

21/06/20 Second Sunday after Trinity Readings and Commentaries

Prayers

Collect

Lord, you have taught us
that all our doings without love are nothing worth:
send your Holy Spirit
and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love,
the true bond of peace and of all virtues,
without which whoever lives is counted dead before you.
Grant this for your only Son Jesus Christ's sake,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

Heavenly Father

We pray for your church in this land and around the world,
may it be a light to the darkness, speak your truth,
bring your love and reflect your glory to a world in need.
Strengthen your people to proclaim your message of salvation
in season and out of season.
May your people be beacons of hope to the hopeless
Amen

Preliminary Comments:

Last week's Morning Prayer again contained sections from the book of Joshua. The commentary last Sunday gave some background to Joshua, the first of twelve books in the bible that record parts of the history of the Israelites in the Promised Land.

Last Sunday's commentary pointed out the underlying lesson of God's faithfulness and human unfaithfulness that permeates through the book of Joshua. As the book draws to a close, the Israelites have subdued the land and Joshua has divided the land according to the promises made by Moses. At the end of the book in chapters

'Peace be with you'

I hope you are well.

These commentaries are not meant to be a sermon but hopefully a way to expand our engagement with the word of God.

Please continue to love your neighbour and pray for all those who are suffering at this testing time. Prayer cannot be quarantined. Our hope is in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and evermore. Amen.

Regards Revd M Orr

23 and 24 Joshua gathers the leaders of the tribes and the people together and makes two speeches to the people of Israel.

In the classic way Joshua reminds the Israelites about their history how they got to the place they are now and what will sustain them in the future. It was through God's blessing and intervention that they were able to enjoy their inheritance. Joshua reminds the people that God had set them apart to be an example to the world. Joshua warned them about being corrupted by the other tribes that lived near them. The Israelites had agreed to be held to God's standards and God would bless them. However, Joshua also warned them not to be fooled by lies and bowing down to false idols, if they did there would be consequences. This sets the scene for the rest of the bible, as the rest of the story of Israel plays out we see how they repeatedly fall into unfaithfulness and submit to false gods and then cry to the Almighty God when things go wrong and the consequences of their actions come back to bite them.

Romans 6:1-11

What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? ³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For whoever has died is freed from sin. ⁸ But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Commentary:

Last Sunday's readings from Romans 5:1-8, helps to set the scene for today's reading and it is worth reading the whole of chapter 5 in order to grasp this passage. In chapter 5, Paul talks about how sin came into the world through the actions of Adam and that sin affects every human being. He goes on to explain how humans can be justified through grace, meaning the unmerited mercy given to humanity when Jesus Christ died on a cross, thus securing man's eternal salvation from sin. Paul clarified that when a person enters into the Christian faith, he is united with Christ, both in his death and his resurrection. Therefore, in a spiritual sense the old sinful self dies and a new faithful self is resurrected through faith in Christ.

Paul realised that some people could assume that because sin can be forgiven by the grace of Christ, people

can just carry on sinning and Jesus will pay the price. This is one of the things Paul deals with in chapter 6.

Matthew 10:24-39

‘A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; ²⁵ it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

Whom to Fear

²⁶ ‘So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. ²⁷ What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸ Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. ³⁰ And even the hairs of your head are all counted. ³¹ So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

³² ‘Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; ³³ but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

Not Peace, but a Sword

³⁴ ‘Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

³⁵ For I have come to set a man against his father,

and a daughter against her mother,

and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;

³⁶ and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household.

³⁷ Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸ and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

Commentary:

Some people hold an almost fairy tale image of Christ, Jesus meek and mild, loving and kind. It is correct that Christ is loving, kind, forgiving, slow to anger and swift to bless. Jesus is our loving saviour, but that does not make him our best buddy, Jesus is also our King and Judge. This passage in the gospel of Matthew helps to remind Christians of this.

Jesus explains to his followers that people called him Beelzebul, meaning prince of demons. If people can insult the Messiah in this way, his followers can expect at least the same and much worse. In verses 26-29, Jesus points out to his disciples that they will face many difficulties and enemies because they proclaim Christ.

However, do not fear what humans can do to them, they should remember that God has the ultimate power and authority. God is the only one who can destroy both the body and the soul in hell. Jesus goes on to inform his disciples that they are unbelievably valuable to God. God can see and hear everything all the time, he knows all things, nothing can be hidden from God.

As disciples of Christ they are not only to emulate him, but they are also required to proclaim and acknowledge Christ to the world. As Paul urged Timothy, 'In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching', (2 Timothy 4:1-2).

By doing so Christ will acknowledge his disciples before God. There is likely to be a cost to his disciples for doing this. The world does not want to hear the message of salvation through the grace of Christ. Disciples of Christ will face opposition, rejection, betrayal, and persecution, even from within their own families. The disciple will bring the peace and love of God, but the world will forcibly reject it, and them. The message of salvation disturbs and perplexes many people causing them to reflect upon themselves and that can be painful. This is the internal spiritual strife that fights against the truth, the message of hope and salvation. This is what Jesus is alluding to in verses 34-39.

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven

1. Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;

To His feet thy tribute bring.

Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,

Who like me His praise should sing?

Praise Him, praise Him,

praise Him, praise Him,

Praise the everlasting King.

2. Praise Him for His grace and favor

To our fathers in distress.

Praise Him still the same forever,

Slow to chide, and swift to bless.

Praise Him, praise Him,

praise Him, praise Him,

Glorious in His faithfulness.

3. Frail as summer's flower we flourish

Blows the wind and it is gone

But while mortals rise and perish

God endures unchanging on

Praise Him, praise Him,

praise Him, praise Him,

Praise the high eternal One

4. Fatherlike He tends and spares us;

Well our feeble frame He Knows.

In His hands He gently bears us,

Rescues us from all our foes.

Praise Him, praise Him,

praise Him, praise Him,

Widely as His mercy goes.

5. Angels help us to adore Him;

Ye behold Him face to face;

Sun and moon, bow down before Him,

Dwellers all in time and space.

Praise Him, praise Him,

praise Him, praise Him,

Praise with us the God of grace.

Tag: Praise Him, praise Him,

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