



~AT HOME WORSHIP~



18th October 2020

Worship Theme : Reaching for the goal

PREPARATION

In a moment of quiet take the time to be still and place yourself in God's hands. Remember those, who will also be worshipping with us and even though we cannot see them, we hold them to God.

Lord God, as we gather together in your house, we thank you for your presence, here with us. Thank you, Lord, that each one of us is unique, yet we share a common bond in you. **Amen**

Hymn ~ *"Come, Holy Ghost our souls inspire"*

Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire and lighten with celestial fire;
thou the anointing Spirit art, who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart.

2 Thy blessed unction from above is comfort, life, and fire of love;
enable with perpetual light the dullness of our mortal sight.

3 Anoint and cheer our soiled face with the abundance of Thy grace;
Keep far our foes; give peace at home; where Thou art guide, no ill can come.

4 Teach us to know the Father, Son, and thee, of both, to be but one;
that through the ages all along this may be our endless song:

5 Praise to thine eternal merit, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YD6a77INAk>

Psalm 100 ~ *Jubilate Deo*

1 O be joyful in the Lord, all the earth; serve the Lord with gladness and
come before his presence with a song.

2 Know that the Lord is God; it is he that has made us and we are his; we
are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

3 Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks
to him and bless his name.

4 For the Lord is gracious; his steadfast love is everlasting, and his
faithfulness endures from generation to generation.

Opening Prayer

O Christ, door of the sheepfold, may we enter your gates with praise and go
from your courts to serve you in the poor, the lost and the wandering, this
day and all our days. **Amen**

A Prayer for the Day

Faithful Lord, whose steadfast love never ceases and whose mercies never come to an end: grant us the grace to trust you and to receive the gifts of your love, new every morning, in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Saying Sorry

Cleanse our hearts, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord, from all vain and wandering thoughts, that we may joyfully praise Thee wherever we may be; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Psalms 51 vv15-17

Holy God, Maker of all **Have mercy on us.**
Jesus Christ, Servant of the poor **Have mercy on us.**
Holy Spirit, Breath of life, **Have mercy on us.**

When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.

Ezek. xviii. 27

Let us in silence confess our faults and admit our frailty.

Before God, with the people of God, we confess to our brokenness: to the ways we wound our lives, the lives of others, and the life of the world. May God forgive us, Christ renew us, and the Spirit enable us to grow in love. Amen

BIBLE READINGS



Matthew 21 vv33-43 & 45-46

“The Parable of the Tenants in the Vineyard”

“Listen to another parable,” Jesus said.

“There was once a land-owner, who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a hole for the wine press, and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to tenants and left home on a trip. When the time came to gather the grapes, he sent his slaves to the tenants to receive his share of the harvest.

The tenants grabbed his slaves, beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again the man sent other slaves, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. Last of all he sent his son to them.

‘Surely they will respect my son,’ he said. But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the owner's son. Come on, let's kill him, and we will get his property!’ So they grabbed him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ♦ “Now, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” Jesus asked.

“He will certainly kill those evil men,” they answered, “and rent the vineyard out to other tenants, who will give him his share of the harvest at the right time.”

/continued

Jesus said to them, "Haven't you ever read, what the Scriptures say?

'The stone, which the builders rejected as worthless, turned out to be the most important of all. This was done by the Lord; what a wonderful sight it is!'

"And so I tell you," added Jesus, "the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, who will produce the proper fruits." ♦

The chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus' parables and knew, that he was talking about them, so they tried to arrest him. But they were afraid of the crowds, who considered Jesus to be a prophet.

Philippians 3 vv4b-14

"Running toward the Goal"

I could, of course, put my trust in such things. If any of you think you can trust in external ceremonies, I have even more reason to feel that way. I was circumcised when I was a week old. I am an Israelite by birth, of the tribe of Benjamin, a pure-blooded Hebrew.

As far as keeping the Jewish Law is concerned, I was a Pharisee, and I was so zealous that I persecuted the church.

As far as a person can be righteous by obeying the commands of the Law, I was without fault. But all those things that I might count as profit I now reckon as loss for Christ's sake.

