

Traditional Home service

Sunday 10th January Epiphany 1

OPENING PRAYER

Eternal Father, who at the baptism of Jesus revealed him to be your Son, anointing him with the Holy Spirit: grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit, that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children; 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

God our Father, we come to you in sorrow for our sins.

God our Father, long-suffering, full of grace and truth, you create us from nothing and give us life. You give your faithful people new life in the water of baptism. You do not turn your face from us, nor cast us aside. We confess that we have sinned against you and our neighbour. We have wounded your love and marred your image in us. Restore us for the sake of your Son, and bring us to heavenly joy, in Jesus 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 (*Praise to the Lord*)

READINGS - Genesis 1.1-5
Acts 19.1-7
Mark 1.9-13

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 (*Shine Jesus Shine*)

CONCLUSION

The love of the Lord Jesus draw you to himself,
the power of the Lord Jesus strengthen you in his service,
the joy of the Lord Jesus fill your hearts;;
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

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty,
the King of creation!
O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy
health and salvation!
All ye who hear,
Now to His temple draw near;
Sing now in glad adoration!

Praise to the Lord, who o'er all
things so wondrously reigneth,
Who, as on wings of an eagle,
uplifteth, sustaineth.
Hast thou not seen
How thy desires all have been
Granted in what He ordaineth?

Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper
thy work and defend thee,
Who from the heavens the streams of
His mercy doth send thee.
Ponder anew
What the Almighty can do,
Who with His love doth befriend thee

Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that
is in me adore Him!
All that hath life and breath, come
now with praises before Him!
Let the Amen
Sound from His people again;
Gladly for aye we adore Him.

**Lord, the light of your love is
shining**

In the midst of the darkness, shining
Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon
us
Set us free by the truth you now bring
us
Shine on me, shine on me

*Shine, Jesus, shine
Fill this land with the Father's glory
Blaze, Spirit, blaze
Set our hearts on fire
Flow, river, flow
Flood the nations with grace and
mercy
Send forth your word
Lord, and let there be light*

Lord, I come to your awesome
presence
From the shadows into your radiance
By the blood I may enter your
brightness
Search me, try me, consume all my
darkness
Shine on me, shine on me

As we gaze on your kingly brightness
So our faces display your likeness
Ever changing from glory to glory
Mirrored here may our lives tell your
story
Shine on me, shine on me

*Source: Musixmatch
Songwriters: Kendrick Graham A
Shine Jesus Shine lyrics © Make Way Music*

Sermon for 10th January 2021
Adrian Morton
Epiphany 1: Mark 1:9-13

This Mark passage which describes the baptism of Jesus is one of those foundational passages for me.

Which means it's a passage that I keep coming back to.

It's a passage that I keep intentionally applying to my life.

And it's a great passage for the New Year!

At his baptism, the Father says to Jesus, "You are my Son, whom I love, with you I am well pleased."

We know one of the titles for Jesus is Messiah.

And this passage also emphasises that as we'll see.

But one of the functions of the Messiah was that he would be the representative of the people.

Jesus is described as the first born among many brothers (Rom 8:29)

And because we are 'in Christ', it means we benefit from what happens to Jesus.

We receive what He receives.

In Romans 6 Paul talks about baptism in this way:

He says we were baptised into his death.

And we will also be united with Him in his resurrection.

So being 'in Christ' means we even share in His crucifixion and resurrection.

What I'm trying to get to is simply this.

When the Father says to Jesus, "You are my Son, whom I love, with you I am well pleased."

We can receive that truth for ourselves.

Because we are 'in Christ'.

Before Jesus did anything notable.

Before He started any ministry, the Father said these words over Him.

And as we start a New Year, I want to encourage you to believe the Father is saying these words never you.

So the Father says: "**You are my Son**"

In other words this is your identity.

Your primary identity.

If you are a woman and it bothers you that you are a Son, then receive the word daughter.

You are a daughter.

But living in the reality of being a Son or daughter of the Father gives our primary identity in life.

One of the joys I currently have is to be reading through the Church of England's response to the whole gender & sexuality debate that is raging within the wider church at the moment.

I'm not yet half way through...

But it seems to me that there is much talk about your gender & your sexuality as being your primary identity.

Well its not... we need to see ourselves firstly as a son or daughter of the King.

When that is clear and firmly established in our psyche and hearts, then lets talk about gender and sexuality.

Anyway, it's a debate that is destined to run and run...

The Father then says to Jesus, '**whom I love**'.

