

Traditional Home service
Sunday 23rd June
4th Sunday after Trinity

OPENING PRAYER

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy:
increase and multiply upon us your mercy;
that with you as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not our hold on things eternal;
grant this, heavenly Father, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

PRAYER OF PENITENCE

Let us return to the Lord our God and say to him:

Father, we have sinned against heaven and against you. We are not worthy to be called your children. We turn to you again. Have mercy on us, bring us back to yourself as those who once were dead but now have life through 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 (*Be Still, My Soul*)

READINGS - 1 Samuel 17.[1a,4-11, 19-23]32-49
2 Corinthians 6.1-13
Mark 4.35-4

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 (*The Firm Foundation*)

CONCLUSION

Eternal God,
comfort of the afflicted and healer of the broken, you have fed us at the table of life and hope:
teach us the ways of gentleness and peace,
that all the world may acknowledge the kingdom of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Hymns to use

Be Still, My Soul

Be still, my soul; the Lord is on thy side;
bear patiently the cross of grief or pain.
Leave to thy God to order and provide;
in every change He faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul; thy best, thy heav'nly
Friend
through thorny ways leads to a joyful
end.

Be still, my soul; thy God doth undertake
to guide the future as He has the past.
Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing
shake;
all now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul; the waves and winds
still know
His voice who ruled them while He dwelt
below.

Be still, my soul; when dearest friends
depart,
and all is darkened in the veil of tears,
then shalt thou better know His love, His
heart,
who comes to soothe thy sorrow and thy
fears.
Be still, my soul; thy Jesus can repay
from His own fullness all He takes away.

Be still, my soul; the hour is hast'ning on
when we shall be forever with the Lord,
when disappointment, grief, and fear are
gone,
sorrow forgot, love's purest joys resto-
red.
Be still, my soul; when change and tears
are past,
all safe and blessed we shall meet at
last.

The Firm Foundation

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the
Lord,
is laid for your faith in God's excellent
Word!
What more can be said than to you God
hath said,
to you who for refuge to Jesus have
fled?

Fear not, I am with thee, O be not
dismayed,
for I am thy God, and will still give thee
aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause
thee to stand,
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent
hand.

When through the deep waters I call thee
to go,
the rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;
for I will be near thee, thy troubles to
bless,
and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

When through fiery trials thy pathway
shall lie,
my grace, all sufficient, shall be thy sup-
ply;
the flame shall not hurt thee; I only
design
thy dross to consume, and thy gold to
refine.

The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for
repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
that soul, though all hell should
endeavour to shake,
I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake.

Sermon - Adrian Morton
1 Sam 17 & Mark 4/35-41
Overcoming giants & storms...

You and I are on a journey to become more like Jesus.

When we signed up to be a Christian, that is what we signed up for.

To become more like Him and to be better able to represent Him to the world.

That is our purpose in life.

Now we all know that in life, we will face difficulties, trials, problems, temptations...

This morning I want to talk about overcoming those things - difficulties, trials, problems, temptations - giants and storms if you like...

But to keep it in the context of us becoming more like Christ and being able to represent Him to the world better or more effectively.

Because sometimes we will talk about this subject in a way that is kind of like this:

I want God to sort out my challenges and problems just so I can get on with my life.

I don't believe God works that way.

When we think about prayer, God isn't there just to dispense right answers to our prayer requests...

I believe He is constantly looking at ways for us to become more like Jesus and to enable us to be able to represent Jesus better to the world around us.

Winds of adversity don't come from the Lord. But He can and does certainly use them to grow us, to mature us.
Lets look at Mark 4 first...

Evening came, Jesus said to his disciples
"Let us go over to the other side."
Leaving the crowd they got into a boat.
A furious squall came up and broke over the boat.
Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion (love the detail!)
The disciples woke him and said to him,
"Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"

He gout, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.
He said to his disciples, Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

Its such an interesting story...

Jesus didn't say to his disciples.. 'Great job... you got frightened and desperate, you woke me up and asked me to sort out this trial, this difficulty you're experiencing.

I did that, great job. We've just modelled good prayer time...
He didn't say that.

He answered there request and then said,

"Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"
Which is really revealing...

He had said to them, "let us go over to the other side."

That is the word he had spoken to them.

So I believe Jesus was expecting the disciples to do one of two things, which they would have been commended for.

Either, they were to also sleep through the storm knowing Jesus had said, "let us go over to the other side."

Or, and probably the better option, they themselves would have rebuked the wind and waves, knowing Jesus had said, "let us go over to the other side."

Thereby learning they could pray with authority over such things.

Now Jesus still answered their prayer of desperation.

