

# Learning to let go

Richard Dormandy *reflects on* Isaiah 43:16-21

Few sights are more breathtaking than trapeze artists. Having let go of their safety, they trust the momentum, and find the safe, strong hands of their partner. Whenever I see it my heart is in my mouth. As long as they remain "in the zone" they will be safe. It's all about intuition and trust – letting go to take hold.

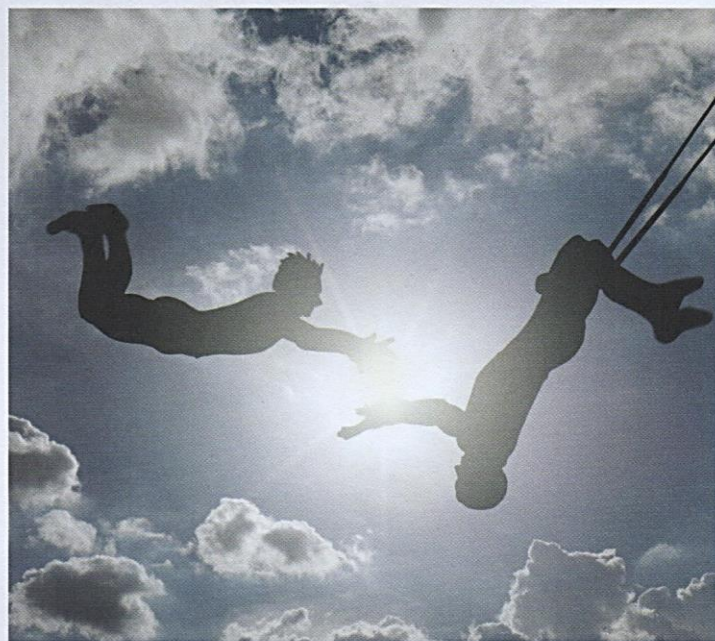
There are so many examples of where we need to let go in order to take hold, such as riding a bike

or learning to swim. It's about overcoming anxiety and trusting the process. The song of Isaiah 43 is an encouragement to embrace the future – to take hold of what we can't see by letting go of what we can.

"I am about to do a new thing," says God. "Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" What new thing is God bringing into your life? It may be an exciting or terrifying prospect. It may come through someone else

– in your family, at work, or in church. It may come through circumstances you've created, such as a qualification, or through something you had no control over, such as illness.

Letting go of our anxieties can be so hard. The more we focus on them, the more seems to be at stake. Yet the only way to embrace the future well is to let go of the past and present with both hands – and trust God. 🙏



## Words from the cross, part 5 A series for Lent

by Caroline Fletcher

*"When Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), 'I am thirsty.'" John 19:28*

Ever wondered whether God really understands suffering?

We know Jesus suffered upon the cross, but the biblical accounts are not very detailed, so it's easy to underestimate his pain. His physical agony is reflected in his cry, "I thirst" – no ordinary thirst but an unquenchable, ravenous one, caused by severe loss of blood. This was just a fraction of it. Before his crucifixion Jesus was scourged, leaving his back a

mess of shredded skin and open wounds. The rough wood of the cross would have scraped against those sores with every movement. Due to how he was positioned in crucifixion, he would have had to push himself up from his nailed feet to breathe.

Those crucified also suffered horrendous cramps, severed nerves, broken bones and massively strained hearts. Crucifixion was designed to kill people as slowly as possible to cause maximum pain, hence its reputation as the most awful of executions.

When we feel God is distant from our suffering, remember the truth about the cross. 🙏

**“Love was compressed for all history in that lonely figure on the cross... At Calvary, God accepted his own unbreakable terms of justice. Any discussion of how pain and suffering fit into God's scheme ultimately leads back to the cross.”**

Philip Yancey (born 1949), author

Heavenly Father, this Lent help me willingly to embrace with faith the new things you are doing in my life and among those around me. Amen.

## Finding God in the spring

by Caroline Hodgson

Have you seen your first lamb of the year? Even if you live in an urban area, try to make a journey to the countryside or a city farm to see them playing in the field. Or you might get a chance to see some chicks. Before you go, look up two poems which will

make you marvel, not only at the beauty of the season, but at the poets' God-given creativity. The first is poem William Wordsworth's famous "Daffodils" – often quoted and well worth re-reading, particularly at this time of year. The poet describes the daffodils as dancers, and his heart dancing with them. The second is William Blake's "The Lamb". It's essentially a child's poem, but one which touches the hearts of all ages with its evocation of the gentle lamb.

Thank you, Lord God, for the gift of poetry, which keeps spring eternal in our hearts. Amen. 🙏