

VINTAGE ADVENTURE

@ HOME

Our Loving God



Dear Vintage Adventure at Home friends,



How quickly the new year seems to be going! For our February issue we are focusing on another very old hymn, which some of us may recall from our childhood – Tell me the old, old story of Jesus and His love. If you like history, Ann has discovered some interesting information about the hymn's background.

Have you realised that the whole Bible is about Jesus? The Old Testament points to His coming as a fulfilment of prophecies, the Gospels introduce us to Him with accounts of His life, death and resurrection, and the Acts of the Apostles and the letters of the New Testament describe the early growth of Christianity and share God's word for our daily lives. The Bible concludes with a vision in the Book of Revelation, pointing forward to Christ's Second Coming in glory and the bringing in of a new creation, when evil will finally be defeated.

We all love a good story, and Jesus told many stories in the form of parables. Dave reflects on a well known one about the Lost Coin in our Worship section, and you can find out more about making sense of parables and where to find them in the piece 'Stories Jesus told'.

Ann has also illustrated a little poem about birds for you to enjoy, and as February includes St Valentine's Day, we have a Valentine's Day wordsearch for you to tackle, as well as trivia about happenings in the month of February and our usual puzzles.

So find somewhere comfortable to sit and allow God to draw close to you as you read the reflections, stories and activities in this Vintage Adventure at Home. Perhaps you will be inspired to send us a few lines with 'your' story?!

With love and blessings from Cynthia and your Caraway friends

Tell me the old, old story

Of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and His glory,
Of Jesus and His love.

Tell me the story simply,
As to a little child;

For I am weak and weary,
And helpless and defiled.

Tell me the old, old story;

Tell me the old, old story,

Tell me the old, old story

Of Jesus and His love.

Tell me the story slowly,
That I may take it in -
That wonderful redemption,
God's remedy for sin.

Tell me the story often,
For I forget so soon;
The early dew of morning
Has passed away at noon.

Tell me the same old story
When you have cause to fear
That this world's empty glory
Is costing me too dear.

Tell me the story always,
If you would really be,
In any time of trouble,
A comforter to me.

Kate Hankey (1866)

WORSHIP



The song *Tell me the Old, Old Story* is about the comfort we receive as we hear the good news about Jesus.

The Coin Story

Jesus told loads of stories. It's one of the reasons we remember what He said. Here's one of them:



"Suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbours together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." (Luke 15:8-10)

The simple centre of this story is that God is searching for a relationship with each one of us. In all the highs and lows of our lives, with the rain in our faces, or the sun on our skin, through the seasons and years, God is inviting, nudging, hoping, working for a life-giving personal relationship with each one of us.

Have you noticed? Here's a prayer you may want to pray - or to reform with your own words.

Prayer

Dear Father God, thank You for wanting a relationship with me.
Please help me turn to face You.



If there are things You want me to turn away from and leave behind,
please show me. Come and find me.

Party

In the story Jesus told, when the precious lost coin had been found, there was rejoicing in God's house. We learn that God loves a party. God is excited about finding you. God celebrates **you**.

Have a think ... Do you believe that God longs for, and celebrates, friendship with precious you?

The next time you spot a party popper in a drawer or on a shelf somewhere, why don't you grab it, and pop it as a sign that you are grateful to God for His joy about **you**?

THE Story

One day Jesus was talking (at night) with a religious leader who was trying to work Jesus out. At one point in the conversation Jesus explained a bit of His own story this way:

'God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.'

(John 3:16)



Later on, after Jesus died and came back to life, it became clear what He meant. Jesus is God, dying for the world, to save us from life without God.

Your Story

There's an idea that the universe, and history, and you, are all part of God's story - God's good plan for everything.

Somewhere inside this big story of God-and-us is your little story: The story of your loves and wins, your struggles and learning.



Invitation

You are invited to accept God's story for you.
God loves you, God gives everything (even God's own life) to be with you.
You are valued and celebrated.

What is the chapter you and God are writing together now?

