

## Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2022

So, apparently towel folding is an actual skill. Who knew?! I only discovered this last week through my own erroneous method. Having seen them hanging on the line and realised that they were dry, I brought the assorted hand drying fabric into the kitchen and set about neatly folding them - I don't iron - and placed them on the table. Satisfied that I had helped with this domestic chore, I moved onto prep for preaching and settled myself in the adjacent office. Half an hour later Mrs F returned in chirpy fashion only to hesitate in mid flow as she walked into the kitchen. After a few moments (and aware that she'd stopped talking) I turned to see all the neatly folded towels being unfolded before being neatly folded again. 'What are you doing?' I asked. 'I'm folding the towels' she said. 'But I already did that' I said. 'Sort of' she said. All of a sudden I felt like the Towel Patrol had just walked into the house and given me a ticket for bad folding! The fine: 100 hours community service at the local Finishing School. The look on my face spoke to confusion and a small amount of feeling insulted at my good work being undone only to be done again in exactly the same way...or so I thought. An explanation was coming. 'Do you remember the video I showed you the other week about the wife who mowed the lawn?' she said. It started coming back to me and I did not like where this was headed. Seeing in my body language that I was not happy with where this was headed, she boldly reminded me that the husband in the video had in all good faith folded the towels but that because he had not followed the line pattern (!! ) in folding, it was patently wrong'.

The memory of what happened next suddenly became crystal clear and I realised like a king on a chessboard who's army of knights, bishops, rooks and pawns have all been obliterated in one foul swoop, that I was boxed in and it would just be a matter of time before the queen dealt the final blow. The queen continued... 'So, the wife went into the garden shed, got out the lawnmower and then proceeded to haphazardly mow the lawn until all the grass was cut. The husband, seeing that the lawn had not been cut in straight lines, was furious at the free abandon with which the grass cutting had occurred, almost feeling the pain of the green carpet that had been so insensitively and manically mowed rather than magnificently manicured.' The Queen stopped awaiting a reaction with a look on her face that read Smugness. I glanced outside relieved to see that I had at least mowed the lawn the day before - with beautiful lines I might add - so at least I wasn't going to be on the end of this self fulfilling prophecy. I then looked at the queen for a long time before venturing without any real conviction 'that's simply not the same comparison.' She gave a withering look and said 'how is it not the same?!' It was a statement as much as a question. I opened my mouth but nothing came out. She smiled and wandered off. Check mate. Perspectives eh. What mattered to Mrs F really didn't matter to me one iota and she would argue the same for my horticultural obsession with cutting grass like it's Wimbledon. Truth be told, neither are important.

There's someone in church who I meet with regularly and speaks a lot of wisdom.

One of their phrases when it comes to perspective is to 'keep the main thing, the main thing'.

As I look at the world around us on a local, national and international level, the sadness and weariness that seems to permeate society should at least help us to concentrate on what is really important right now. Yet, I'm not sure we do. I think we still get hung up on incidental, irrelevant and frankly first world stuff. I remember David's last preach before he retired that he brought us back to the main thing by referring to Jesus' own words in John 13; So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." I remember it for being a clarion call to be followers of Jesus as Jesus wanted his followers to be. Now, at the end of two years of weekly reflections, I think it's only right that I conclude by pleading with us to look again at that passage and realise that it's the main thing because Jesus said so. May we remember that His banner over us is Love. May we remember what it is that unites us. And may we seek to be authentic in our love for others. God commands it.