

Worship@Home 7th July 2024 with Revd David Speirs

Opening Prayer:

Holy and gracious God,
we come before you now in praise and thanksgiving for all that you are
and all that you have done for us. Bless this time of worship so that we
might be shaped in the likeness of your Son by the power of your Holy
Spirit. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

STF 449 – Lord of creation

https://youtu.be/bs4_jiiYgSw?si=8M0XUMKywnjZnoGJ

Lord of creation, to you be all praise!
Most mighty your working,
most wondrous your ways!
Your glory and might are beyond us to tell,
and yet in the heart of the humble you dwell.

Lord of all power, I give you my will,
in joyful obedience your tasks to fulfil.
Your bondage is freedom, your service is song;
and, held in your keeping, my weakness is strong.

Lord of all wisdom, I give you, my mind;
rich truth that surpasses our knowledge to find,
what eye has not seen and what ear has not heard is taught by your Spirit
and shines from your word.

Lord of all bounty, I give you my heart;
I praise and adore you for all you impart,
your love to inspire me, your counsel to guide,
your presence to shield me, whatever betide.

Lord of all being, I give you my all;
if ever I leave you, I stumble and fall;
but led in your service your word to obey,
I'll walk in your freedom to the end of the way.

*By Jack Copley Winslow (1882 -1974),
Words © Mrs J Tyrell. Used by permission.
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Please read:

Mark 6: 1-13

<https://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Mark+6:1-13&version=nrsv>

Time to Reflect

At the time of writing the UK is still in the midst of a general election campaign. Whoever holds the keys to Number 10 Downing Street when his service is published will have a lot of work to do. They will also have to meet the expectations not only of their party and parliamentary colleagues but of the electorate as well.

In the passage we have today, taken from the Gospel of Mark, addresses certain expectations around the ministry of Jesus. At the beginning of the passage Jesus has visited his hometown (Nazareth) and has received something of a cold reception from his former neighbours. The people of his hometown know Jesus' family and his apprenticeship as a carpenter. This knowledge of Jesus leads them to take umbrage with him as this new prophetic leader who preaches amongst them. Jesus defies their own limited expectations and so they reject him and his ministry.

Jesus interprets their rejection as part of his prophetic task noting that:

“Prophets are not without honour, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house.” (Mark 6:4)

Interestingly, the negative reaction that Jesus receives in his own town does seem to have an impact on his ability to exercise his divine power amongst them. The passage states that “he could do no deed of power there” although he does heal a few people who were sick and cure them whilst being amazed by the extent of the unbelief that he encounters (Mark 6:5).

After this encounter Jesus goes on to the nearby villages to continue his teaching and offer healing. Jesus calls and appoints his twelve disciples to go out two by two to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to have Jesus' power over unclean Spirits (Mark 6:7-8). In so doing they are told to carry nothing but a staff and to rely on the hospitality of those who receive them.

This in turn leads to positive outcomes with the disciples sharing in the ministry that Jesus has been exercising.

As I stated earlier, expectation is a central theme within this passage. The familiarity with which the people of Nazareth have with Jesus' family defies their own expectations and leads them to reject Jesus. They are so wrapped up in their own notions and prejudices towards Jesus that they are unable to believe what God is doing in and through him. This lack of belief therefore limits the signs that they see performed amongst them. This is perhaps a lesson for us as well. Do we too need greater conviction in Christ's presence with us through the Holy Spirit and a greater openness to the works of power that can occur amongst us?

We should also note that Jesus calls and sends his disciples with the expectation that they would fully share in his mission and ministry, giving them his authority. However, along with the power that he vests with them he also leaves them in a state of dependence and vulnerability, with no food or money but relying on the hospitality of strangers.

At the beginning of this reflection, I spoke about the new government that will have been formed at the time that this service goes out. That government will be faced with many expectations but perhaps the most important one is that it will govern for the wellbeing of all people. Jesus makes it clear in his ministry that the Kingdom of God is for all people. He also demonstrates God's particular concern for those on the margins of his society. He then calls his disciples to further the work of the Kingdom by sharing in that ministry.

We as a church are called to the ministry of Jesus. This involves building relationships with people as we tell them about Jesus Christ and do the good works that God calls us to. However, we do this not by lording it over others but in service of them. Jesus' disciples are guests in the homes of strangers, humbly willing to commit themselves to the wellbeing of the people that they encounter. We too must have a willingness to not only work out the ministry of Christ with new people in new places but to do so humbly and with a high regard for their wellbeing.

Let us remember then what we are called and expected to do by Christ; to proclaim his Kingdom and offer his healing and wholeness in confidence and humility.

May God's Spirit equip us to this task as we seek to follow Jesus as our Lord, Saviour, and Friend.

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 239 – Sent to the Lord am I

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2uN-oeDI7Ag>

Sent by the Lord am I; my hands are ready now
to make the earth the place in which the kingdom comes.

Sent by the Lord am I; my hands are ready now
to make the earth the place in which the kingdom comes.

The angels cannot change a world of hurt and pain
into a world of love, of justice and of peace.

The task is mine to do, to set it really free.

Oh, help me to obey; help me to do Your will.

By Jorge E. Maldonado. Words © 1991 Abingdon Press.

Admin: Wild Goose Resource Group.

CCLI Song Number: 4773768

Final Prayer

O God, you have taught us to keep all your commandments by loving you and our neighbour: Grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit, that we may be devoted to you with our whole heart, and united to one another with pure affection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Collect for Proper 9, Year B. Taken from The Lectionary Page:

<https://shorturl.at/E8m9W>