Home Service Sheet for Sunday 12th June 2022

Call To Worship:                Psalm 8:1-9

O Lord, our Lord,
    how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens.
    Out of the mouth of babies and infants,
you have established strength because of your foes,
    to still the enemy and the avenger.
When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
    the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,
what is man that you are mindful of him,
    and the son of man that you care for him?
Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings
    and crowned him with glory and honour.
You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;
    you have put all things under his feet,
all sheep and oxen,
    and also the beasts of the field,
the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,
    whatever passes along the paths of the seas.
O Lord, our Lord,
    how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Opening Prayer

Holy and Everlasting God, we bring You our worship today. ‘Holy, Holy, Holy’ cry out the angels who see and know You face to face, O Lord. Blessed are You, Heavenly Father, the Maker of all from nothing! Blessed are You Lord Jesus Christ, the One and only Saviour of all from sin! Blessed are You, Holy Spirit of all, who is in all, and through all. Blessed are You, Holy God, One and yet three Persons in community. Help us to worship You as You deserve, and help us to respond to Your Word with faith and obedience. Bless Your Church on earth with the unity and diversity of heaven, that we may be one, as You are one. This we ask in the Name of Your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, amen.

Hymn                            Holy, holy, holy by Reginald Heber
<https://youtu.be/vBjM47zICos>

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! all the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Which wert and art and evermore shalt be.

Holy, holy, holy! though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see;
Only Thou art holy − there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in pow’r, in love and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea;
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Bible Reading:          John 16:1-15

“I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me. But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.

“I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Reflection

Over the two to three years of Jesus’ public ministry He taught the disciples many things which are recorded for us in the Gospels. Not only did Jesus teach them practical lessons, and important teachings to continue to share with others, but He also prepared them for the times ahead when He would no longer physically be with them. The emphasis in this preparation seems to be so that they would not ‘fall away’. But what did Jesus mean by this in verse 1? Mainly this is about falling away from the right, narrow path we must walk as disciples of Jesus Christ.

In the parable of the sower, Jesus spoke about seed that fell on different kinds of ground, the majority of which did no go on to produce fruit (Matthew 13:1-9). This is perhaps the best illustration in Scripture of falling away. Some stopped following Jesus because they had no depth to their faith, while others were distracted by the cares of this world, and still others fell away because of hardships and persecution (Matthew 13:18-23). These issues are still as relevant today as they were 2000 years ago, and they are things of which we need to be aware. In fact, Scripture speaks of a time to come when many will fall away before Jesus returns (2 Thessalonians 2:1-4). We need to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, and continue to follow Him faithfully, come what may.

In our Bible reading Jesus gave the disciples some specific warnings about what to expect. In particular He mentions that they will be thrown out of the synagogues for following Him (v.2). You might expect that this is one place where they would be safe, following Israel’s Messiah, but sadly many in Israel would reject Him. It’s only natural that they would also reject those who follow Jesus and His teachings. Perhaps we are in a time now where faithfully following Jesus may even get us expelled from some churches? More than this hardship, though, Jesus warned His disciples that He would soon be leaving them (v.5).

Jesus understood that the disciples would find this extremely hard to understand and manage, and so He had been preparing them for this. However, despite what they may have thought, it was in fact best that Jesus would be leaving because firstly this meant He would pay the price for sin, dying on the cross. Secondly, it would mean that Jesus would send the Holy Spirit, who would be their Helper and Advocate (v.7). Of course, since the day of Pentecost, that same Spirit comes and lives in all who have faith in Jesus. So, once the Spirit had come, what would He do?

Jesus speaks of a number of things in our Bible passage, which I will briefly mention now, although we could probably spend several weeks going over these roles that the Spirit plays in the lives of believers. Perhaps the main emphasis here is on the Holy Spirit coming to convict the world of sin (v.8). Left to our own devices we often tend to think the best of ourselves, and rarely think that we should take the blame for things. For this reason, amongst others, the Holy Spirit convicts people of their sin, not so that they can wallow in despair, but rather so that they might be filled with Godly sorrow, pray to God and repent. Under the conviction that the Spirit brings upon us we all stand condemned apart from faith in Jesus Christ.

Besides that key element of the Holy Spirit’s work, He also guides us into all truth (v.13) speaks the wonderful truths that the Father has revealed (v.13) through the Word of God, and tells us what is to come (v.13), again through the Scriptures. We could perhaps combine these three things into inspiring the writing of the Scriptures and helping us to understand and apply them today. Finally, Jesus speaks about the way in which the Holy Spirit will glorify Jesus (v.14). In these wondrous descriptions of the work of the Spirit, the inner workings of the Trinity are made known to us. Both the Son and the Spirit do and speak what the Father tells them to do and say. Jesus sends the Spirit to live in believers, leading them into all the truth the Father has spoken, and so that Jesus would be glorified.

Today is Trinity Sunday, and although our main focus has not been trying to understand exactly how God is both One, and Three Persons, we have nonetheless been seeing how God has revealed Himself to us as the Trinity through His Word. Sometimes there are things we don’t fully understand about God and His Word, and so we have to accept some things by faith. God the Holy Spirit helps us to do this by granting us the gift of faith. He also empowers us and teaches us to live to the glory of Jesus. May that be our aim each and every day as we seek to follow Jesus. Amen!

Pastoral Prayer

Heavenly Father, we are amazed by You. You sent Your only Son, fully God and fully man, to be born into the human race, to become our Kinsman-Redeemer and save us by grace through faith in His death for us. Thank You that, by faith in Him, we have become Your children and have an inheritance in Christ. Open the eyes of our understanding to all that Your Holy Spirit wants to show us, and may we grow in grace in the days ahead. Thank You too, O Lord, that by faith we have the privilege of knowing wonderful things from Your Word and the privilege of having the Holy Spirit dwell in us to guide us into a greater knowledge of the things of God - to Whom be all praise and glory. In Jesus' name we pray, amen!

Benediction

The Lord God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the holy and undivided Trinity, guard you, save you, and bring you to that heavenly city, where He lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.