

This is now the 6th Reflections for Today – and the 2nd attempt at meeting together using modern technology, thus avoiding being in each other's breathing space! Are you getting used to it yet?

There were 7 of us together last Sunday, and 14 of us today. There might have been more, but for one or two concerns about the security of the program that I'm using to do the group video conference calls.

It's true that although many organisations are using Zoom – there have been recorded instances where security has broken down and people have been shocked and distressed by a new phenomenon currently called 'Zoom-bombing'. The word is derived from another fairly modern practise called 'photo-bombing'. This is where someone deliberately gets into the frame of a photograph that you're about to take - and then 'low and behold' – you have a grimacing child or youth just behind an otherwise perfectly arranged and posed couple on their wedding day or something similar!

The reason that these things happen – is that some people are just mischievous, and also, because - if it CAN happen – then you can almost guarantee – that one day - it WILL happen.

That is why on-line bank fraud and telephone scams happen – the criminal mind is highly inventive and like I said before – if it CAN happen - someone will succeed at MAKING it happen. (The saying – The 'Devil finds work for idle hands' comes to mind – it's almost like people are enticed to rise to the challenge and defeat all the barriers designed to hold them back or keep them out.)

The reason I am content that these Sunday Morning Meetings are sufficiently secure is as follows:

1. You don't know there is a meeting going on unless I've told you that I'm hosting one and what time to arrive at the meeting.
2. If you've got the meeting code and the password to enter the meeting – it's because I emailed it to you personally, therefore giving you a personal invite to a virtual meeting in my kitchen! (Much the same as if I'd invited you to a BBQ or something - I wouldn't expect you to turn up with your neighbours or friends without telling me!)
3. When you arrive at the meeting, you wait in a virtual 'waiting room' where I can see who is waiting there and decide whether a) I recognise you by your name or email address. b) Decide whether to let you in based whether I know you and trust you!
4. If anything DOES go wrong in the meeting, with an individual – being the host, I can turn off their microphone, turn off their camera or eject them from the meeting.
5. If anything goes wrong with the meeting in a more serious way – I can shut down the meeting for EVERYONE.

So, all in-all I believe it's pretty secure - and let's face it - back in the good old days – someone could theoretically barge into the chapel, shout abuse, throw things about, tear up the Bibles or spray us with a semi-automatic machine gun – so let's get things in perspective here!

OK – so why have I spent so much time going over this – there must be something else? There IS something else – and it’s because Jesus said this...

Matthew 22:8-14 *“Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’ So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. ‘Friend,’ he asked, ‘how did you get in here without wedding clothes?’ The man was speechless. “Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’” **“For many are invited, but few are chosen.”***

The lesson is this – everyone is offered Salvation through Jesus Christ – and The Lord himself has told us that it is OUR job to share the good news and invite our friends and neighbours into the Kingdom of God – but there are some people who either think they’ve always been a Christian or a church-goer, or are just as good as a so-called ‘Born Again’ believer. But in the end – it is the HOST who decides whether to let them into the Kingdom – they might be able to fool you and me, they might be almost indistinguishable to genuine born-again believers – they might say the right things, quote the right scriptures, even speak in a spiritual manner – but they won’t get past the host – because HE is also the door keeper.

John 10:7-10 *Therefore Jesus said again, “I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. **I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved.** He will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*

So you see, It’s OUR job to spread the good news and offer out the invites – some will come to faith and some won’t – but often – even people who seem to say all the right things – say they have repented, say that they believe, even up to the point of fulfilling the command to be baptised – some of them may not actually be HIS Sheep – and even if WE can’t tell (because some of us don’t have the spirit of discernment perhaps) – JESUS KNOWS those who are HIS – and if you’re NOT HIS – you won’t be entering His Kingdom. When the Rapture occurs – he won’t be calling you – because your treasure remains on earth.

Matthew 7:21-23 *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ **Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’**”*

You might get past me into a ZOOM Meeting – but you won’t get past Jesus unless HE knows you! Soon (and very soon) we might be *Zooming up* into the clouds to meet him in the air!

Until we meet again, keep safe, get to know Jesus better, and make sure you get in!
God Bless,
Rob