

Pastor's Patch



Sow righteousness for yourselves, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unploughed ground; for it is time to seek the Lord until He comes and showers His righteousness on you.

(Hosea chapter 10 verse 12)

It's probably the first question I'm asked as I return to work – "*How was the Sabbatical?*" Actually it's not an easy one to answer in one sentence, so here's a longer answer for you.

At the start of June, the Lord laid this verse from Hosea ch10 v12 on my heart. Let me unpack how it seemed to be so pertinent to me.

Sow righteousness for yourselves

This was a call to pay attention to invest in a regular pattern of prayer and Bible reading. Spending time with the Lord is never wasted, and focussing on other books and films was a way He really drew me closer.

reap the fruit of unfailing love,

It so happens that this summer our garden has been producing massive amounts of produce. Plums, pears, apples, raspberries, tomatoes, and grapes – too much for us to eat as a family, so we have given a lot away. This was a great illustration for me of God's abundant provision, something which we are always intended to share rather than just keep to ourselves.

and break up your unploughed ground;

Every farmer has areas that are undeveloped. So too every follower of Jesus has areas of their lives that are unproductive, unfruitful and unhelpful in our walk with the Lord. Again, this has been a time when gently, and with some necessary pain, the Lord has been revealing areas where He invites me to love Him and others more deeply.

for it is time to seek the Lord, until he comes and showers His righteousness on you.

Sabbatical gave me that time to notice what the Lord is doing, how His Spirit is at work in the church and in our lives and that if we let Him, He will shower us even more with His blessings and transforming Spirit.

So I return humbled, changed, recharged and restored for the journey ahead. Thank you again for the privilege of sabbatical, and I'm already hearing the exciting ways that the Lord has been at work in Brixham Baptist Church in my absence. As leaders and members and congregation, may you go on growing, being blessed and being a blessing to others. AMEN

Darrell Holmes