

Worship At Home: 10 April 2020 - Good Friday

Opening prayer

Let us come humbly now before our God,
not because we must, but because we may,
not because we are strong, but because we are weak,
not because any goodness of our own gives us a right to come,
but because we need mercy and help.
Let us come because we love the Lord a little and long to love him more.
Let us come because he loved us and gave himself for us.

Hymn: When I survey the wondrous cross

(CCLI Song # 3296590)

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God!
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

Confession

Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have failed you just as your first disciples did.
We ask for your mercy and your help.

When we take our ease rather than watch with you:
Lord, have mercy; **Father, forgive us.**

When we bestow a kiss of peace, yet nurse enmity in our hearts:
Lord, have mercy; **Father, forgive us.**

When we strike at those who hurt us rather than stretch out our hands to bless:
Lord, have mercy; **Father, forgive us.**

When we deny that we know you for fear of the world and its scorn:
Lord, have mercy; **Father, forgive us.**

May God who loved the world so much
that he sent his Son to be our Saviour,
forgive us our sins
and make us holy to serve him in his world,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Reading

Matthew 27:32-54

Reflection: Loss and gain - Keith Nurse

As I've watched and reflected on what's been happening over the last few remarkable weeks, one thing that's particularly struck me is just how quickly and dramatically many of our assumptions about daily life have been swept away - being able to arrange a supermarket delivery, to greet someone with a handshake - let alone a hug, to celebrate family occasions, to walk round Kew Gardens, to go to the funeral of a friend, to enjoy a secure job and, for some of us, even to set foot outside our front door. The sorts of changes we couldn't have possibly imagined at the start of the year have been both sobering and humbling.

So our celebration of Easter this year has a very different backdrop. In such a short space of time it feels as if we've lost so much, and with little if any choice about it. But Easter is also a story of loss. It's the climax of Jesus' earthly life and ministry, and in the space of just a few days he moves from being welcomed into Jerusalem by joyful crowds to hearing the same people call for His crucifixion. In human terms it seemed as if He had everything going for Him, but it was suddenly and brutally stripped away.

But there was a bigger picture. Listen again to what Paul wrote to the church in Philippi, words that we used as our Affirmation of Faith last Sunday:

*Christ Jesus, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God
something to be grasped,
but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to death -
even death on a cross!*

Philippians 2:5b-8

Jesus humbly and willingly accepted loss. He is God, but he consciously and deliberately made Himself nothing, became a servant and accepted death. He knew what God's plan of salvation was, but He still had the choice whether or not to follow it. And while He wrestled with this, and the night before He died desperately cried out to His Father to ask if there was another way, ultimately He chose a path of obedience. And our reading today reminds us of the horror of this - the mocking, the insults, the sense of abandonment, and the physical and mental pain of crucifixion.

So while we feel a sense of loss at the moment, and grapple with the very real challenges of a different pattern of daily life, Easter reminds us that the loss our Saviour willingly chose to accept

is really gain for us - for all of humankind - not just for now but for eternity. Enjoying the privilege of a relationship with the creator of the world who is also Abba, Father, Dad, gives a confidence, a certainty that stretches way beyond the uncertainties of this present time.

So as we approach another Easter celebration, something most of us will have seen many times before, my prayer for us this year echoes what Paul prayed for the church in Ephesus, that we will have power to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge. To **know**, not just as words written on a page, or spoken in a talk, but brought alive in the depth of our being by the Spirit of God who is with us and in us, moment by moment. Let us pray.

"We may not know, we cannot tell, what pains He had to bear; but we believe it was for us He hung and suffered there. There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin; He only could unlock the gate of heaven and let us in." Thank you, Lord Jesus, that you died for me. Help me to grasp the depth of your love for me, to find in it a real sense of security in these troubled times and a hope for eternity. Amen

Song: How deep the Father's love for us

(CCLI Song # 1558110)

How deep the Father's love for us,
How vast beyond all measure,
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure.
How great the pain of searing loss -
The Father turns His face away,
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory.

Behold the man upon a cross,
My sin upon His shoulders;
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers.
It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished;
His dying breath has brought me life -
I know that it is finished.

I will not boast in anything,
No gifts, no power, no wisdom;
But I will boast in Jesus Christ,
His death and resurrection.
Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer;
But this I know with all my heart -
His wounds have paid my ransom.

Affirmation of faith

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen**

Intercessions

- Pray for people who are grieving around the world and for those whose loved ones are unwell
- Pray for those who feel isolated, lonely and afraid, that they would feel your peace and comfort
- Pray for healthcare workers, for strength, perseverance, protection and hope in the darkness
- Pray for people living in poverty, particularly those living in refugee camps and slums, who are most at risk from coronavirus.
- Pray for leaders and decision makers: for wisdom and courage in making difficult decisions for the good of all

'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.' John 1:5

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: I stand amazed in the presence

(CCLI Song # 25297)

I stand amazed in the presence
Of Jesus the Nazarene,
And wonder how He could love me,
A sinner condemned, unclean.

**How marvellous! How wonderful!
And my song shall ever be:
How marvellous! How wonderful!
Is my Saviour's love for me.**

He took my sins and my sorrows,
He made them his very own;
He bore the burden to Calvary
And suffered and died alone.

**How marvellous! How wonderful!
And my song shall ever be:
How marvellous! How wonderful!
Is my Saviour's love for me.**

When with the ransomed in glory
His face I at last shall see,
'Twill be my joy through the ages
To sing of His love for me.

**How marvellous! How wonderful!
And my song shall ever be:
How marvellous! How wonderful!
Is my Saviour's love for me.**

Collect (special prayer) for Good Friday

Most merciful God,
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ
delivered and saved the world:
grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross
we may triumph in the power of his victory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.
Amen

Closing prayer

Christ crucified draw us to himself,
to find in him a sure ground for faith, a firm support for hope,
and the assurance of sins forgiven;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
be with us throughout our Easter celebrations and for evermore.
Amen.