

Better Together



“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son but only the Father.” (Mark 13:31-32)

January. A new year dawns and with it the certainty of uncertainty.

The world continues its existence in a perpetual cycle of change and unknowing. And it is in this perpetual cycle of change and unknowing that we live out our lives in the day-to-day. And in this curious life we live, we experience a contrast between the generations. Young people, less set in their ways, still in the throes of developing their own identities, are naturally more flexible when it comes to managing change. One example by way of illustration, is the very sharp edge of tech and electronic devices, which seem to me to advance and develop with lightning speed. Young people find this exciting and invigorating and can't wait for the next new invention. As someone in his middling years, I find myself wanting to stick a bit more with what I know and am quite happy to hold on to that for a bit longer, rather than being continually pushed out of my comfort zone. The advantage of youth, still being a bit less sure as to what an emerging personality might yet evolve into, more willing to experiment with alternatives and hence more open to dealing with change in

ways which older folks struggle and are sometimes ticked off for being 'set in their ways' - resistant to keeping up with the times.

The contrast, however, is that older people, who, by the grace of God, know themselves more fully, are more aware, more comfortable in their own skin, are less phased by the unknown of the younger generation. Tech-savvy kids laugh at parents and grandparents and tell them that they are dinosaurs who have yet to progress beyond the C19th. These same kids run to them when they want advice on negotiating an area of life they are still discovering for themselves - money, love, and where they think they want to go in life but are still not yet so sure. They worry more about what tomorrow will bring; their still developing sense of adulthood not yet quite so able to reassure them. The younger generation filled with anxious bravado, flexible and willing to experiment, laughing at the seeming intransigence of the older folks. The older folks being pushed into the constant change of the new world. Yet more assured, less phased by the unknown, more willing to tolerate the absence of security, find themselves being needed by the younger generation for comfort and stability.

In this world, there is the constant of change and unknown. In Mark's Gospel, the Son must give way to the Father whilst the Father rejoices in the work of the Son.

"Heaven and earth will pass away", the anxiety of the young. "But my words will not pass away", the comfort of the old. In this constant world of change and the unknown rests the place of faith. The faith of the younger generation in the old. And the faith of the older generation in the young. The young need the old. And the old need the young.

At the start of a new year, it is good to remind ourselves that different generations set out together. Better together at negotiating the certainty of uncertainty.

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