sun 11th

Sacred Circle, 10.30 a.m.

Fri 16th

Gold Coast Discussion Group

Sun 18th

Abiding In the Vine Service/Sermon
led by Rev. Brunne at 10.30 a.m.

Sun 25th

Free for Phone Conference and Visitations

May 2020

Sun 2nd

Family Service/Sermon - Mark and the Messiah
led by Rev. Brunne at 10.30 a.m.

Fri 7th

Gold Coast Discussion Group

Sun 9th

Sacred Circle, 10.30 a.m.

Sun 16th

Abiding In the Vine Service/Sermon
led by Rev. Brunne at 10.30 a.m.

Sun 23rd

Free for Phone Conference and Visitations

June 2020

Sun 6th

Family Service/Sermon - Mark and the Messiah
led by Rev. Brunne at 10.30 a.m.

Sun 13th

Sacred Circle, 10.30 a.m.

Fri 18th

Gold Coast Discussion Group

Sun 20th

New Church Day Service/Sermon
led by Rev. Brunne at 10.30 a.m.

Sun 27th

Free for Phone Conference and Visitations

July 2020

Sun 4th

Family Service/Sermon - Mark and the Messiah
led by Rev. Brunne at 10.30 a.m.

Sun 11th

Sacred Circle, 10.30 a.m.

Fri 16th

Gold Coast Discussion Group

Sun 18th

Abiding In the Vine Service/Sermon
led by Rev. Brunne at 10.30 a.m.

Sun 25th

Free for Phone Conference and Visitations