

Our Sunday Service Together

23rd October 2022

19th Sunday after Trinity



An Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
one God, who was, and who is, and who is to come, the Almighty.

Alleluia

Preparation

All: This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Through the brokenness of Christ, we become one body
as one body we now gather in the name of Christ to offer our praise and thanksgiving, to receive God's
holy word, to pray for the needs of the world,
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins, that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

Our Confession

Let us come to the light of Christ, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

All: Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord, we come to you in sorrow for our sins, and confess to
you our weakness and unbelief.

We have lived by our own strength, and not by the power of your resurrection.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived by the light of our own eyes, as faithless and not believing.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived for this world alone, and doubted our home in heaven.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

Be still for a moment in confession and in receiving God's Grace in Christ

All: May Almighty God, who in Jesus Christ has given us a kingdom that cannot be destroyed, forgive us
our sins, open our eyes to God's truth, strengthen us to do God's will and give us the joy of his
kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Risen Lord. Amen.

The opening prayer

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

Silence is kept.

All: 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 Psalmody Psalm 84.1-7

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!
My soul has a desire and longing to enter the courts of the Lord;
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.
The sparrow has found her a house and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young:
at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.
Blessed are they who dwell in your house: they will always be praising you.
Blessed are those whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion,
Who going through the barren valley find there a spring, and the early rains will clothe it with blessing.
They will go from strength to strength and appear before God in Zion.
O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; listen, O God of Jacob.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen

Scripture Reading Jeremiah 14.7-10 and 19-22

Although our iniquities testify against us, act, O Lord, for your name's sake;
our apostasies indeed are many, and we have sinned against you.

⁸O hope of Israel, its saviour in time of trouble, why should you be like a stranger in the land, like a traveller turning aside for the night?

⁹Why should you be like someone confused, like a mighty warrior who cannot give help? Yet you, O Lord, are in the midst of us, and we are called by your name; do not forsake us!

¹⁰Thus says the Lord concerning this people: Truly they have loved to wander,
they have not restrained their feet; therefore the Lord does not accept them,
now he will remember their iniquity and punish their sins.

At the end of the reading we say:

All: This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Gloria

All: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Gospel Luke 18.9-14

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: ¹⁰ 'Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax-collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, "God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax-collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income." ¹³ But the tax-collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.'

at the end of the reading we say:

All: This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

A Reflection for the day

Jesus' parables come to us to shock and to encourage our journey of faith. I wonder how are we shocked and encouraged by today's parable?

On the one level, it could be we are shocked by the actions of one character in the parable and encouraged by those of the other. Many will have heard sermons proposing shock at the Pharisee's self-righteousness, and at the same time, encouraging listeners to adopt the humble attitude of the tax collector. One preacher is said to have famously stood up and delivered a one-line sermon on the passage, 'hands up anyone who didn't think, 'thank God I am not like that Pharisee!'.

Of course, thinking like that is to self-justify and to fall into the same hole that the Pharisee is supposed to be falling into. And maybe this would shock us, that we all have something of the Pharisee's self-righteousness attitude in our faith! However, in many ways the Pharisee was justified in his review his faith – he lived a simple life, fasting and giving through the tithe. Here was a good man of faith! Many would have been shocked to hear his everyday faith offered for criticism by Jesus.

Jesus' use of a Tax Collector as the contrast character would have shocked just as many people; after all, simply because of his job, working with and for the enemy state of Rome, he was considered beyond the bounds of the faith community. 'Sinners and Tax Collectors' is the corporate noun of the age for all who have exempted themselves from the community of faith, and as such from the possibility of approaching God and receiving mercy. So, the man stands at a distance and calls to God, and Jesus says he receives God's mercy; just as have the outcast lepers of the parables in the previous chapters of Luke.

Jesus shocks his audience in saying that the outcast is justified and the 'man of good works and faith' is not. I wonder who we would be surprised to hear Jesus say today was justified, and who was not as they approached God. Who might we automatically think of as outside the possibilities of being part of the community of faith? Likewise, who might we think is a good example of Christian practice, and why?

Here is the nub of what Jesus is saying, 'all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God'. Jesus is looking to remind everyone listening to the parable that all can be self-righteous in their faith attitude and judgmental of others to boot – either consciously or sub-consciously. The reality is that each of us have actions and attitudes that can exclude us from the grace of God. The parable challenges us to reflect and ask whether our attitude puts a distance between us and God; and of course to be wary when we say 'no, I am fine', for the big trap of self-righteousness looms before us then.

However, all is not loss and gloom, for there is great encouragement also to be had, for 'God so loved the

cosmos that he sent his Son that all who believe in him would be saved and have life into eternity'. The Kingdom project of God in Christ looks not to possessions, prestige, social standing, but to the cry of the heart! This would have been the greatest shock and encouragement to the hearers of Jesus' parable, that God's kingdom is inclusive of all who come with the right attitude of heart. It is still shocking for many of faith today, that God would welcome any who come with the right heart. And for those who feel they can't come, what an encouragement too, that God welcomes the humble of heart and they go home justified. Good news indeed!

The Creed

All: 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

We make our intercessions

Gracious God, we pray for your church throughout the world, that your way may be known upon earth, and your saving power among all nations. We pray for all church leaders and all those who are seeking new ways to live and tell the story of Jesus in changing times.

Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.

God of compassion, challenge the boundaries we set to our charity and concern. Grant that we may all rejoice in your love and share it.

Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.

God of hospitality, you set a place for everyone at your table. Open our hearts to embrace those who are easily excluded and despised. We pray for peace and unity among all people and across nations.

Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.

God of healing, at your word, the girl was released from her distress. Grant your healing love to all who are weighed down with sickness or anxiety. We pray especially for ...

Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.

God of hope, you bring life to all who call upon your name. Draw into your family all who have died and be with those who are bereaved....

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your son, Our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

The Collect

All: O God, forasmuch as without you we are not able to please you;
mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts;
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.

The Conclusion

All: Christ, as a light illumine and guide me this day.
Christ, as a shield overshadow me.
Christ under me, Christ over me; Christ beside me on my left and my right.
This day be within and without me. Amen