

Celebrate what God is doing!

I once led a team arranging events for the celebration of the new Millennium, We hired the town cinema for a week, showing of the life of Jesus. We also put on a production of a musical called 'Hopes and Dreams', in which I played the devil in one particular sketch. My favourite event was a celebration of songs and worship in the Town Hall, with nearly a thousand of us in attendance. We had Cannon and Ball as our special guests sharing their recently found faith in Jesus. I remember about a week after the event someone telling me they had been disappointed because they didn't know all of the songs! I was so deflated ... thankfully not for long. I realised that they themselves had missed out by focussing too much on what they were used to.

Take this week's Gospel for example. John reports how Jesus had just healed a man who had been unwell for thirty eight years. A man seemingly without family or friends, as no one was willing to carry him into the waters of a local pool, said to have healing properties. From the words Jesus spoke to the man we get the famous phrase 'take up your mat and walk'.

Now you would have expected that everyone would be delighted and excited and even euphoric for the man. No. One of the religious leaders was actually annoyed because the man was carrying his mat, deemed to be work, on the Sabbath. Hard to imagine I know. I hope that we would never be such killjoys.

Recent surveys are showing that younger people are becoming more interested in faith and the Bible. The Bible Society are calling it a 'quiet Revival'. Let's pray they are correct and that it will grow. Indeed the recently released Church of England attendance figures for 2024, were up a little, for the fourth year in a row. Something is brewing and the Spirit seems to be at work in a new way. Perhaps the church may need to tweak and adapt things a little to welcome these new believers. When that time comes may we be very different from that religious leader, who couldn't cope with change, even when God was at the centre of it. Have a great week and Go Well!

