



~AT HOME WORSHIP~

27th September 2020



Service Theme:

Make my life complete – living life like it matters

Preparation

As we still ourselves we recognise that wherever we are, we are in God's presence and the God we know in Jesus waits patiently for us.

Lord our God, help us to know your ways and teach us your paths.
Lead us in your truth for you are the God of our salvation.

Hymn/Song:

To be in your presence

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=typ7cueKdT4>

To be in your presence,
to sit at your feet,
where your love surrounds me,
and makes me complete:

*This is my desire, O Lord,
this is my desire.
This is my desire, O Lord,
this is my desire.*

To rest in your presence,
not rushing away,
to cherish each moment --
here I would stay.

Noel Richards (b. 1955)

Opening Prayer

Loving God, all worship and adoration belongs to you for you alone are Lord, you alone are the mighty God, Creator of all that is good.

And yet you are closer than our very breath.

You are closer than my breath and I thank you Lord that you are always with me,

whether I know it or not,

whether I recognise it or not,

whether I delight in it or not.

You are always there to comfort and to challenge

Thank you for your saving presence.

Amen

Prayer for the Day

Lord of Creation, whose glory is around and within us:
Open our eyes to your wonders,
That we may serve you with reverence and know your peace at our lives' end.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Saying Sorry

This Sunday, just read through or listen to Faithful one, and give thanks we can be forgiven for all the wrongs we have done by a Faithful God who is unchanging.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uxviwvjyg1w>

Faithful One

[Brian Doerksen](#)

Faithful one, so unchanging
Ageless one, you're my rock of peace
Lord of all I depend on you
I call out to you, again and again
I call out to you, again and again
You are my rock in times of trouble
You lift me up when I fall down
All through the storm
Your love is the anchor
My hope is in You alone

BIBLE READINGS



Matthew 21:23-32

The Question about Jesus' Authority

²³ Jesus came back to the Temple; and as he taught, the chief priests and the elders came to him and asked, "What right do you have to do these things? Who gave you such right?"

²⁴ Jesus answered them, "I will ask you just one question, and if you give me an answer, I will tell you what right I have to do these things. ²⁵ Where did John's right to baptize come from: was it from God or from human beings?"

They started to argue among themselves, "What shall we say? If we answer, 'From God,' he will say to us, 'Why, then, did you not believe John?' ²⁶ But if we say, 'From human beings,' we are afraid of what the people might do, because they are all convinced that John was a prophet." ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, "We don't know."

And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you, then, by what right I do these things."

The Parable of the Two Sons

²⁸ “Now, what do you think? There was once a man who had two sons. He went to the older one and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ ²⁹ ‘I don't want to,’ he answered, but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. ‘Yes, sir,’ he answered, but he did not go. ³¹ Which one of the two did what his father wanted?”

“The older one,” they answered.

So Jesus said to them, “I tell you: the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the Kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John the Baptist came to you showing you the right path to take, and you would not believe him; but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. Even when you saw this, you did not later change your minds and believe him.

Philippians 2:1-13

Christ's Humility and Greatness

2 Your life in Christ makes you strong, and his love comforts you. You have fellowship with the Spirit, and you have kindness and compassion for one another. ² I urge you, then, to make me completely happy by having the same thoughts, sharing the same love, and being one in soul and mind. ³ Don't do anything from selfish ambition or from a cheap desire to boast, but be humble toward one another, always considering others better than yourselves. ⁴ And look out for one another's interests, not just for your own. ⁵ The attitude you should have is the one that Christ Jesus had:

⁶ He always had the nature of God,
but he did not think that by force he should try to remain^[b] equal with God.

⁷ Instead of this, of his own free will he gave up all he had,
and took the nature of a servant.

He became like a human being
and appeared in human likeness.

⁸ He was humble and walked the path of obedience all the way to death—
his death on the cross.

⁹ For this reason God raised him to the highest place above
and gave him the name that is greater than any other name.

