

The Church of Scotland

Canonbie Utd. L/W Liddesdale

In The Good Old summertime

6th. After Trinity.

27-07-14.

“Then *the Lord planted a garden, in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man he had formed.*

He *made all kinds of beautiful trees grow there and produce good fruit...*

a *stream flowed in Eden and watered the garden; beyond Eden it divided into four rivers.*

Then *the Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and guard it.”*

Genesis 2:8-9,10,15 (paraphrased)

Wow! The glory that is the Borders summer, the bright sunshine, the long evenings, the midges!

Everywhere, people are the bustling with various summertime activities.

I seriously doubt that there is anywhere else on earth that is as beautiful as these lands in the months of July and August, when the sun shines.

Having survived the winter we are ready to bask in the heat and relax for a while.

So this morning I want to talk very briefly about a few of the things I believe God wants to see happen in our lives as we enjoy this special season.

First, what should we be getting done this summer?

As any Borderer can tell you, the summertime is the time to repair the infrastructure that has been affected by the harsh conditions that sometimes prevail throughout the rest of the year.

This summer has been a major time of restoration around the manse.

We've been busy in the house and in the garden; **Holes** in fences are being repaired; **old** and rotted wood is being replaced; grass, flowers and a few vegetables have and will be planted;

Trees have been trimmed and will be pruned; **We've** painted and cleaned and hauled loads of old junk to the dump;

So, yes, this is the season to make repairs.

What needs repairing around your house?

I'm not talking about the building where you live now... I'm talking about YOUR HOUSE...

I'm talking about you, your core, your very self.

What, in your house, what in you, has been beaten and battered by past harsh conditions? **You** know, we all need to do more than just relax in this enjoyable season because, as you well know, it's not always going to be this way. **As** it says in Hebrews; *“Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.”*

When repairs need to be made things are going to go in one direction or the other.

What is lame will either be dislocated or healed.

Someone told me this week that they had lost something; that worship was not the same, and that prayer for them had no appeal.

Which way will it go from here?

Well, either you make repairs or you head toward demolition.

The Psalmist said, *“The LORD builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the exiles of Israel. He heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds.”*

So maybe we need to draw close to God and be repaired this summer?

Maybe we need to suck up all the life we can consume in these wonderful summer months?

One thing that always amazes me after the brutality of our winters is the way life springs forward in the summer months.

You would think that no living thing could survive the really bad winter cold and snow; yet, every year, life conquers again.

The psalmist wrote, *“Blessed is the man... who is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers...*

For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous...”

Anything that is alive grows and we have some growing to do that will take more than one lifetime!

St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians saying, *“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Don’t miss this growing season, you may miss a few church services, though I don’t recommend making a habit of it, but don’t take a break from walking with the light of life!

Because this season is the season to be transformed, this is the season to be repaired, and to experience some real spiritual growth. **The** summer is the ideal time to get into the Word of God and experience renewal of your mind by its new ideals and its new attitude!

So, make repairs while the summer sun shines; **Do** some transformational growing this summer; and, finally, because this is not the land of endless summer, prepare...

All too soon the air will begin to feel a little different, the leaves will start to change, the harvest will be brought in, and we will be facing a new season...

Proverbs six tells us, **“Go** to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! **It** has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest.”

Proverbs twenty-seven tells us, **“Be** sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; for riches do not endure forever, and a crown is not secure for all generations.

When *the hay is removed and new growth appears and the grass from the hills is gathered in, the lambs will provide you with clothing, and the goats with the price of a field.*

You *will have plenty of goats' milk to feed you and your family and to nourish your servant girls."*

What must we do to prepare for the winter in these days of on-line shopping and central heating?

Did you know that my 'phone rings much less in July and August?

Is it because people are problem free in the summer?

No, I don't think so... the "enemy" does not take time off... I think the big difference is the amount of sitting around contemplating our problems at other times.

Prepare now for winter...

Maybe you might plan to commit to one of the home groups, or Bible study groups or commit to a ministry here at the Church.

Maybe you might determine now to be in church every Sunday, you know it's not that hard?

Above all, remember that God is with you no matter what season you're in.

If you leave this place this morning with only one thing in mind, remember this, God is with you.

No matter what season you are in right now; **And** you may be experiencing an autumn or winter-time today;

Some of you, I know, may be going through some hardships.

Some of you might have sadness in your life right now;

Some of you may be experiencing despair and discouragement, but God is always with you.

In the summer time we sometimes forget God.

Things are going too well to remember God.

Too many times in this season we sit God on the shelf, except for times of need...

When things start going wrong, then we remember God and prayer.

When things are good, it doesn't mean that we should set God aside, it's right and proper that we should enjoy that season in the sun.

God is an excellent guide in every season. **Take** note that He is our guide and take note that we don't work for God.

I have been a minister for a long time but I don't work for God, I work with God, or, at least, I try to

I have met a lot of Christians that work for God; **They** all keep their calendar and diaries all busy and full...

But, Jesus said, *"take my yoke upon you and learn from me. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light"*.

A yoke harnesses two people together. **I** don't work for God, I work with God. **God** said to take His yoke upon you and learn from Him.

He will be with you, He is the friend that sticks closer than a brother and will never leave you or forsake you and He will always, always, be by your side.

Of course, every season has an ending. **If** you are in the summer time of your life, yes! Praise God, it is summer.

But recognize also that that season, too, will end.

And if you feel that you are in a winter time of your life right now.

If you are in a time of sadness, a time of difficulty;

Then keep your chin up, keep a smile on your face.

Keep an attitude that is shorts, T-shirt and flip-flops.

Spend some time outdoors, make use of each new day because that season will also end;

And God will take you out of that winter time of your life.

And there will be a new birth, there will be a new spring time and there will be a new summer-time in your life.

All of us sitting here have walked through many of these seasons.

We've have probably walked through a number of bright summer-times and dark winter-times.

And, do you know, summer or winter, our God has walked right alongside us and our God always will do, come what may.

So I'm preparing in this record-breaking summer;

This afternoon I am going to put my Christmas lights up before it is -4 outside!

Let us Pray

Creator God who breathed this world into being, and who is discernible within the harmony of nature; the perfection of a butterfly's wing; the grandeur of a mountain range; the soaring eagle and humming bird;

Thank You for this world which You have created.

Thank You for summer sun, which reminds us that Your creative breath is still alive and active.

Thank You for the warmth of Your love, sustaining this world, Your garden. **Amen.**