

Friends

I am writing this just after all that snow and ice has finally thawed.

I hope you have managed to stay safe and warm, and have not been too frustrated by the weather wreaking havoc on our plans and routines! More days indoors with the kids because of schools being closed was not how I planned to start January, and I really don't like travelling in the snow!

But winter is not all dark and cold and inconvenient. Last night the cold weather meant clear skies and the children and I were spotting constellations of stars as we got home and there was the most amazing huge orange full moon. A winter spectacle, as in summer, they are not awake when the stars and moon come out.

Walking back from church this morning, the path was slippery, but the birds were singing cheerfully, and the sun was shining. Blue skies and birdsong are not only the preserve of summer and can be enjoyed from a window.

And whilst we may feel far from spring, any keen gardeners amongst you will know that the seemingly barren is not dead. Before the last leaves fell, the buds of the next cycle of life were already there.

The seasons we experience give us Spiritual insight into how it feels to live a mortal human life. Some seasons are easier than others, some we prefer, some remind us of times gone past, some cause us to wonder about the future. The human life is a mixed bag, but even in the times we most fear or dislike, God is ever-present and still at work.

Just like the stars the birds and the buds, there is joy and hope to be found in all seasons of life, if only would raise our eyes to see, open our minds to notice, reach out to connect.

It is my firm belief that God knows and loves each one of us. But we choose how much of a relationship we want to have with him.

We can treat him like a safety net. Like grown up children leaving home, exploring their independence, not calling for weeks, only to run home when trouble strikes. He understands, and he is ready and waiting.

We can treat him like an impersonal figure of authority. Someone to stay on the right side of and not bother unnecessarily. Like a teenager keeping their head down at school and staying out of trouble. He understands your efforts and fear.

We can treat him like a punch bag, throwing all our anger and frustration at the world at him for not sorting it out and then giving him the silent treatment. Like a teenager who is finding out how big the world is and how small they are. He can take it.

But what if there was another type of relationship?

But what if we chose to get to know him and to stay in touch? Like a grown up child who has a parent they trust and rely on. Someone they check in with, take advice from and enjoy being with. That's what He hopes for.

Through bible reading, prayer, worship and fellowship together and serving others we can draw close to God. Whatever season we are in, he is there with us.

Don't let the natural season of life deter you from the truth of God's deep love for you.

Don't let your circumstances, your frustrations or your fears mislead you.

Your heavenly Father loves you, is around you, is waiting for you, and longs for you to draw near.

That's the who and why of Jesus.

May you have that Epiphany this year, and draw close.

Blessings to you all,

Jo