

One Monday morning, when I was aged about seven, the teacher in our little village school announced that if it was fine on the Friday we would all be taken to a nearby field for a 'proper' game of cricket. There were about 22 boys and girls with ages ranging 7 – 14. Of course, the lads were so excited at such a thought, especially the older ones. I am pretty certain that the wise timing of that announcement meant that it was probably the best behaved, most hard-working class in Derbyshire that week because none of them wanted to be left behind in the school whilst the event took place. Personally, I was not looking forward to it at all and was secretly hoping that on the Friday it would be pouring down with rain.



Friday dawned lovely and sunny. In the afternoon we were lined up in two's in the playground ready to set off along the narrow road to a field about two hundred yards away. On our arrival we had to wait just inside the gate until the teacher had found a suitable patch for the game. The farmer had very kindly moved his cows to another field for the day, but unfortunately, the cow pats still remained! No teams were picked. Everyone had a chance to bat and all of the boys had a turn at bowling. The hero for several weeks after, was the one who had scored the most runs.



100

Well, this is the **100 th** Doodle. What do I do now? Do I call it a day and 'Draw stumps' or do I start all over again and make another 100 runs? I have been very carefully considering these two options for a while and these are the conclusions I have reached:-

Option 1: Draw stumps? If I finish now I would be able to spend more time researching my Family Tree. I love this hobby so this option is extremely tempting. Naturally the Family Tree is mainly researching people who are no longer living. All the hundreds of folk on the Tree have one thing in common, regardless of their occupations or family situations. Like each one of us, every one of them, whilst they were alive, had to decide what to do about Jesus. Those who decided to become Christians are now in Heaven in the presence of a holy God. Those who did not make that decision are not in God's presence. It is very sad to think of all those people who will be away from the Lord for the rest of eternity.

If I choose the option of spending more time on this hobby, can I do anything at all about those who did not choose to become followers of Jesus? Sadly, the answer is, 'No'. I can find out about their baptisms, weddings, funerals, etc., but, there is nothing more that I can do with regard to where they will spend eternity. They each made their decision whilst they were living and there is nothing in Scripture, as far as I am aware, that indicates that we can pray for them or alter their situations.

Researching my Family Tree gives me personally a great deal of pleasure, but that is all it does; it does not make a difference to anyone else's life.

Option 2:

What about the second option? I reckon that I can just about write another 100 Doodles before reaching my 100th birthday! It is rather daunting though to think about all that writing. Why bother? Why continue to write the Doodles that were started six years ago because of Covid? There are several reasons:-



** I believe that we all go through different seasons in our lives. At present my season seems to be a writer. My body is not too good, but my head still seems to be working OK. (Well, most of the time!) God laid it on my heart to write the Doodles and He continues to drop ideas into my spirit that enables the writing to take place. I would not be able to do this without His ideas, nudges and promptings. When the ideas stop then so will the Doodles.

** There are people who read the Doodles who have not yet decided to become Christians and follow Jesus. Obviously, this is **THE** main aim of the writing. Ultimately each one has to make a personal decision. We can talk to them, take them to church and pray for them, but the one thing that we are not able to do is to make them Christians. It is only God who can touch their spirits and draw them to Himself. If the Doodles help some to make that vital choice, then all of the writing will have been worthwhile.

YES TO JESUS

** Some who are no longer able to get to the church services find that the Doodles help them to keep connected with the Church. It can sometimes be quite difficult to still feel part of the Church when no longer attending and the Doodles can help to bridge that gap.

** My prayer is that those who read them will be encouraged to go for a deeper relationship with God. Sometimes I give out challenges that actually make me feel guilty as I know that they apply to myself as well as to others.

** I try to give a variety so that people of various ages and interests will continue to be readers.

** Doodle bit. My childhood years on the smallholding in the village of Yeaveley had a massive impact on me. As our property was just outside the village, apart from school, we had very little contact with either other villagers or relatives so we were a very close-knit family. There are times when I get rather carried away when using those times as illustrations and have to keep going back and crossing bits



out, otherwise it would become solely a Doodle and nothing else! They are intended to be illustrations rather than the main part of the Doodle. I can hardly express the love and security that I found in that place I still think of as 'Home', even though I have not lived there for 60 years.

I pray that the Doodles will continue to bless you and help you in your spiritual walk.