

To all members of the St James Traditional Services

A Weekly Word of Encouragement: Revive and Restore us, Lord

Psalm 80 – read it reflectively.

Reality for God's people: the Lord, exalted and enthroned in highest heaven, is a loving shepherd; caring, leading and ever ready to listen to His people, always concerned and intimately connected.

So if the Lord **seems** far away, guess who moved?

Sin is turning away from God and interrupts our fellowship with Him. When our devotion becomes a duty, rather than enjoying His beauty we need revival; to be restored, to experience the light of God's face shining on us, experiencing His presence and favour, the joy of God's salvation renewed – back to spiritual reality of relationship with our Lord.

That is the recurring chorus in vv. 3, 7 and 19: to be renewed and restored to spiritual reality, our intimacy with Him.

Israel, God's ancient people, are described as a vine of God's planting (v. 8-11). Jesus called Himself the True Vine (John 15) and only by being connected to Him does His life flow through us, enabling us to become like Him, and to enjoy Him. (Galatians 5:22-25). Jesus is the anointed leader, the Son of Man at God's right hand (v. 17) who brings us into real connection with God, our loving Shepherd. If I am conscious that my relationship with God is slipping into that grey area of mechanical religious practice, simply going through the motions of mere duty, I need to ask Jesus to revive me, to bring me back to spiritual reality, to turn me to Himself, to renew and restore me to the beauty of seeing His face shining on me as reflected in His Word, and in prevailing Prayer.

Pray Lord, how can I lose my attraction to the most beautiful face in the universe? Revive my soul and reopen my eyes to Your glory and grace, as I gaze on Your likeness in Your Word, and help me to grow into Your likeness. Amen.

Remember:

- keep praying daily
- keep reading God's Word
- keep in touch with one another, and know that I am only a phone call away: 0438 455 493.

With Christian love,

Robert