¹⁰ And so, in honour of the name of Jesus
all beings in heaven, on earth, and in the world below^[c]
will fall on their knees,

¹¹ and all will openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Shining as Lights in the World

¹² So then, dear friends, as you always obeyed me when I was with you, it is even more important that you obey me now while I am away from you. Keep on working with fear and trembling to complete your salvation, ¹³ because God is always at work in you to make you willing and able to obey his own purpose.

REFLECTION TIME



Short Reflection by Revd Capt Clive Deverell

For children: why not do the colouring sheet that is provided with the children's sheets.

It would be difficult to find a more influential passage in all of Scripture than today's epistle reading from Philippians.

Often called "the Christ Hymn," on the supposition that Paul is quoting at least in part a very early hymn from the worship of the church, these verses have generated and shaped endless debates about the nature of Christ's humanity and divinity, his saving work, and its relationship to the Christian life. So much can be -- and has been -- said about this passage.

One thing is needful. This is the drama of Christ's redemptive incursion into the depths of our bondage and despair. This is the story of God with us, told from the standpoint of his incarnation *as a slave*.

Today we hear of Christ himself taking the form of a slave, humbling himself even to the point of death by crucifixion -- the execution reserved for slaves and traitors in the Roman Empire. Paradoxically, our liberation comes from Christ's voluntary bondage, which is his entry into our bondage. This movement by Christ is the heartbeat of the exhortation that begins and ends today's passage. If we want to become like Christ, we begin by hearing how Christ became like us, and continues to come among us. Then, and only then, are we ready to hear about "the imitation of Christ."

The movement in this drama is one of descent and ascent: First it tells of Christ's descent from a position of being in the form of God and equal with God, to being in the form of a slave, in the likeness of human beings, in the appearance of a singular human being, obedient even to the point of death by crucifixion. Having been raised on a cross, Christ is exalted even higher by God, so that all creation will bow down and confess him as Lord.

This exaltation echoes in 3:20-21, where Christ the "Saviour," a name which Caesar Augustus took to himself, will subject all things to himself. This powerful Saviour also will transform our body of humiliation to be conformed to his body of glory, so that we ourselves are caught up into the divine movement of humiliation and exaltation.

For this very reason, the story of Christ also moves from separation to solidarity, and from difference to likeness, as Christ moves into the most despairing depths of human experience. In the form of a slave, he mirrors back to us the reality of our own enslavement to sin and death. He comes very near, so near that he "gets under our skin." This is the "kindness" of God, in that God becomes one of our kind, kin to us. This is the incarnation, and it is the source of the life-transforming power that animates Paul's ethical teaching: "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (2:13). **living faith like it matters, making his and our joy complete.**

A better translation might be, "God is the one working in you both the willing and the working." The Greek word translated "work" is the source of our word, "energy" or "energize."

God gives us the desire and the energy to enact Christ's compassion in the world. The "you" is plural, showing that God is among us, having come among us as a slave, as one who serves. This divine condescension and companionship thus is not only or even primarily an example for us in our dealings with one another, but the actual motivating power operating in and through those mutual relationships.

Similarly, the "salvation" we are to work out is not our private, individual destiny, but rather, the quality of our corporate life as it is lived under the rule of the Saviour. Paul already has described this quality of life in terms of mutual love and affection, sharing in the Spirit, unity, humility, putting others first -- and all of this "in Christ" (2:1-4). Here is real "quality of life!" And it is a public life, a public "politics."

Paul tells us we "shine as lights in the world" (3:15). Echoing the story of God's revelation on Mount Sinai, the "fear and trembling" (2:12) evoked by Christ's incarnation, death and exaltation tell us we are in the presence of God. This is the language of theophany. God's self-revelation issues in a transformed community that itself becomes a kind of theophany, a manifestation of God's presence in the world.