The Father secures Jesus in the knowledge of His love.

Even the most hard hearted of us, will acknowledge (maybe secretly) that we need to be loved to function well.

Lack of love is devastating to our sense of well being.

People don't really need Psychologists to tell us that.

The prisons are full of people, many whom have never experienced the love of a Father.

We are designed to be loved.

We are designed to be loved by our heavenly Father.

Living in the reality of His love is what gives us our ultimate security in life.

It's what riches, possessions, fame, popularity can never give us.

And the love that God has for you is the same He has for Jesus.

It doesn't depend on what you or I do.

In other words, whatever you do the way the Father looks at you, the way the father relates to you never changes.

You can't earn His love.

You don't need to prove yourself by doing great things.

You don't have to perform for Him.

And so living in the reality of His love leads to immense freedom.

It means we can be who we are, we have no need for pretence before Him.

It means we can work **from** a place of approval rather than working for approval.

It should mean we are less swayed by others opinions of us.

The Father then says, "**with you I am well pleased.**"

At this point Jesus hadn't done any public ministry.

I'm sure he proved himself obedient in the secret places.

He will have built up His relationship with His Father.

But he hadn't done anything what you and I would call significant.

Yet the Father was well pleased with Him.

These words "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased" are echoes of both Psalm 2:7 and Is 42:1

Which say: "I will proclaim a decree of the Lord: He said to me, You are my Son; today I have become your Father."

And: "Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on Him and he will bring justice to the nations."

These are prophetic texts pointing to the future Messiah.

So these words were giving Jesus His significance.

This is your purpose.

This is what You are called to.

And I am pleased with you.

You know, the Father is pleased with me as a vicar, not because of anything I have done.

Not because of my vicar-ing prowess or not.

Which is questionable to be honest...

He's pleased with me because he called me to it.

Its all about Him!

As we start this New Year, lets start it with a renewed sense of our identity as a son or daughter of the King.

A renewed security in His love.

And a renewed significance to what He's called us to.

At His baptism the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus to anoint Him for ministry.

This passage is also a reminder that it is the Holy Spirit that impresses upon us our sense of identity, our sense of security and our sense of significance.

In the Acts passage that I haven't really got time to go into, but its worth referring to.

Paul found some disciples who had not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

He immediately addressed this and prayed that the Holy Spirit would come upon them.

The Holy Spirit is so essential for us if we are to walk strong and tall in the knowledge of our identity, security and significance.

Finally this passage also refers to Jesus being led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

I said at the beginning that being 'in Christ' means that what happens to Jesus will happen to us!

So it's a reminder that the Lord will at times lead us into a wilderness place.

Not all times of wilderness will be from the Lord.

Sometimes we lead ourselves into that place.

If we've let our hearts go cold, maybe we've become passive in our faith, maybe we've withdrawn from a life of worship, or we've stopped feeding our souls with His word... we can then find ourselves in a dry and arid place.

Which feels like being in a wilderness.

The question is therefore, how do we know whether it's the Lord that has led us or it's come from us?

Well I think the clue is in this text..

The Father bestowed on Jesus his sense of identity, security and significance.

Jesus would have gone into the wilderness with all that in place.

Knowing his sonship, knowing the love of the Father, knowing His purpose...

If you know these things, if you are walking in the truth of them and you find yourself in a dry place.

A wilderness place, then it just may be that the Lord has led you there.

And that place is a place of strengthening and equipping for ministry.

It's a preparation time...

The very things the Father spoke over Jesus were the very things the devil tried to cause him to doubt.

The Father said, You are my Son..

The first temptation, the devil says, "If you are the Son of God..."

The enemy was trying to unhinge Jesus' sense of identity, his security and his significance.

But the Father was using it as a strengthening and equipping time.

And the Lord will lead us into this place to equally strengthen and equip us for ministry and something new.

If you are in a wilderness place and you haven't got a deep sense of your son or daughter ship, your security in God's love, your sense of significance then maybe it's not the Lord who had led you into this place.

You need to find again and renew your sense of identity, your security and significance.

And that can be just going back to basics... worship, feeding on God's word, reminding yourself and declaring over yourself God's promises over your life etc...

I want to pray for us this morning..

As we start a New Year...

See no matter what this year has in store for us.. and I feel strangely optimistic despite this new lockdown...

But no matter what we face this year, if we are walking tall and upright in our identity as a Son or daughter of King, we are secure in His love, we are a sense of significance and purpose in our lives..

Then we can face any situation with confidence and boldness..

So let's pray...