Not only those things; I reckon everything as complete loss for the sake of what is so much more valuable, the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.

For his sake I have thrown everything away; I consider it all as mere garbage, so that I may gain Christ and be completely united with him. I no longer have a righteousness of my own, the kind that is gained by obeying the Law.

I now have the righteousness that is given through faith in Christ, the righteousness that comes from God and is based on faith.

All I want is to know Christ and to experience the power of his resurrection, to share in his sufferings and become like him in his death, in the hope that I myself will be raised from death to life. ♦

I do not claim that I have already succeeded or have already become perfect.

I keep striving to win the prize, for which Christ Jesus has already won me to himself. Of course, my friends, I really do not think that I have already won it; the one thing I do, however, is to forget what is behind me and do my best to reach what is ahead. So I run straight toward the goal in order to win the prize, which is God's call through Christ Jesus to the life above.

For the word of God in scripture,
for the Word of God among us,
for the Word of God within us
Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION TIME



Short Reflection by Revd Trevor Day

[Children \[and adults if they so wish\] may choose to use the Activity and Colouring Sheet](#)

Another short ramble from me ... What are **our** main **aims** and **goals** in life? ♦

An autobiographical snippet => I remember at primary school [1956-62] my main goals were not about playing football well [*I was put in goal because I was no good at playing the game*] but more about ... being good at arithmetic [I loved mathematics], winning the running race [80yds or so] on school sports day, becoming a sixer at Cubs, becoming head chorister in the church choir . At senior school [1962-69 ... *a boys only school*] the goals were similar but at a more senior level ... still being good at maths, winning the 880yds, becoming a patrol leader at Scouts, singing appropriate bass or tenor solos at choir ... and Rugby. Then it was off to university ... more goals in life ... Not, I might add, all achieved as I would at the time have wished. I only lasted one year at University [Exeter 1969-70 ... *reading Mathematics*] ... the Rugby was good there, but the Maths was nothing like the Maths that I liked at school. My life was falling apart ... I felt let down. Mum and Dad had separated, I was a failure [*in my own eyes*] and there was no one to support me! I was 19 and lost ... except, that I was still at church singing in the choir and still playing rugby [*I had now joined a local club in Richmond*]. It was church and rugby that kept me going and on the straight and narrow. Mum told me, that I'd better get a job [*that at any rate was the gist of what she said*] ... so I joined the Post Office as a Post-Man [after three months, I moved across to PO Telecoms and dare I say it, I didn't look back [*well ... not too much*]; ... Church, Rugby and PO Telecoms and with those three came friendships, comradeship, and people who cared for me and I for them ... relationships. It was circuitously through Telecoms that I ended up meeting a Dutch au-pair in 1974 ... we have now been married for 43years ... relationships. My goals at each stage in my journey were there for those stages and were developed and adjusted as life moved on ... but it's true to say that at the heart of it all were strong relationships, a sense of love and a firm foundation with the church ... I'm not sure how strong my faith was then ... but what the church meant to me was certainly very important as was being a member of our Rugby club.

St Paul in our selected verses from his letter to the Phillipians starts with a short auto-biography. His main goals were to become a learned and zealous Pharisee ... a devout follower of Jewish Law, to the extent that he had been avidly persecuting followers of Jesus Christ. Those goals changed ... he learned what Jesus's teaching really meant; he threw away all his past and became an avid and zealous follower of Jesus Christ. The "avid and zealous" is something that probably couldn't be changed in Paul, but the goals and direction of his life certainly could be and were changed ... for the good. He didn't claim to have succeeded ... he strove to improve ... he wanted to throw away his past and to "*do his best to reach what is ahead*". He wanted, not only

to meet those goals himself, but to encourage others to follow that same path as himself. It is his avid and zealousness that we see by the plethora of letters he wrote to the Christian communities in the towns and cities he visited. He wanted to encourage, yes! Yet, also to admonish, with grace, when they started going off the rails a bit ... when they were adrift of continuing towards their goal in Christian faith and fellowship.

