



## Welcome to Café Explore for October

Find a quiet space with a cup of coffee and settle down to share these thoughts and prayers.

Are we going back into hibernation? Or do I mean lockdown two!

We have to trust that our country's leaders choose the right path for us all, but they have never had to do this before, so we question, debate, argue and sometimes disagree with them and each other.

Doubt niggles at us, we try to put it to one side but in times of trouble it raises its head, and we worry.

Just as we may have doubts regarding the way forward chosen for us by our government so we sometimes have doubts about our faith and in such times it can feel a very lonely place stuck in at home with few people to chat with or discuss our feelings. Café Explore has always been a place where together we can study and discover our faith often through study of passages from the Bible. It has also been a place where we can stray away from the subject as people voice differing opinions, thoughts and concerns. Sometimes we just need to talk! I miss the banter, the laughs, the cake and the coffee but continue to plan Café Explore as hopefully it helps you and me to continue to explore scripture and prayer knowing we are all still in touch with each other. Happy to receive comments from any of you [marief2930@outlook.com](mailto:marief2930@outlook.com)



So, let us consider John the Baptist, he recognises Jesus then has doubts. As usual when you read these quotes from the Bible read them as if for the first time noting anything that 'hits you between the eyes'!

First from the Old Testament

### Isaiah 40:3

**A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.**

Question – Where is this 'wilderness'? Is it literally the desert or the desert in our lives without God?

### Malachi 3:1

**'See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts.'**

Question – And what is 'his temple'? A building or . . . is it you and me?

Now to the New Testament -

### Matthew 3:1-3, 11-12

**In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.' This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'"**

**'I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing-floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'**

Question – What do you think were John's expectations of Jesus?

### **Matthew 11:1-3**

**After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee. When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to ask him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?'**

Question – John had doubts!! Why? When have you ever had doubts about your faith? – If we were together now we would probably share that we are not alone in this and we support each other.

### **Matthew 11:4-6**

**Jesus replied, 'Go back and report to John what you hear and see: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.'**

Question- Consider Jesus' reply particularly the underlined verse, what might Jesus be saying about John? Has John misunderstood Jesus' mission? Could this be because he is in Herod's prison and doubt is creeping in?

### **Prayers**

Sometimes as doubt creeps in, we need reminders of God's love for us in his wonderful works. As we look through a window we can worship His wonderful creation.

**Thank you, Lord, that we are able to worship you.**

Just as we have started to come together again in small numbers to worship, we may worry, especially if we need to shield; that it won't be safe and so we stay at home, but online we can meet to worship.

**Thank you, Lord, that we are able to worship you.**

Creativity is a gift from God, let us give thanks for all musicians and artists whose work we can admire and use in our worship.

**Thank you, Lord, that we are able to worship you.**

Using the following words from a song written by Michael Frye, let us invite Jesus into our worship, if you know the tune sing out loud or find it on You Tube! [www.youtube.com/watch?v=EG-l1kK-BpU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EG-l1kK-BpU)

Jesus, be the centre  
Be my source, be my light,  
Jesus

Jesus, be the centre  
Be my hope, be my song,  
Jesus

*Be the fire in my heart,  
Be the wind in these sails,  
Be the reason that I live  
Jesus, Jesus*

Jesus, be my vision,  
Be my path, be my guide,  
Jesus.

**Thank you, Lord, that we are able to worship you. AMEN  
God Bless, Marie x**