Reflection



'Tell me the old, old story' is a good old Gospel hymn. It was written in 1866 by a Victorian spinster Arabella Catherine Hankey (1834-1911). Her father was Thomas Hankey, a banker and member of the Clapham Sect - a group of social reformers, around the 1780s to the 1840s, many of whom attended Holy Trinity Church, Clapham (then a village south of London but now part of south-west London). Despite the name 'sect', most members belonged to the Church of England and its leaders, who included William Wilberforce, were social reformers especially as regards the abolition of the slave trade.



With her sister, Arabella taught at a Sunday school in Croydon and started a Bible class for girl assistants in the large West End shops. She suffered from poor health, and apart from a memorable journey to South Africa, she had an uneventful life. She continued to support missionary work and spent her later years in hospital visiting and doing good works. Her hymn was set to a catchy tune by William Doane, which contributed to its appeal, and it was often sung

to great effect at Moody and Sankey's revival meetings in Britain and in America.

The text is very simple – the 'old, old story' is the gospel message of Jesus, His life and teachings and His redeeming love that brings healing, forgiveness and comfort to all who acknowledge their weaknesses with the simplicity of a child. She admits her own physical and intellectual failings and asks for the comforting stories to be told to her simply, slowly, often, softly and always. It brings to mind another favourite mission hymn '*Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.*' Although both hymns tend to be dismissed as too childish and perhaps sentimental, they remind us how significant the story of Jesus is for people of all ages.

From childhood everyone needs and loves stories for their fascinating subjects and for the togetherness they can bring as well as moral and



practical instruction. Jesus was a consummate story teller, who could express His teaching in a highly memorable way that could be understood and enjoyed by men, women and children in His time, and still be relevant in the 21st century. His examples were of recognizable domestic situations

that were easily understood, while His longer parables carried a meaning and deep wisdom that merited discussion and sometimes an explanation for the disciples. The Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan have become part of our language, while the parables of the Lost Sheep, the Reluctant Wedding Guest, and the Sower are as thought provoking today as they were 2000 years ago.

Stories Jesus Told

Many of us can recall from our Religious Education lessons at school, or perhaps from attendance at Sunday School, listening to stories Jesus told. Several of these were parables. As you can see from David Hunt's list following this, there are lots of them!

Why parables?

Owing to the huge crowds which came to hear Him, mostly because of the miracles He was doing, Jesus often taught in parables. He always explained the meaning clearly to his disciples privately. The original parables were spoken to the hearers gathered round, though nowadays we tend to read them.



What are parables?

Clive Thorne suggests that 'parables are not *allegories*, in which each element of the story represents some aspect of the message, but stories from **everyday life**, with a spiritual meaning. They typically make just *one main point*. So, for example, a mustard seed starts off as a tiny seed you can barely see, but over time it grows into a large tree, which blesses those around with its shade. The



coming of God's Kingdom into our hearts cannot be seen, but over time (it takes a human lifetime for a seed to grow into a tree), it changes us, enabling us to be a blessing to those around us.

If we look at the titles of Jesus' parables and their contents, we see that they often draw on scenes from agricultural life: the growing of crops, keeping of livestock and fishing, as well as social customs such as weddings, hiring of labourers and buildings etc.' Although more difficult for us in the 21st century to identify with, all these would have been familiar and common place settings to the people of first century Israel. It is therefore important to find out as much as possible about the historical context and customs at the time, to help us interpret the meaning of parables correctly.

Jesus often told His listeners, “The Kingdom of God is near.” The Jews were familiar with prophecies in the Old Testament about the coming of the Kingdom of God. However, their ideas about how this would happen were frequently wrong. The religious leaders, the Pharisees, thought that a precise keeping of details of the Law of Moses would make them acceptable to God, rather than having a sense of sinfulness and a desire for love and justice. Several parables describe God’s mercy and grace in accepting repentant sinners and the general unready state of the Jewish people to enter God’s Kingdom. Others describe the nature of that Kingdom. Thorne organises parables as follows:

- **The Coming and Growth of the Kingdom** - e.g. *the Sower, the Mustard Seed, the Yeast.*
- **The Grace of The Kingdom** -e.g. *the Two Debtors, the Waiting Father or Prodigal Son, the Generous Employer.*
- **The People of the Kingdom** -e.g. *the Tower Builder, the Hidden Treasure, the Good Samaritan.*
- **The Consequences of Refusing the Kingdom** –e.g. *the Great Feast, the Ten Bridesmaids, the Vineyard.*

Which is your favourite?

