

20th November, 2022

The paper-version Service



To Begin: Find a Bible and a comfortable place. If safe, light a candle and read prayerfully through the service. If you have access to worship music, choose a song and listen to it as you begin or read, or even sing, the song from this Sunday's



The Good
Shepherd
Four Marks

Responding to God's Love

Service.

Opening Prayer: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Song:

When the music fades
All is stripped away,
and I simply come
Longing just to bring
Something that's of worth
That will bless Your heart

King of endless worth
No one could express how much You
deserve
Though I'm weak and poor
All I have is Yours, ev'ry single breath

I'll bring You more than a song, for a
song in itself
Is not what You have required
You search much deeper within
through the way things appear
You're looking into my heart

I'll bring You more than a song, for a
song in itself
Is not what You have required
You search much deeper within
through the way things appear
You're looking into my heart

I'm coming back to the heart of
worship
And it's all about You, all about You,
Jesus
I'm sorry, Lord, for the thing I've made
it
When it's all about You, all about You,
Jesus

I'm coming back to the heart of
worship
And it's all about You, all about You,
Jesus
I'm sorry, Lord, for the thing I've made
it
When it's all about You, all about You,
Jesus

Sermon by Rev Jonathan Rooke: We live in Victory.

1 John 5:1-12 (John 16:29-33)

Life has many battles. What is it that you have been bringing to God this week in prayer, asking for help and guidance to overcome? What are your battles? Where is God in all of this? John can help us. He invites us to think about 3 things.

1. Know what we believe and connect to God's resources

John wants disciples, those who love and follow God, to be secure in their faith. He wants Christians to be sure of a Christian reality. He gives us a set of anchors that will hold us secure in any storm of battle. John says when the wind blows, hold on to this:

Jesus is the son of God. Jesus is God.

Jesus died.

Jesus rose from the dead.

Jesus calls us to him through his Holy Spirit

These are truths.

These are what we believe.

These are the content of the creed.

These do not alter.

We can trust in these.

When we are battling in life, these beliefs root us in Christ. Our branches may shake and even break from time to time. But the tree will stand firm because of these roots of truth.

This is our faith. This is the faith that can overcome whatever we are battling. John says, our faith connects us to God and God's love will help us to overcome.

How do we connect ourselves to God's resources of love? We faithfully turn to him, obey, love God, love others, love ourselves and we keep hoping in God. He will not let us down.

2. Keep moving forward toward God

Jesus came that we might have life. John seems to urge us to open ourselves up to this life of God, receive and accept God's love and allow new life into any situation we are facing. We can let that life keep us moving in our spirit. We can let it change us, and as we change so the situation around us will change.

John encourages disciples to open themselves up to Him and commit themselves to faithfully rely on him. To love God is the steady devotion of the will so we can love God, love our brother and sister, our neighbour and even our enemies.

Christians need to keep walking towards God. If we stay faithful to God, allow God to be faithful to us, and if we trust him, then, John says, we will overcome. And then we will have stories to tell about God. We will have a testimony.

3. Grow our testimony and tell it

John says 'Those who believe in the son of God have a testimony in their hearts'. So, followers of Jesus have a knowledge of who God is. As disciples, we have a story we can tell. We have a truth about God we can testify to. Testimony of the heart is statements we can share about God that we know to be true.

We are constantly learning the truth about God. We don't have one testimony about how we came to know God for the first time. There are more things and experiences and truths we have learned about God while walking with God since those first introductions into the faith.

We can reflect on some questions:

What have we learned about God in the last 12 months? What have we noticed about who God is and how he behaves? What has he revealed to us through our struggles and challenges and times of peace?

God is always communicating and talking to us. It is the nature of God to speak. How has he been speaking to us? Are we intentionally listening? John says followers of Jesus are to grow our testimony in our hearts, we need to grow what we know is true about God - so we need to listen through scripture, through prayer and through our experiences of walking with God

My observation is that when the flames of battle are licking around Christians' feet and the waters seem to threaten to drown Christians, that is the time when they can really hear God and learn more about the truth of who he is. This is when the testimony in our heart really grows and these truths we learn about God really can make a difference to the way we face our battles.

John reassures us that God will not let us down. Together we will overcome. Then we will have a new testimony in our hearts to share perhaps, about who God is and how much we are loved.

Let us pray

Lord, Help us to connect faithfully to you and give us the resources to face our battles once again, confident that you will help us to overcome. Amen.

Prayers: *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.* (Philippians 4:4-6)

- Pray for this day, and the coming week.
- Pray for justice, mercy, peace, and hope.
- Pray for individuals, neighbours, and for family & friends.
- Pray for the Church.



Collect: Christ the King Sunday, Next before Advent

Eternal Father, whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven that He might rule over all things as Lord and King: keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace, and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

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.*

Blessing to be declared over yourselves, The Good Shepherd, the communities around us and our whole nation. 'The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.' (Numbers 6:24-26 NIV).

The Notices: We are now holding services in the building on Sundays at 8am and 9.30am, and are live streaming the 9.30 service. This Paper Service will continue for the moment and is generally available the week after the service.

- Tea and Chat & Bowls: Wed. 18th Jan. at 2pm, Church Hall and Church.
- Coffee and Questions: 23rd Nov., 25th Jan at 11am in Church Hall.
- COGS Tots: 2nd Mondays. COGS Tinytots: Monday mornings.
- Messy Church: Second Sundays of the month.