Today's Gospel reading [Matthew 21 vv33 onwards] is a bit more gruesome in many respects. Jesus tells a story ... a parable ... so that those in ear-shot might understand that they [in this case the leaders of the Jewish faith] had totally missed the point of God's Commandments and wishes for the people of Israel. Yes! ... They understood what Jesus was saying to them; but they didn't want to change their ways; they just wanted to get rid of him.

It's so easy for us to point the finger of blame at those "leaders" yet we forget that it is greed and the goal to be rich and powerful, that totally get in the way of "love for our neighbours" and humility. We see it in so many of the world's leaders at the moment [*actually throughout all ages ... as they say*] and yet we also see that humility and an aim for friendship and closer relationships in some other leaders. Would, that more might be like them ... but that wouldn't serve the lust for power.

So ... in order to keep my ramble, simply to be more the length of a pre-amble, I will draw stumps in a short moment ... I promise.

Our hymns and songs today highlight [*well ... that was my aim*] some key elements, that can support our personal goals ...

Come Holy Ghost our souls inspire and lighten with celestial fire; thou the anointing Spirit art, who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart.

One more step along the world I go

And it's from the old I travel to the new, Keep me travelling along with You.

O for a closer walk with God So shall my walk be close with God, Calm and serene my frame; So purer light shall mark the road that leads me to the Lamb.

As we move from the Old to the New with the help of the Holy Spirit, calmly and serenely ... and from our two readings today, I think we might see that need to move away from being driven by goals set around power and greed, ... to throw away the old ways and to look towards setting goals, that are encompassed by and that reinforce our aim for neighbourly love, humility and an approach to life driven and sustained by the Holy Spirit, where the main Goal is the one we run ... *neither the 80 nor the 880 yards but ... towards,* which is God's call on us all to follow Christ's teaching above all and for always.

As St Paul wrote in his 2nd letter to the Corinthians:

***May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen***

Family Song ~ “One more step along the world I go”

One more step along the world I go,
One more step along the world I go,
From the old things to the new,
Keep me travelling along with You.



*Refrain: And it's from the old I travel to the new,
Keep me travelling along with You.*

2. Round the corners of the world I turn,
More and more about the world I learn.
And the new things that I see,
You'll be looking at along with me.
3. As I travel through the bad and good,
Keep me travelling the way I should.
Where I see no way to go,
You'll be telling me the way, I know.
4. Give me courage when the world is rough,
Keep me loving when the world is tough.
Leap and sing in all I do,
Keep me travelling along with You.
5. You are older than the world can be,
You are younger than the life in me.
Ever old and ever new,
Keep me travelling along with You.

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7PXV3dwaeNU>



TIME FOR PRAYER

God within and beyond us all, teach us the silence of humility,
the silence of wisdom, the silence of love, the silence of faith,
the silence that enables reflection and speaks without words.

Teach us, God, to silence our own hearts and minds
That we may listen For the movement of your Spirit within us,
And treasure your presence in the depths of our being.

<< allow a time of silence >>

Holy God, as you have heard every silent prayer
and wordless petition, hear now these prayers for others.

<< allow a time of open prayer >>

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 ~ *“O for a closer walk with God”*

- O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb.
2. Where is the blessedness I knew
When I first saw the Lord?
Where is that soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and His word?
 3. O Fire of God, come burn in me
Renew a holy passion
Till Christ my deepest longing be
My never-failing fountain
 4. What peaceful hours I once enjoyed,
How sweet the memory still!
But they have left an aching void
The world can never fill!
 5. The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me tear it from Thy throne,
And worship only Thee.
 6. So shall my walk be close with God,
Calm and serene my frame;
So purer light shall mark the road
That leads me to the Lamb.

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tpl2Jst2_eY

Closing Prayer Poem/Prose

Take my life, and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to thee;
Take my moments and my days, Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour, At thy feet its treasure-store;
Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for thee.

Praise to the Father, Praise to the Son,
Praise to the Spirit, The Three in One.

Dismissal & Blessing

May God be
a bright flame before us
a guiding star above us
a smooth path below us
a kindly shepherd behind us
this day, tomorrow and for ever. **Amen**

God bless you now and always