Jesus’ parables are there to evoke a response in us.

I am touched by the parable of the *Prodigal Son*, which describes the love of the Father patiently awaiting the return of his wayward son. It reminds me that God is extremely generous with the love He showers on those who turn to Him, whatever they have done.

In contrast, I am always challenged by *The Good Samaritan*, a story pure and simple, with a plot, a beginning and an end. I wonder how I would have reacted, if I had come across the injured man by the roadside.

Do any of Jesus’ stories have special significance for you? Why not choose one to explore using the list!

PARABLE	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
Lamp under a bowl	5:14-15	4:21-22	8:16; 11 :33
Wise and foolish builders	7:24-27		6:47-49
New cloth on an old coat	9:16	2:21	5:36
New wine in old wineskins	9:17	2:22	5:37-38
Sower and the soils	13:3-8,18-23	4:3-8,14-20	8:5-8,11-15
Weeds	13:24- 30,36-43		
Mustard seed	13:31-32	4:30-32	13:18-19
Yeast	13:33		13:20-21
Hidden treasure	13:44		
Valuable pearl	13:45-46		
Net	13:47-50		
Owner of a house	13:52		
Lost sheep	18:12-14		15:4-7
Unmerciful servant	18:23-34		
Workers in the vineyard	20:1-16		
Two sons	21 :28-32		
Vineyard tenants	21 :33-44	12:1-11	20:9-18
Wedding banquet	22:2-14		
Fig tree	24:32-35	13:28-29	21 :29-31
Faithful and wise servant	24:45-51		12:42-48
Ten virgins	25:1-13		
Bags of gold (minas)	25:14-30		19:12-27
Sheep and goats	25:31-46		
Growing seed		4:26-29	
Watchful servants		13:35-37	12:35-40
Moneylender			7:41-43
Good Samaritan			10:30-37
Friend in need			11:5-8
Rich fool			12:16-21
Unfruitful fig tree			13:6-9
Lowest seat at the feast			14:7-14
Great banquet			14:16-24
Cost of discipleship			14:28-33

Lost coin			15:8-10
Lost (prodigal) son			15:11-32
Shrewd manager			16:1-8
Rich man and Lazarus			16:19-31
Master and his servant			17:7-10
Persistent widow			18:2-8
Pharisee and tax collector			18:10-14

Everyone has a story!

Storytelling is a wonderful process for all! My favourite thing about storytelling is that everyone has a story. Personal stories can be of happy times, traumatic times and ordinary times, with each bringing their own lessons. Storytelling can be used for personal, spiritual and even business growth.



The first time I noticed storytelling I was a young 20-year-old about to cross the Atlantic and a colleague insisted that I write down the experience. Fast forward 20 years I find myself writing the next chapter, which is of a traumatic experience, that I see as a consequence of that initial adventure. The moral I took from both chapters is one of strength and that humans are stronger than they can imagine.



Telling stories
Touching lives

There are some wonderful community interest groups that focus on storytelling, as a means of inspiring others.

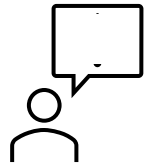
Touch Network CIC (<https://touch.network>) is a storytelling

community group that holds storytelling evenings, where someone tells the story. I have been to a number of these events and have always been inspired by the stories I have heard. Out-of-the-box, which some of you may be familiar with, focuses on storytelling. How to tell a story with a moral to a group and then open discussions on what it means to the listeners. I cannot recommend all of these enough. I have experienced all of them, multiple times and I found them shaping the way I view the world.