Because He is merciful, good and welcomes us no matter what state we are in.

He will sometimes answer prayer, even if our way of praying is clumsy and immature.

But ultimately, I think he was trying to teach His disciples to pray out of authority rather than desperation.

Why was Jesus able to sleep through the storm?
Because he was so confident about what the Father had said.

“lets go to the other side.”

He had complete peace... he knew no level of wind and waves were going to thwart the word of the Father.

Its interesting that the disciples didn't wake Jesus up and say, “But you said, Let us go over to the other side.”

They had become intimated by the problem and not remembered what Jesus had said.

Or if they had remembered, they had not put their trust in it.

What can we learn from this encounter...

When we are facing difficulties, trials, problems, or temptations we need to ask:

What is the Lord saying in this situation?

What does His word say?

How might He be maturing me?

What is He trying to teach me?

It may be that our starting point is to find a logos word, a general word of Scripture that will help us.

So for example, if we are facing a real difficult situation, it could even be something that makes your future uncertain..

We can go into His word and find out what He says at a general level...

So we can quote to ourselves verses such as:

“For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen.”

—2 Corinthians 4:17-18

“The sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”

—Romans 8:18

God's logos word will encourage us, strengthen us...

Even better, is to receive a Rhema word, a specific word for now kind of word...

<Personal testimony>

If we don't feel we have had any specific words like that spoken over us, then we need to start finding some prophetic people.

And then ask them, can you speak over me...

And as a church we'll hopefully continue to ensure that happens.

So we believe the Lord has recently spoken a word over us about building something new.

Earlier in Mark 4 Jesus tells the parable of the sower.

He says about the seed that falls on rocky places:

“when trouble or persecution comes because of the word...”

When the word of God is spoken over your life, it will attract trouble and persecution...

Now trial and difficulty from the enemies perspective will try and dislodge us from what God has said.

We see that in the Garden of Eden... the serpent says.. “did God really say... you must not eat...”

Jesus was baptised, with the Father speaking over Him, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased...”

He is then taken into the wilderness. After 40 days what is the first thing the enemy says: “If you are the Son of God...”

For all of us, when we face difficulties, trials, problems, temptations... it will come in one of two forms:

Either to get me to question what God has said, or question who I am.

If either of those two realities are compromised in my heart.

Then I'm compromised in my thinking.
And that puts me on a very weak foundation.
And my life can be shaken.

Winds of adversity don't come from the Lord.

But they are an opportunity to keep obedient to the word that has been spoken over us.

Because that will mature us, grow us, strengthen us...

Whenever I say yes to the word of God it qualifies, strengthens me for greater impact for the Kingdom.

So, What is the Lord saying in this situation?

The second point is this:

Don't be intimidated by the problem...

In our OT reading we've heard the well known story of David & Goliath...

Goliath was a big, literally, problem.

in v11, when confronted by Goliath it says:

v11 - "all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified..."

If we keep focussed on the difficulty, trial, the problem we are facing and become intimidated by it..

Then it can lead us to a place of fear and potentially despair.

How many of us have been kept awake at night constantly going over and over again the problem or difficulty we are facing.

How many of us have found that helpful?

So we need to guard against that.

If we have slipped into a place of fear then using Scripture can help us:

So, Isaiah 41:10 encourages us, "Do not fear, for I am with you

In Psalm 56:11 the psalmist writes, "In God I trust; I will not be afraid

2 Timothy 1:7: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (NKJV)

The Israelites looked at and focussed on Goliath and saw the problem was too big.

David looked at Goliath and saw that God was bigger.

He said to Saul, "The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."

My God is bigger.

He knew God has equipped him throughout his life.

He didn't need, or could even use, Saul's or anyone else's armour.

He knew that how he had been equipped through life was sufficient to enable him to win this battle.

So David's confidence was in God and also in what has shaped him thus far...

v47 - David says this: "All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's..."

Depending on the difficulties, trials, problems, temptation we are facing it is sometimes good to remind ourselves Eph 6:

"our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

Some battles will be only won on our knees. Standing firm in the armour of God...

Praying in the Spirit on all occasions as it says in that passage.

And trusting God for the outcome.

CONCLUSION

We are all on a journey to become more like Jesus.

To become more like Him and to be better able to represent Him to the world.

In life, we will all face difficulties, trials, problems, temptations...

It can be a temptation to ignore, run away from these things.

Often we won't be able to because that is out of our control.

Whatever difficulty, trial, problem, temptation; the Lord will lead us through in a way that will mature us and strengthen us to face even bigger challenges in the future.

We need to find out what he is saying in the situation.

And not allow us to be intimidated by whatever the trial is.

He is bigger than it all...

Lets pray...