

Worship@Home 25th February 2024 Second Sunday in Lent with Revd David Speirs

Opening Prayer:

O Lord Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, full of compassion and maker of peace, you lived in poverty and suffered persecution for the cause of justice. You chose the Cross as the path to glory to show us the way of salvation. May we receive the word of the Gospel joyfully and live by your example as heirs and citizens of your kingdom. **Amen.**

Prayer of the Mission Society of St..Columban

<https://columban.org/article/daily-prayer-humble-heart>

Reposted on RE:Worship: <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2013/08/prayer-to-follow-christ.html>

StF 287 - When I survey the wondrous cross

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dyHkkmL-KWo>

When I survey the wondrous cross
on which the Prince of Glory died
my richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
save in the death of Christ my God;
all the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down;
did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
or thorns compose so rich a crown?

His dying crimson, like a robe,
spreads o'er his body on the tree;
then am I dead to all the globe,
and all the globe is dead to me.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were an offering far too small;
love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.

Issac Watts (1674 - 1748)

Please read: Mark 8: 31-38 <https://bible.oremus.org/?q1=195004097>

Time to Reflect

In today's lectionary reading we have a fascinating interaction between Jesus and Peter concerning Jesus' arrest, death, and resurrection. On reading it we might find that we have some sympathy with Peter. Recently Jesus had instructed his disciples not to tell anyone about him (Mark 8:27-30) however now Jesus is openly talking about what is going to happen to him. Peter may have been surprised by Jesus' sudden openness as well as finding Jesus' words about his arrest and death difficult to accept himself. Peter might also be concerned that the message would be difficult for others to hear and could disadvantage the messianic movement that was coalescing around Jesus. To put it another way; what Jesus was saying was strange and not necessarily particularly popular to Peter and to others.

Having been challenged in his attitude by Jesus, Peter then listens to what Jesus has to say about discipleship and following him: That they have to deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow him. This would also have been challenging to hear. After all Peter is likely to have been familiar with the expectations placed upon the people who were subjects of the Roman Empire. Rome promised those it ruled *Pax Romana* (Roman Peace) which was sustained through brutal military occupation. Those under the auspices of the Empire were promised peace and order through their deprivation and denial, with the burden of heavy taxation and the possibility of forced labour. At the head of this empire was Augustus, a figure who was deified as the *Divi Filius* ('son of god').

However, the key difference is that while the Roman Empire was built on military conquest and oppression God's Kingdom was found on love, mercy, forgiveness, and righteousness. The Kingdom that Jesus heralded promised liberation from the burden of sin and a new way of being where every person would be released into the fullness of life. While the emperor lived in pomp and luxury in Rome Jesus lived amongst the poor in Galilee. His ministry of teaching, feeding, healing, and serving was in marked contrast to the words and actions of the earthly empire that occupied and exploited the people in that region.

Furthermore, Jesus' Kingdom is not of this world. It is not temporary or defined by borders; it does not adopt any of the trappings of an earthly empire. Instead, Jesus, the King, who would give up his life on the cross so that his people might have forgiveness, and have eternal life through the resurrection, represents a Kingdom that is boundless, that will never end, and is life giving.

Being part of this Kingdom, however, means that we are asked to follow Jesus and the way of the cross. This means that we must reject sinful selfishness and instead live in a way that exemplifies the grace and love of God. We do this by the help of the Holy Spirit, God's presence in us, who enables our service and who gives us life in all its fullness. While the Roman Empire establishes its oppressive Pax Romana through fear, the liberating peace of the Kingdom of God is found in love and in hope through God's Spirit. So in this season of Lent, we reaffirm our commitment to following Jesus and being part of his Kingdom as we walk with him, bear the cross, embrace the Holy Spirit, and look to the resurrection.

Prayer of Intercession

You are invited to pray silently for:

The needs of the world...

The Church and its calling...

Loved ones going through difficult times...

For peace, justice, and reconciliation...

In Jesus name. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven...

StF 681 - Community of Christ

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1I4i3IOPBU>

Community of Christ, who make the Cross your own,
live out your creed and risk your life for God alone:
the God who wears your face, to whom all worlds belong,
whose children are of every race and every song.

Community of Christ, look past the Church's door
and see the refugee, the hungry, and the poor.
Take hands with the oppressed, the jobless in your street,
take towel and water, that you wash your neighbour's feet.

Community of Christ, through whom the word must sound --
cry out for justice and for peace the whole world round:
disarm the powers that war and all that can destroy,
turn bombs to bread, and tears of anguish into joy.

When menace melts away, so shall God's will be done,
the climate of the world be peace and Christ its Sun;
our currency be love and kindness our law,
our food and faith be shared as one for evermore.

Shirley Erena Murray. Words © 1992 Hope Publishing Company. CCLI Song Number: 3755392

Final Prayer

Lord Jesus, you are a Lord who walks beside your people. So, we pray for people who walk for justice. You are a Lord who raises up those who are bent low. So, we pray for those held down by the grindings of life and the indifference of the world.

You are a Lord who feeds the hungry
So we pray for all who long for bread
and the means to provide it.

You are a Lord who celebrates the small and the insignificant. So, we pray for the children and for those who are never noticed. You are a Lord who says, 'Follow me'. So, we pray for courage and faith in our hearts that we may take up the cross and find it leads to life. **Amen.**

Posted on the Christian Aid website: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/>

Reposted at RE:Worship: <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2018/09/prayer-who-do-you-say-i-am.html>