

## Morning Prayer – Wednesday 13 October 2021

Lord, open our lips,

**And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

O God, make speed to save us.

**O Lord, make haste to help us.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. *Matthew 5.3*

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us; let us pray with one heart and mind.

***Silence is kept.***

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and for ever. **Amen.**

### The Psalms

#### Psalm 13

1 How long, O Lord? will you forget me for ever? \*how long will you hide your face from me?

2 How long shall I have perplexity in my mind, and grief in my heart, day after day? \*how long shall my enemy triumph over me?

3 Look upon me and answer me, O Lord my God; \*give light to my eyes, lest I sleep in death;

4 Lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him," \*and my foes rejoice that I have fallen.

5 But I put my trust in your mercy; \*my heart is joyful because of your saving help.

6 I will sing to the Lord, for he has dealt with me richly; \*I will praise the name of the Lord Most High.

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now and will be for ever. Amen.**

### The Proclamation of the Word

A reading from 1 Corinthians 14:13-25

<sup>13</sup> Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret. <sup>14</sup> For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unproductive. <sup>15</sup> What should I do then? I will pray with the spirit, but I will pray with the mind also; I will sing praise with the spirit, but I will sing praise with the mind also. <sup>16</sup> Otherwise, if you say a blessing with the spirit, how can anyone in the position of an outsider say the 'Amen' to your thanksgiving, since the outsider does not know what you are saying? <sup>17</sup> For you may give thanks well enough, but the other person is not built up. <sup>18</sup> I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you; <sup>19</sup> nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind, in order to instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue. <sup>20</sup> Brothers and sisters,<sup>[a]</sup> do not be children in your thinking; rather, be infants in evil, but in thinking be adults. <sup>21</sup> In the law it is written, 'By people of strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners will speak to this

people; yet even then they will not listen to me,' says the Lord. <sup>22</sup> Tongues, then, are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is not for unbelievers but for believers. <sup>23</sup> If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your mind? <sup>24</sup> But if all prophecy, an unbeliever or outsider who enters is reproved by all and called to account by all. <sup>25</sup> After the secrets of the unbeliever's heart are disclosed, that person will bow down before God and worship him, declaring, 'God is really among you.'

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew (10:24-33)**

**Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

<sup>24</sup> 'A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; <sup>25</sup> 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! <sup>26</sup> 'So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. <sup>27</sup> What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. <sup>28</sup> 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.<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>29</sup> Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. <sup>30</sup> And even the hairs of your head are all counted. <sup>31</sup> So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. <sup>32</sup> 'Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; <sup>33</sup> but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

The Gospel of Christ.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Sermon**

Do not be afraid

Matthew 10 is all about the commissioning of the twelve disciples. In it Jesus gives them very clear instruction on how they are to carry out the mission of the Good News into the world. While it begins with this great statement of authority – "Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness", it turns in vs. 16 to the reality of the anticipated suffering "See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves."

Then in vs.24 we have another major shift where Jesus, in reference to his own suffering, indicates that his disciples are to expect the same for themselves. "A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; <sup>25</sup> 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!" That, in essence, if Jesus' ministry is to be marked by suffering, accusation and him being maligned then his disciples should expect the same as their teacher or master.

It is then that Jesus turns to our emotive response – fear. In the following six verses the disciples are assured three times that there is no need to fear. Each of those injunctions is made in reference to fear of a particular outcome.

The first is in reference to our fear of the secretive or intentionally disguised (vs.26-27). “So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. <sup>27</sup> What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops.” It reminds us that in the age of competing realities and claims to truth we have nothing to fear as God is at work uncovering that which others intentionally disguise or cover up or sweep under the carpet. And in an age where we might feel compelled to defend our public image, that God is at work uncovering the truth and revealing the true reality of life.

The second is a reference to the fear of physical harm, “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. <sup>29</sup> Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father.” The point that Jesus is making is not that God will stop or prevent us from suffering for the Gospel, but rather that in the grand scheme of things no human can take from us our significance or the essence of our being irrespective of the fact that they may terminate our physical existence. It is hard for us to grasp in a world where we place so much value on physical existence, but it makes perfect sense in a world view where we value the essence of our being – our soul – and the idea that this essence is held in the embrace of God.

The third is a reference to our true value as a human being, “And even the hairs of your head are all counted. <sup>31</sup> So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.” It reminds us that when we might feel that our value is undermined by the evil and malicious and self-centred intentions of others, that our true value is held by God. And when we might feel like a value-less object that others are so willing to discount as worthless, that God is constantly active in asserting our value.

While we may not face the same reality of suffering as Jesus and his early disciples did, we do need to remind ourselves that followers of Jesus we see suffering within a very different light. And while we might be drawn to fear those who intend to undermine us in secret, do physical harm to us or undermine our value, we are encouraged by the reality that God is active in our world uncovering the truth, embracing the essence of our being and upholding our value. Amen

### **Affirmation of Faith**

**Hear, O Israel**

**Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the first and the great commandment. The second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.**

### **Intercessions and Thanksgivings**

From all evil and mischief; from pride, vanity and hypocrisy; from envy, hatred and malice; and from all evil intent, **good Lord, deliver us.**

From sloth, worldliness and love of money; from hardness of heart and contempt for your word and your laws, **good Lord, deliver us.**

From sins of body and mind; from the deceits of the world, the flesh and the devil, **good Lord, deliver us.**

From famine and disaster; from violence, murder and dying unprepared, **good Lord, deliver us.**

In all times of sorrow; in all times of joy; in the hour of death, and at the day of judgement, **good Lord, deliver us.**

### **The Collect**

Almighty God, in our baptism you adopted us for your own. Quicken, we pray, your Spirit within us, that we, being renewed both in body and mind, may worship you in sincerity and truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray as our Saviour taught us,  
**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. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.**

### **Dismissal**

Let us bless the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Notices**

### **Blessing**

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

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