

Informal Morning Service for Tuesday 7th July 2020

Great is the Lord and worthy of all praise.

Praise and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honour, power and might, be to our God for ever and ever Amen.

Together we pray:

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

Confession

Jesus says, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand. So let us turn away from sin and turn to him, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Almighty God, long-suffering and of great goodness: we confess to you with our whole hearts our neglect and forgetfulness of your commandments, our wrong doing, thinking, and speaking; the hurts we have done to others, and the good we have left undone. O God, forgive us, for we have sinned against you; and raise us to newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Absolution

May the Lord enrich us with his grace, and nourish us with his blessing; may the Lord defend us in trouble and keep us from all evil; may the Lord accept our prayers and forgive us all our sins, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Collect

Gracious Father, by the obedience of Jesus you brought salvation to our wayward world: draw us into harmony with your will, that we may find all things restored in him, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Reading

Psalm 103:8-13 New International Version (NIV)

The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and of great kindness. He will not always accuse us, neither will he keep his anger for ever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our wickedness. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his mercy upon those who fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has he set our sins from us.

Thought for Today

This is a psalm of King David and it starts with David praising the Lord his God, he praises God for being holy, for Gods' kindness, for forgiveness, for healing, and for life itself, and keeping Him safe. But most importantly David praises God for his love and mercy. This is a love and mercy that cares for the oppressed and fills our lives with the good things of His creation.

In our church and in fact in this service already, we come before God confessing our wrong actions in thought, word and deed. At the end of this confession we share an absolution which is a reflection of Gods forgiving love for us.



But what we see here in this psalm is something more than just forgiveness we are familiar with, we see that God actively forgets about our sin, he actively forgets our sin as He removes our wrong doings far away from us.

I have worked with a lot of people in my life, and on this matter of forgiveness so often they have said, "I will forgive them but I'll not forget what they have done to me". It is often easier to forgive than forget. The relationship has been broken and the trust is gone or damaged.

When we look at these words in Psalms we see God acting in a different way in regard to our forgiveness, an integral part of Gods forgiveness is forgetting – When we look at how Godly forgiveness works - if we haven't forgotten then we probably haven't forgiven. This is true in our relationship, apart from being a Liverpool supporter, I can't remember the last thing Rachel did wrong.

The psalm shows us how God deals with our wrong doing and we see a God who is slow to become angry at us. His anger at us does come, but only because we choose to be separated from God by our actions, but when His anger comes it comes slowly and after much mercy has been shown.

We have a God that loves us with an unconditional love, this is the same love that most parents have for their children – they might not always like them, but they always love them. But here is a problem, so often we compare our Gods love to our parent's love. Many people have been completely hurt and destroyed by their own parent's care for them. I know people who have been deeply hurt by terrible experiences. As we learn about what our Father God is like so we can start to see the true nature of a parent and apply that compassion and care to those around us

Our Father God doesn't keep on nagging at us either, but through his love and justice he gently steers us to a place of forgiveness. One thing that stands out in the Psalm is that God doesn't punish us as we deserve to be punished, He doesn't repay us according to our sins and wrongs. God doesn't insist on an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth. Kind David knew the slow anger and abounding mercy of God personally in his own life. David was quite a naughty boy at times, he slept with someone else's wife and had the husband murdered. King David knew that his wrong doings and the wrong doings of the people around him deserved much greater judgement or discipline than they had received.

How often do we feel the mercy of God on our lives? How often do we think we have done things that God could never forgive?

We are reminded that God's forgiveness doesn't work like that, when we come to Him for forgiveness. Our God forgives and forgets.

I have a drone and I can fly it around; I like to fly it high and look down and take an aerial pictures or movies. Our church website has a little movie of one of my early flights inside the church, when it was too windy and cold outside to fly. From the ground to the clouds is a long way, I have had my drone high up in the sky, that it has been difficult to see it, but even then the clouds have been way above me. This is how vast the love of God is for us.

Someone once said that if you travel north, you begin to travel south as soon as you reach the north pole, but if you travel east, you will continue east forever. East and West will never meet. This is how far God has removed our wrong doings from us.



When God made us He loved us, when we do wrong God forgives us and forgets and restart the relationship with us with no malice or contempt for us. But as we grow in the love of God, so we need to move away from doing the wrong things that are common to us and become transformed into the humans that God originally intended us to be. If we honour God then God is kind to us, He is merciful, we are forgiven. These are the characteristics of our heavenly father, compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love, does not accuse us, and will not be angry forever.

David does not list any wrongs here, he just says sins and wrongs – we all do sins and wrong things. But when we give them to God, God sweeps them away. David knews that we find our strength in Gods love, this is where we should seek to be. God wants good things for us, and we find those good things by serving our loving God, following His commandments and sharing His ways with others.

The apostle Paul reminded us in his letter to the Philippians 3:13-14 “Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”

Let us forget all the times we let God down and come to Jesus for forgiveness, remembering all the good things that God has for us and push on in our service of our loving heavenly father.

Amen

We declare our faith in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures; he was buried; he was raised to life on the third day in accordance with the scriptures; afterwards he appeared to his followers, and to all the apostles: this we have received, and this we believe. Amen.

We Pray

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

A moment of silent prayer

Lord, we ask you to accept all our prayers and answer them for your glory. **Amen.**

Eternal God, our beginning and our end, be our starting point and accompany us in this day's journey. Scatter our darkness and open our eyes to praise you for your creation and to see the work you set before us today. Take us and use us to bring to others the new life you give in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

And 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.

