

Traditional Home service Sunday 11th October Trinity 18

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty and everlasting God,
increase in us your gift of faith
that, forsaking what lies behind
and reaching out to that which is before,
we may run the way of your
commandments and win the crown of
everlasting joy; through Jesus Christ your
Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns
with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

PRAYER OF PENITENCE

Let us confess our sins in penitence and
faith, firmly resolved to keep God's
commandments and to live in love and
peace with all.

**All: Father, we have sinned against
heaven and against you. We are not
worthy to be called your children.
We turn to you again. Have mercy on
us, bring us back to yourself as those
who once were dead but now have life
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

PRAISE

Let everything be said and done in the
name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to
God through Jesus Christ. Sing psalms,
hymns and sacred songs:

Let us sing to God with thankful hearts.
Open our lips, Lord:
and we shall praise your name.

HYMN 1 (*see page 2*)

READINGS - Exodus 32:1-14
 Philippians 4:1-9
 Matthew 22:1-14

TALK

CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son,
our Lord, who was conceived by the
Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the
Father, and he will come to judge the
living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Spend some time praying for our nation,
our community and our families.*

THE 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 2 (*see page 2*)

CONCLUSION

The peace of God, which passes all
understanding, keep your hearts and
minds in the knowledge and love of God,
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you
always. Amen.

HYMNS TO USE

902 Jan Struther.
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LORD OF ALL HOPEFULNESS,

Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever child-like,
No cares could destroy;
Be there at our waking,
And give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord,
At the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled
At the plane and the lathe;
Be there at our labours,
And give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord,
At the noon of the day.

Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
Your hands swift to welcome,
Your arms to embrace;
Be there at our homing,
And give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord,
At the eve of the day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment,
Whose presence is balm;
Be there at our sleeping,
And give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord,
At the end of the day.

Timothy Dudley-Smith.
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TELL OUT, MY SOUL, the greatness
of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit
voice;
Tender to me the promise of His word;
In God my Saviour shall my heart
rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of His
name!
Make known His might, the deeds His
arm has done;
His mercy sure, from age to age the
same;
His holy name—the Lord, the mighty
One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of His
might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory
by;
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are
put to flight,
The hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of His
word!
Firm is His promise, and His mercy
sure:
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the
Lord
To children's children and forever
more!

Sunday 11th Oct - Adrian Morton
Philippians 4:1-9 Living with a sense of Peace

This is a powerful Scripture...

And in a global pandemic its probably one of the best Scriptures to read, meditate on, and allow to impact your heart.

I don't know about you, but I like to be reminded that my name is in the 'book of life'...

But I want to of course concentrate on verses 4-9 briefly this morning...

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

When it comes to that word, peace, it's a word full of promise and meaning, full of life.

Peace, or complete well being, touches our spirit, our soul and our bodies.

Often when we are experiencing, conflict, or trouble we want the Lord to take us out of the situation.

We want the source of conflict or trouble taken away so we can live in peace.

But Peace is not merely the absence of something, but it is the presence of someone.

One of Jesus' titles is that he is the Prince of Peace.

It is His presence that will guard our hearts and minds.

It is probably not surprising that anxiety levels have increased since last March.

Family life have been disrupted.
School life has been disrupted.
Job security is less certain.

But when I look, God is still on the throne.

His word still says, "**all things work together for good** to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."
Romans 8:28

All things...

I believe we can live a life characterised by 'Peace' no matter what the circumstances of life may be.

In this passage Paul gives us 4 keys to unlock the secret of living in peace...

Firstly, in verse 4:

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"

The Message version says:
"Celebrate God all day, every day... revel in Him!"

We used to know a lady in our past church who we spent much time with. She was a lady who just seemed to live under a cloud. Her eyes were dark, she didn't exude joy at all. And we prayed with her without much success really trying to get to the bottom of why she felt as she did. She had had an awful childhood experience, made to be part of a Satanic ritual, really awful, but she had renounced all that and was now a sincere believer. After not making much progress we asked a good friend of ours about her. And this friend, who was very experienced in prayer ministry, said, and it was almost an off the cuff comment, she said "Ah, she just needs to worship!" I thought, is that it? That's not very profound!

Anyway, we suggested that to her next time we met.

