

THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS



It's on everyone's lips. The cost of living crisis. Rising prices. Spiralling fuel and food costs. Heating bills doubling and even tripling. Exorbitant rents. Countless businesses folding. Strikes in numerous sectors! Hospitals and schools struggling desperately to make ends meet.

Who or what is to blame? Power-crazed Putin for invading Ukraine? The pandemic? Our flawed politicians? No doubt world leaders must shoulder a portion of the blame. But surely the reality is that we're all to blame. Our constant craving for more and more things is a major contributor to this crisis.

What are we to learn from such a crisis? What is God saying to us? At the very least He is saying that we're not to put our hope in our finances for our security. We must recognise that money, possessions and property aren't what life is all about.

What God said to a nation over two thousand years ago seems so relevant for our day. 'Consider your ways. You have sown much and harvested little. You eat but never have enough; you drink but never have your fill. You clothe yourselves but no one is warm. And he who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes.' Haggai 1v5b-6



The economic crisis of that day was a wake-up call and could this not be the same loving message from God?

As the hard earned savings of many today leak out of a bag with holes we're being made to see that things we put our hope and confidence in are so fragile. We're investing in the wrong stuff, building our lives on the wrong foundation.

God in His great love brings about these crises to grab our attention. God wants us to see that the treasures we rely on such as our money, property and position in society will never satisfy us or make us secure long-term.

God is shouting to us that these things we consider to be riches are not lasting riches at all. He is showing us that we are grabbing on to wrong things in our search for happiness and security.

A very striking sentence from the Bible explains where true wealth is found:

'the Lord Jesus Christ ... though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor so that you by His poverty might become rich.' 2 Corinthians 8v9

Paul here was writing to people who had become Christians and reminding them of what Jesus Christ had done. In astounding love the Lord Jesus left the riches of heaven and came to our spiritually bankrupt world. The reason Jesus came was to rescue sinners from the judgement of God. He did this by taking the punishment for sin that sinners like us deserve. On the cross Jesus suffered the ultimate poverty, being crushed under the wrath of God to rescue us from our spiritual bankruptcy and from God's wrath to come.



When we see that we are spiritually destitute, separated from God because of our sin, and we turn from living our own way and trust in Jesus alone for acceptance by God, we become really, really rich! Ransomed, healed, restored and forgiven, we're adopted into God's family and become His precious sons and daughters. And we're guaranteed a place in heaven with Christ as our eternal home.

This is the lasting wealth that Jesus Christ offers you right now. God's Son says to you today, 'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.' Matthew 6v19-20

We want to offer you a chance to discover the riches Christ offers you through:

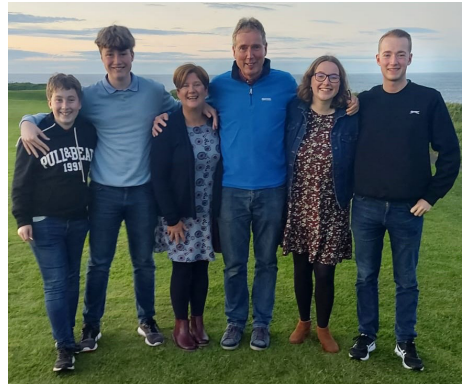
Christianity Explored

A 7-week course designed to let you find out for yourself the riches that Jesus Christ offers sinners like us. You won't be asked to read aloud, pray or answer any questions. You can ask questions if you want to and take the course on your own or as part of a group. You can do the course where and when you want. We can arrange it at a time and place that suits you.

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Peter Jemphrey is our new pastor. He and his wife Jenny, along with their daughter Rachel and three boys, Thomas, Chris and Timmy moved to Knockbracken in June 2022. Peter had been serving as Pastor in Galway for the past ten years. He grew up in East Belfast so he has now returned to his roots and is enjoying serving Christ in a part of the world he knows well. He enjoys playing squash and badminton and is a long-standing (long-suffering) Leeds United fan!



Above: The Jemphrey family



Weekly meetings:

Sunday School	Sunday 10:30am
Morning Service.....	Sunday 11:30am
Evening Service.....	Sunday 7:00pm
Happy Tots.....	Wednesday 10:00am
Prayer Meeting/Bible Study/Missionary Meeting....	Wednesday 7:30pm
Youth Group	Saturday 7:30pm

Address: 37 Knockbracken Road, Belfast, BT8 6SE
Find us on Facebook, Instagram and Youtube