

Informal Service

Tuesday 19 May 2020

In the name of Christ, who died and was raised by the glory of the Father, welcome: grace, mercy and peace be with you. **And also with you.**

We have come to the city of the living God to the heavenly Jerusalem, with thousands of angels in joyful assembly. **Alleluia!**

We have come to God the judge of all, to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant with thousands of angels in joyful assembly. **Alleluia.**

Lord, direct our thoughts, teach us to pray, lift up our hearts to worship you in Spirit and in truth, through Jesus Christ. Amen

Please sit or kneel

Christ our Passover lamb has been offered for us. Let us then rejoice by putting away all malice and evil and confessing our sins with a sincere and true heart.

O 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. We have lived by the light of our own eyes, as faithless and not believing. We have lived for this world alone and doubted our home in heaven. In your mercy, forgive us. Hear us and help us.

God who is both power and love, forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by his Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Bible Reading

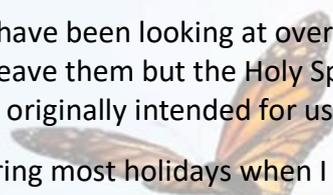
John 16:5-11 New International Version (NIV)

But now I am going to him who sent me. None of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things. But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because people do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

Thought for Today

This passage follows on directly from the passages we have been looking at over the last few weeks. Jesus is telling the disciples that He is going to leave them but the Holy Spirit – The Advocate will come to help them live their lives as God originally intended for us.

I remember visiting my mums' friend - auntie Mary during most holidays when I was younger. My mum and Auntie Mary did their children training as nurses together and became very close friends. Every holiday was spent as a family at Aunties Marys house just



outside Scarborough and we had many enjoyable times. But leaving was a traumatic at times, Auntie Mary who had been ill for some time didn't want to return to her single life without us and we loved being by the sea with its adventures and treats. It was the end of good times for that holiday. :(

Jesus talking about his leaving saddened the disciples they liked having him around. They liked going where he went, seeing the things he did, and listening to his teaching.

But Jesus tells them that if he does not go away then the spirit will not come, and the mission of the church to go into the whole world and tell others cannot happen.

When I was growing up, we used to drink the now defunct Ward Best Bitter. A local Sheffield beer it sold very well locally with little to no advertisement – It was very good, and you have probably never heard of it. Coca Cola on the other hand you probably have. Life with Jesus in Israel was a bit like Wards Best Bitter it was exceptionally good but very localised. Jesus saw a different model, a worldwide strategy like Coca Cola - the message was for the whole world, and enabled by the power of Gods Holy spirit in us to go forth and tell. A message where we are prompted to know a life with God... away from the things we do wrong, away from our interpretation of the right way to live and where our demonstration of Justice is shown to be unjust.

Jesus tells us that the Holy Spirit will clearly reveal to us that Jesus was truthful in who He said he was. That the teaching of Jesus would show us clearly how we should live our lives as God intended, and that through Jesus we can have a new relationship with God.

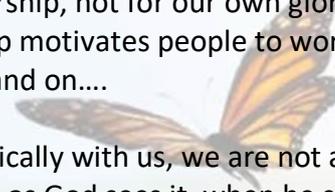
Jesus tells us that he is the way, the truth and the life and the Holy spirit will guide, prompt, and encourage us to make the choice to follow or go with the world.

What seems like abandonment to the disciples, Jesus says he goes away for our good, so that the Holy Spirit might come to us. The gift of the Holy Spirit means we don't have to rely on our own powers to reach God. But we do need to become better moulded to the transforming of the Holy Spirit, so that our lives are shaped by the Holy Spirit.

So how are we going to let the Holy Spirit mould us today, are we willing to give everything to God, and start showing the fruits of his Holy Spirit. The same fruits of the Holy spirit that Galatians 5 v 22-23 – But the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. And we mustn't forget the gifts of the Holy Spirit that enable us to do many things from teaching, caring and admin through to counselling, giving and hospitality.

Gods Holy spirit enables us to follow Gods plans for our lives, these gifts mobilise us as a church to reach out effectively to our families, friends, neighbours, and this community. We care because Gods Holy Spirit has prompted us to care. We encourage one another because that builds up Gods family. We take positions of leadership, not for our own glory but to reach the goals and purposes of the church. Leadership motivates people to work together in unity towards common goals. I could go on and on and on....

This passage reminds us, that though Jesus is not physically with us, we are not alone, Gods Holy spirit enables us to look at the world differently – as God sees it, when he said it was



good, and then helps us to use our gifts and skills to tell others, through our actions, through our words, through our love.

In the words of the song - We are one in the Spirit; we are one in the Lord - And they will know we are Christians by our love. We are reminded that Gods Holy spirit guides us, teaches us, unites us, and helps us to love. Though Jesus was leaving his disciples they had nothing to fear, Jesus wanted them to have the peace of God and know life in all its fulness. This is the challenge for all of us at St James – are we worried and saddened, or are we going to enable Gods Holy spirit to work in us to bring us the life that God has intended for each and every one of us.

Let us declare our faith in God.

We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love. We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high. We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Prayers for Today

Lord God make your ways known upon the earth: **your saving power among all the peoples.**

Renew your Church in holiness: **and help us to serve you with joy.**

Guide the leaders of this and every nation: **that justice may prevail throughout the world.**

Let not the needy be forgotten: **nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

Make us instruments of your peace: **and let your glory be over all the world.**

Pour your healing power upon us; **and upon all those we love who are suffering at this time.**

As you sent your Son into the world: **so send us, to make your glory known.**

Amen.

And now may The Father, whose glory fills the heavens, cleanse us by his holiness and send us out to proclaim his word. The Son, who has ascended to the heights, pour upon us the riches of his grace. And the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, equip us and strengthen us in our walk with Jesus. Amen.

And now may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, be amongst us and remain with us always Amen

Go in Peace to love and serve the Lord

In the name of Christ. Amen.