And this lady said, she couldn't really worship. She was unable to sing the words.

And she gave her excuses that some of the words she didn't believe or like.

or she had to analyse them first before singing them.

And we spent some time encouraging her just to worship.

But she wouldn't.

And I mention that story because I believe that was a key for her.

She needed to worship, to rejoice!.

Just to do it out of obedience.

And I know, particularly when we don't feel like it.
or when we are feeling down,
It can be hard.

But it's a command. Rejoice!
Worship is important for our well being.

We enter His presence, (his courts) with praise.

I've been so pleased that where possible our worship teams have continued to worship through this pandemic.

Both in Bozeat & Wollaston....

Key 1 - Worship...

Let your gentleness be evident to all, The Lord is near."

'gentleness' is to act with gentle forbearance towards others.
To act with patient self-control; restraint and tolerance.

Much anxiety comes when we have uncertain goals in life.
We are hoping for something to happen but we have no guarantee it will happen.

I hope that all my children come to Christ and live lives sold out for him.

But if my sense of worth as a parent is based on that, if that goal becomes how I measure success as a parent, I am setting myself up for anxiety because I have no control over whether that will happen or not.

Its a good desire to have but I can't put too much store in that goal.

If we have goals in life that we have no control over whether we can meet them we set ourselves up for anxiety.

Or Anxiety comes when we focus too much on our rights and not on our responsibilities.

For example, in my marriage.

I may think I have a right to a loving wife.
But I cannot control that.

My responsibility though as a husband is to be the best husband I can be.
That is something that is under my control.

Some people live under the mercy of what others think of them.

Craving other's approval and acceptance.

Or striving to please others.

No wonder they live with anxiety because we cannot control what others think of us.

My responsibility in life is for my own character in God.
I am not responsible for yours.

The only person who can stop me becoming more Christ like, which is God's goal for my life, is me.

We are responsible for our own character.
We are not responsible for other people's character.

Gentleness is acting with patient self control.

It's being quick to forgive.
To act with mercy.
Not being quick to judge.

Key 2 - Let your gentleness be evident to all

The 3rd key - Paul says:

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

I have to confess as a father of young children, I sometimes didn't enter into the gravity of some situations my children brought to me. So for example, when one of my boys came to me having lost a head for one of his lego men, I didn't always appreciate the importance of this calamity. I would go and find another head for him. Use this racing drivers head. But no, it wasn't the Indians head! Well what about this cowboy's head, that was of course ridiculous for an Indian body. After a couple of iterations I probably went away exasperated...

Our heavenly father though is interested in every detail and circumstance of life.

'In everything... in every detail and circumstance of life...'

There is nothing too small or too big to bring before him.

Coming before him with prayer and petition is like putting our problem, issue whatever it is in front of us.

And knowing that He is bigger than anything we can face in life.

It is knowing that our problem, issue is under the shadow of His wing.

A person with God is always in the majority.
~John Knox

It is significant that it says pray with thanksgiving.

Thankfulness is an attitude of heart that opens us up to receive the grace of God.

It is a choice we make.

It is a right and proper response to there being a God.

If we can cultivate a life of thankfulness then that will go along way to us living content lives.

Being thankful is one of the best habits to develop in life.

If you cannot find something to be thankful for. Then try harder.

If nothing else, thank God your name is written in the book of life.

3 keys:

To rejoice
To let your gentleness be evident.
To pray with thanksgiving.

God's promise is this:

And the peace of God, which transcends (goes beyond) all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

This bit is God's part.
That He bestows on us peace, His presence.

A peace that we can't understand but we can experience.

And our emotions, our thinking will be guarded.

I said at the beginning there were 4 keys..

Well Paul goes on:

*Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. 9
Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.*

What we allow our selves to watch and listen will affect our sense of well being.

I love rock music... I really like AC/DC...
I remember early on singing on of their songs, Hell's Bells.. which has the line.. "If you're into evil you're a friend of mine..."!

I didn't think it was wise to sing it anymore.

If you are in the habit of watching violent horror movies, don't expect your inner life to be at peace.

Because our eyes and ears are gateways into our soul....

Key 4 is ...

whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

I need to finish..

The peace of God is available.
Its not the absence of things... but the presence of someone...

And my prayer for us all is that we are able to walk in this peace that God has made available.

Amen!