Stories are a wonderful way to share your experiences and life lessons with your loved ones. Christmas just gone I bought my father-in-law a storytelling experience from an online company called The Story Keepers (<https://www.thestorykeepers.co.uk/>). He has a lifetime of stories but struggles to tell them. This tool sends him a weekly question to which he replies. At the end of the year, he gets a personalised (with pictures) book with all his answers. I bought this as a gift for him but also as a future present for his four grandchildren to cherish and learn from, when they are ready.

So, my challenge to you, is to tell your story in any way with which you are comfortable, what is the worst that can happen...? *Lo Carr*

What is your story?



We all have a story to tell, we have all lived and experienced things, both good and not so good. Maybe you could write your story down to share with others, maybe friends, family, grandchildren. If you were up for sharing your story with us in a future VA@Home we'd love to hear from you. Here's some prompts to get you started.

- When and where were you born?
- What was your first job?
- What is your happiest memory?
- If you've been abroad, when was your first trip?
- What other experiences in your life have been significant for you?

The Bible's Big Story

Have you ever realised that the Bible, which consists of 66 separate books, is like a library with all the books in the collection telling **one big story**? All the various parts offer us different perspectives on a single theme - God's love for His creation - which runs right through the Old and New Testaments from Genesis to Revelation.



Some parts are hard to understand for us 21st century readers, because the Bible is recounting events from another time and culture. Written by a variety of authors, each inspired by God, over a period of 1500 years, it contains prose, poetry, prophecy, philosophy, history and letters. Its divine inspiration means that the Bible is not just a record of people's religious reflections, but is God's own self-revelation and therefore authoritative. Importantly, the Bible tells us that, unlike any other book, it is God's *living word*, through which God speaks to each one of us.

From time to time we all wonder about our identity, why we are here at all, and why the world is as it is. The purpose of the Bible is to tell us about God's relationship with the world, **who He is, who we are, who Jesus is, and what He offers each of us.**

We read that God's creation was perfect but was spoiled, when the first humans disobeyed God's command. As a result, evil and sin entered the world. This has been the problem for humanity ever since. But God made a promise that in time, He would solve the problem for us, as we are unable to sort out the mess ourselves. The Old Testament recounts how God stepped into history and revealed Himself to a man called Abraham, born about 2000 years before Jesus. God gave Abraham a promise that through him all nations would be blessed. Abraham's son Isaac was the father of Jacob, whose family

eventually moved to Egypt. Here the numbers of God's people increased, which frightened the Egyptians, who oppressed them. God sent Moses to deliver the Israelites. After their escape, they wandered in the wilderness for forty years. Moses died, and God brought His people into the promised land under Joshua's leadership. Sadly, God's people kept repeating a cycle of turning away from God, then repenting, only to forget about God once more, behave badly, suffer the consequences, and repent yet again. One of their most important rulers was King David, although he was a deeply flawed character.

The **story of the Old Testament points towards Jesus**, the One Who fulfilled God's promises, and through Whom all families on earth will be blessed. Although born into the line of David, Jesus is a King Who will reign forever, because God is His Father and He is the Son of God.



We learn more about Jesus in the New Testament, especially in the four Gospels. Between them, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John recount the key events of Jesus' life. They emphasise that God loves each of us with a profound love and offers the gift of forgiveness and eternal life, if we truly believe and trust in the Lord Jesus, Who paid the penalty for our rejection of God.

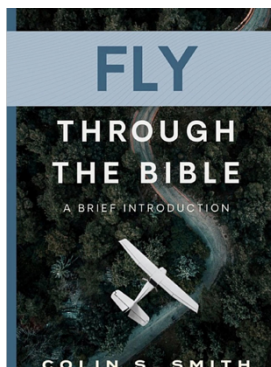
After a three year public ministry, Jesus was arrested, falsely accused, tried, and died on a cross. His body was laid in a tomb, which Pilate ordered to be sealed with a huge boulder, and guarded day and night. But on the third day, when some of Jesus' female followers came to the tomb, they discovered it empty. After His resurrection, Jesus appeared not only to His friends but to multitudes of people, before His ascension into heaven to return to His Father.

