**A mother’s words to her daughter** October 2023 emm

You are loved by the great and living God, in fact you are His treasured possession; your name is written on the palm of his hand (Isa 49:16). He cares about your life and knows all your disappointments and difficulties. He loves you and promises to be with you and help you every day.

Thankfulness is a strong antidote to disappointment – try and think of 10 things to be thankful for every day.

Everyone’s life is like painting a picture. Your job is to make your painting as beautiful as you can. Some people get a big piece of paper and a wonderful array of paints and brushes. Other people only have a small piece of paper and a few colours. By that I mean that there are many things that you can’t change about your life and your circumstances: the family you come from; your health; your skills and abilities; your financial position; your husband and family. We need to accept the things that we can’t change. But given the piece of paper that we have, and the colours we have been given, paint the most beautiful picture you can. One of the most amazing and admired paintings in the world is the Mona Lisa. It is very small and has very few colours. Remember, too, that as a Christian, the Master Artist is willing to remove your mistakes when you ask him to, and help you in your painting. He breathes beauty and love into your work.

My mother always used to quote the verse, “Inasmuch as it is up to you, live at peace with all men” (Rom 12:18). I really like that verse, but I extend it: inasmuch as it’s up to you, make your home a warm and loving place to be; inasmuch as it’s up to you, make your friendships rich and rewarding; inasmuch as it’s up to you, make your workplace a good place to be; inasmuch as it’s up to you, make your marriage kind and respectful. You can’t help how other people behave, but don’t react to their behaviour, live positively and graciously yourself.

The lotus is a lovely, delicate flower, yet it blossoms in the filthiest and most polluted rivers and lakes.

True contentment comes from within. Don’t expect other people to make you happy – you will be continually disappointed. Nourish your inner self; be thankful for every blessing; enjoy your hobbies and your interests; don’t compare yourself with other people or try to compete with them; cherish your friendships; take time to pray; spend time appreciating beauty; do things that give you joy.

You can’t change other people. If you can accept all their flaws and annoying behaviours, and be kind to them anyway, you will find a measure of peace.

Take time to enjoy this stage of your life – this very time. It will never come back again. Your children or grandchildren will never be this age again. This is the only time you will be this age, and in these circumstances. You only have this period in your life for a very short while. Enjoy it and cherish it.

Negativity is a damp grey blanket that casts its miserable shadow over everything. Intentionally seek to find something that is good and something to be thankful for in all that you do and in everyone you meet. Try not to be negative about other people. Once negativity becomes a feature of your thoughts it spoils everything and it becomes hard to see what is good and worthwhile in the other person. For every negative thing you observe, see if you can find one positive thing.

Prayer is powerful because God is powerful and gracious and good. Pray about the things that distress you, commit them to God, and then try not to think about them until the next time you pray. Trust that in some way, in His time, God will change the things that are hurting you. In the meantime, live each day with courage and kindness.

If you commit your way to the Lord and seek to live according to God’s patterns and principles, you can be sure that God will be with you, helping you, making your path straight.

Love is patient; love is kind; it does not envy; it does not boast; it is not proud. Love does not behave rudely or put itself first; love does not get angry easily and it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices in the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.                                                  1 Corinthians 13:4 -8

Reflection on climate change

Climate change is nothing new. What about the seven year drought/famine experienced in Egypt in Joseph’s day! What about the huge flood in Noah’s day! This was indeed anthropogenic. It was caused by mankind’s sin, not his coal-burning power stations. ‘The Lord saw the wickedness of man was very great in the earth and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually’ (Genesis 6:5).

More reflections on climate change

What if climate change is not the result of emissions of carbon dioxide and other gases from coal-fired power stations, gas ovens, and ICE cars? Imagine what could have been done with all the money being spent on ‘renewables’ and a whole new fleet of electric cars. When will someone say, ‘we did all this but the climate has not changed’- 2030, 2050, 2080, 3000?