

Finding the Missing Peace



By Stephen G Baker

This year I've been invited to three weddings. Most people like to receive an invitation to a wedding. When the invite drops on the doormat it is so exciting. Maybe it's the prospect of a new outfit, meeting old friends and sharing the joy with the happy couple.

But whom do you invite? The wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle was held on 19 May 2018 in St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle. In the run-up to the event, I looked at the suggested guest list. There were some people on the list whom you would expect to be there. There were other guests whom I'd never heard of. We were told that there would be 2,640 members of the public including 1,200 people from the community. Why would they be there? Simply because they had been invited.

It struck me that heaven will be like that. There are some people whom you might expect to be there and others who you might be surprised to see there. Everyone who is there will have one thing in common – they were invited, and they accepted the invitation.

Incidentally, the guest list for Harry and Meghan was limited as St George's Chapel would only seat 800. However, that's not the case with heaven, we are all invited, there is room for all! Jesus still says to everyone who will listen 'come to me... and I will give you rest', Matthew 11. 28. The invitation to come to God for forgiveness is still available. Listen to the offer 'he who hears My word, and believes in Him who sent Me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment; but has passed from death into life', John 5. 24. Naturally, we are all heading for separation from God, but He offers an invitation to heaven.

An invitation to a wedding assumes that you do not pay. It's all paid for and you go free. Weddings are not cheap, but when you are invited to a wedding someone else is paying. Heaven is like that. It's not cheap to gain entry but it has been paid for by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible says that 'Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God'. 1 Peter 3. 18.

To go to a wedding, you have to accept the invitation. You can't just turn up! It's just the same with heaven. The invitation has been made but you need to reply. As failure to reply to a wedding invitation implies you are not going so failure to reply to God implies that you are not going to heaven either. If you intend to accept God's invitation remember to reply – 'whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved', Romans 10. 13.

I hope you have a great summer; if you are going to a wedding, have a great time.

Listen, watch or read more on my webpage,
www.findingthemissingpeace.co.uk



The Pet Column

By Abbas Hussain of Principal Pets

The Anatomy of a Dog's Neck

We often take a dog's neck for granted, but those necks, like ours, do so much. The main function of a dog's neck is to support the head and protect the spinal cord.

The neck contains many important organs and bones, including: thyroid gland, lymph nodes, trachea, arteries and veins, oesophagus, larynx, vertebrae and spinal cord.

Every time we pull our dog we increase pressure on the trachea, larynx, thyroid, lymph nodes and blood vessels, and even the spinal cord and vertebrae. Often a dog won't understand why a lead jerks the head and neck, causing pain and can lead to anxiety or even aggression in the dog.

Thyroid Damage

Dogs pulling on their leads can cause damage to the thyroid, causing inflammation and bruising. The immune system repairs this damage, but eventually this can wear down the thyroid leading to hypothyroidism, slowing down the dog's metabolism and this can lead to the dog becoming overweight.

Blood Vessels

When a collar puts pressure on a dog's neck it can put pressure on the arteries and veins to and from the head. The build-up of blood pressure in the head can lead to glaucoma and even brain damage due to lack of oxygen.

Larynx, Oesophagus and Trachea

Signs of a damaged trachea include a honking cough and trouble breathing. Sometimes a dog can faint or there may be a blue tinge to their gums. Damaging the oesophagus can lead to issues with swallowing food, vomiting or even acid reflux. While collars are not known to be a factor in laryngeal collapse and paralysis, it is recommended for larger and prone breeds to wear a harness rather than a collar or anything else around a dog's neck.

Spine and Nerve Damage

Yanking on a collar can cause whiplash type injuries leading to damaged vertebrae and even nerve damage. Nerve damage can cause a tingling sensation in the dog's front paws leading to excessive licking. Damaged vertebrae in the neck can cause the dog to be in pain for the rest of its life.

Front Attach Harness

By walking your dog on a front attach harness, you take all the pressure off a neck while also being able to control the dog relatively easily. The lead attaches at the front of the harness, under the dog's head. When the dog tries to pull, the lead gently turns the dog towards you from the chest, taking all the pull out of the dog.

Surgeons warn of serious hand injuries due to dog leads

As an aside, surgeons are warning of a marked increase in severe hand injuries caused by leads and pulling dogs. To avoid injury, dog owners should avoid hooking fingers under a dog's collar, not winding the lead around their hand or fingers – particularly retractable ones – and keep larger dogs on a shorter lead to avoid them building up speed that can cause a wrenching force.

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