Jesus promised He would always be with those who trust Him. In His place, God the Father would send the Holy Spirit to comfort, guide and strengthen believers. The Acts of the Apostles and the letters to early churches, contain guidance for all Christians, wherever they are in the world, of whatever nationality, and from whatever generation.

Finally, the Book of Revelation uses vivid picture language to describe the end of the world as we know it. The Bible warns us that Jesus is going to return and when He does, He will require each of us to give an account of our lives to Him as Judge. He will bring all evil, suffering and sorrow to an end and initiate a new creation, in which believers may live with Him.



If you'd like to explore more, a very short and accessible overview is provided by Colin Smith in Fly Through the Bible



Fun Riddle

What loses its head in the morning and gets it back at night?

To answer this riddle, follow the steps below. Once complete, the unmarked words will reveal the answer.

- Cross out 7 fast food chains
- Tick 7 words related to romance
- Circle 6 card games
- Underline 6 names for girls starting with 'A'
- Scribble through 7 animals from the Chinese zodiac
- Shade 7 types of insects

A	KFC	Dragon	Flirtation	Uno	Beetle
Solitaire	Cricket	Subway	Amanada	Pig	Courtship
Nando's	Affair	Pillow	Snake	Poker	Abigail
Andrea	Blackjack	Grasshopper	Passion	Rabbit	Burger King
Tiger	Taco Bell	Go Fish	Alice	Love	Mosquito
Starry-eyed	Termite	Ox	Aphid	McDonald's	Amy
Cicada	Amber	Starbucks	Canasta	Monkey	Fairy-tale

The Birds
by Estelle White



*"Cheep," said the sparrow
On the chimney top.
"All my feathers are known
to God."*



*"Caw," said the rook
in a tree so tall.
"I know that God
gladly made us all."*



*"Coo," said the gentle one
the blue grey dove.
"I can tell you
that God is love."*



*"Chirp," said the robin
with his breast so red.
"I don't work at all
yet I'm fed."*

*High up above
sang the lark in flight.*

*"I know the Lord
is my heart's delight."*

*"Whoo," said the owl
in a leafy wood.*

*"Our God is wonderful
and wise and good."*



It happened in February



1. Which King of England died in February 1952?
2. After the demise of the Shah of Iran who returned after 14 years in exile?
3. What type of accident killed Buddy Holly, Ritchie Vallens and the Big Bopper in February 1959?
4. What major online social networking service was founded in February 2004?
5. In February 1964, which country did the Beatles perform in for the very first time?
6. Who was released from prison after 27 years in February 1990?
7. Which life-saving medication was discovered in February 1929?
8. Which American heiress was kidnapped by the Symbionese Army in February 1974?
9. Which country celebrates New Year on the new moon that appears between 21 January and 20 February?
10. Valentine's Day falls on this day in February.
11. Name the French girl who saw apparitions of the Virgin Mary in February 1858.
12. How often does February have 29 days?
13. Shrove Tuesday is a Christian festival that occurs in February or March on the day immediately preceding Ash Wednesday. This day is also known by other names - can you name them?
14. Which gangster is considered responsible for the St. Valentine's Massacre in February 1929?
15. What is considered the gem of February?
16. Which huge festival is held every year in Brazil, 46 days before the Easter festival?
17. Which flower do some people consider to be the flower of February?
18. The 16th president of the United States was born in February 1809. What was his name?