Finally, the drama of salvation enacted by Christ (2:6-11) and embedded in exhortations to act in ways that mirror Christ's humiliation, service and obedience (2:1-5, 12-13), we are like a flash mob, fully involved in the action. This is not a television show or a movie; it is not virtual reality; it is God's action in the flesh, invading our worlds, catching us up into the saving work of God, making us also participants, actors in the drama. No longer mere spectators, we are part of the "spectacle" of God (1 Corinthians 4:9).

Children's Reflection on the Matthew Reading

And/or you could do the Activity Time Sheet together (separate sheet).

A man had two sons and he asked them both to go out and work in the vineyard. *What did the sons say?*

The first son said he would not go. *But what happened next?* He changed his mind and went as his father had asked him.

The second son said he would go. *But what happened next?* He did not go out to the vineyard.

Jesus asks a question about this story. *Which one of the two sons did what his father asked him to do? The first son or the second son?*

The first son went and did what his father asked, even though at first he did not want to.

Can you think of a time when someone asked you to do something? Did you do it? Or did you just say you would do it?

How did you feel afterwards? And how do you think the person who asked for your help felt?

What will you do the next time someone asks you for help? How will you help other people in the coming week?

Why do you think Jesus tells this story? What is he trying to teach us?

The man in the story is God. And we are all God's children. So Jesus is trying to tell us that we should listen to what God asks of us and then go and do what is asked.

It is not enough just to say that we will follow God in our lives. We actually have to go and do what is asked. We have to live our lives as God wants us to.

How do you think we can do that today?

God asks us to take care of the world and the people in it and it is up to us how we answer.

Time for Prayer

A mustard seed; small enough to hold in the palm of your hand. Yet, Jesus tells us that this precious little seed is like the kingdom of Heaven. We ask the Lord our God to open our eyes to the wonders of creation, and we offer our hearts in hope that all things may flourish.

We pray for the Church: that the Holy Spirit may breathe compassion and courage into the hearts of all her people. May she walk alongside all those who are vulnerable and respond in love to their needs. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

We pray for the world, our common home: that through God's grace we may recognise that we are all part of a fragile balance. May we hear the earth's cry, and be moved to protect it for future generations. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

We pray for world leaders, that the Lord may move them to act with respect and urgency for the sake of the earth and the most vulnerable. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

We pray for those of us who are already struggling in the face of increasing droughts, floods and storms, and for all who are working to tackle the climate emergency. May God grant us all hope and strength for the future. Lord, in your mercy...

Hear our prayer.

We pray for our Partnership, and our local communities as we begin to rebuild following coronavirus. Through the grace of God may we choose lifestyles that do not negatively impact our vulnerable brothers and sisters or the earth. Lord, in your mercy...

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We ask these prayers through our Lord Jesus Christ, Redeemer of all creation,

All: Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come, Your will be done
On earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread
Forgive us our sins
As we forgive those who sin against us
Lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
And the glory are yours
Now and for ever.
Amen.

Hymn/Song

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7SSJicZO6_g

Blessed Assurance this is a long version just enjoy

Closing Prayer

Lord, allow my ears to listen to the cry of the earth,
the voices of my sisters and brothers,
those who face the harsh reality of climate change.
Lord, I come to do your will.

Lord, allow my eyes to see the beauty of creation,
in flowers, creatures, forests, and cities alike.
Lord, I come to do your will.

Lord, allow my voice to speak out for justice
and ensure people living in poverty are heard.
Lord, I come to do your will.

Lord, allow my hands to care for the earth,
to toil, to reap, to celebrate.
Lord, I come to do your will.

Lord, allow my feet to take the path less trod,
to walk the extra mile,
to take your message out to the world.
Lord, I come to do your will.

Dismissal

May you know the Lord with you each day of your life, may you answer the call to listen and the challenge to follow.

And the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit will be with you as you go. Amen

Original Materials by Rev'd Anne Smith

God bless you now and always