Spot 20 differences



Word Search

VALENTINE'S DAY



W B H Z E C T J U C H H A F
H E A R T B Z Z Y A C F O O
B E P P G N V F N N H E U R
R X P O S D A L Q D O B H G
H D Y N I W L O F Y C R U E
K F P P A K E W W D O U G T
Y I U D L M N E E Y L A S -
O C N L P P T R T N A R J M
Z Q R D O I I S F H T Y P E
Z C A O N V N C A H E R C -
K A A J C E E K R I P A V N
F R I E N D S P T P L S R O
F D L O V E R S K X I A G T
Y S Z N G R O M A N C E N M

Lovers

Red

Lace

Kindness

Happy

Heart

Hugs

Romance

February

Cupid

Sweetheart

Pink

Love

Flowers

Cards

Valentine

Chocolate

Friends

Forget-me-not

Candy



The Story of God's Care for Us

As we celebrate Valentine's Day this month here's a Quiz about all things red



1. Which planet is known as the Red Planet?
2. What emotion is the colour red said to represent?
3. Name the fairytale about a girl who ventures into the woods to visit her grandmother.
4. What is 'red' in French?
5. Baron von Richthofen was a fighter pilot with the German Air Force during World War I. What is he famously known as?
6. What is the international organisation that provides assistance to victims of war or disasters?
7. In a deck of cards which suits are red?
8. Name the number 1 hit single released by British reggae band UB40 in 1983.
9. Which country has a flag with a red circle in the middle of a white background?
10. Which red flowers are worn on Remembrance Day?
11. What is Alice Springs, in the centre of Australia, also known as?
12. In Formula One racing, Ferraris are red. True or False?
13. Which U.S. state's name means 'coloured red' in Spanish?
14. Name the plaza near the Kremlin, in Russia.
15. What do you call unnecessary bureaucracy?
16. In art, what colour is complementary to red?
17. What does 'Moulin Rouge' mean in English?
18. Which 80s British soul and pop band has 'Red' in the name?
19. This Australian woman had a big hit with "I Am Woman". Who was she?
20. This shade of red is used to describe the colour of a red gemstone.

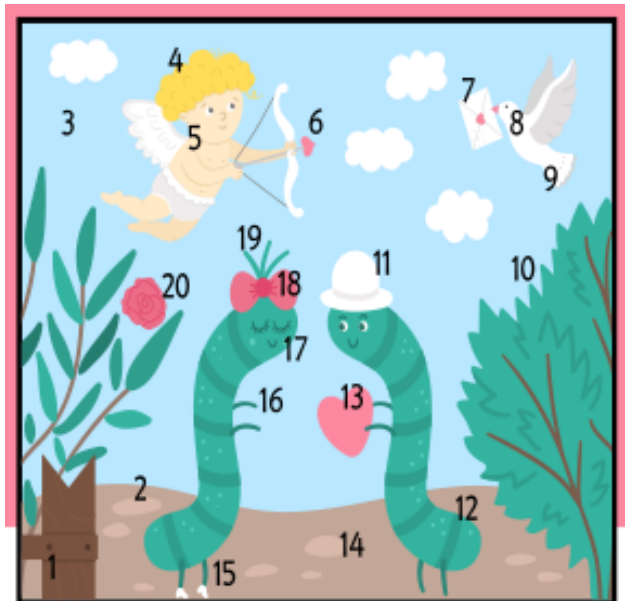
Answer to Fun Riddle: A Pillow

Answers to Red Quiz

1. Mars
2. Anger
3. Little Red Riding Hood
4. Rouge
5. The Red Baron
6. The Red Cross
7. Hearts & Diamonds
8. Red Red Wine
9. Japan
10. Poppies
11. The Red Centre
12. True
13. Colorado
14. Red Square
15. Red-tape
16. Green
17. Red Mill
18. Simply Red
19. Helen Reddy
20. Ruby

Answers – it happened in February

1. King George VI
2. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini
3. Plane crash
4. Facebook is founded by Mark Zuckerberg
5. USA
6. Nelson Mandela
7. Penicillin by Sir Alexander Fleming
8. Patty Hearst
9. China
10. 14th
11. Bernadette
12. Every 4 years
13. Pancake Day, Fat Tuesday
14. Al Capone
15. Amethyst
16. Carnival
17. Violet / Primrose
18. Abraham Lincoln



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Messy Vintage

from The Bible Reading Fellowship

