

Service for Week 15th – 21st June 2026

By Chaplain Andy

Our Opening Prayer.

Loving God, we thank you for your call: to discipleship, fellowship and service, to sharing the work of your kingdom. Above all we thank you for the inner presence of your Holy Spirit, through which Jesus Christ is constantly at work within us, to change our lives and to draw us ever closer to you

Loving God receive our praise in his name.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

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 them who 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 Matthew 10:24-39

Jesus said "A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for the student to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebub, how much more the members of his household!

"So do not be afraid of them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny ? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.

"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.

For I have come to turn

" 'a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'

"Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take

his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Holy words, Holy wisdom,

Thanks be to God.

Reflection

In our text for this week Jesus is outlining what it means to follow his teachings. This may have been a response against various sects of Greek/ Roman origin within the Roman ruling elite at that time and within Judaism there were secretive groups, the Zealots and the Sicarii. Also, the Essenes who had withdrawn from society believing that the Temple in Jerusalem had become corrupt. They had established secretive communities—most famously at Qumran, the site where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. Jesus makes it clear that if you follow his teachings, you are not joining a secret society, everything is out in the open there are no secrets that are only revealed to a select few.

Jesus says don't be afraid of those that oppress you, everyone is of equal importance in the sight of God 'even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.' But be aware that if you follow my teachings and adopt its values and standards in your life you are going to meet opposition and perhaps persecution. Jesus says 'I did not come to bring peace, but a sword'

that doesn't mean we should use weapons against those with different beliefs. It means that there may be a sharp division between Jesus' message and the beliefs and values of those we are living with which will cause arguments and division within families.

There are many families today where one person has a strong belief in Christ and his teachings and their partner has no belief. Also, families where one person attends a particular church and their partner attends a different one. This doesn't always lead to division if the principals and values they are living by are generally the same. However, Jesus says if we place such a great importance on the love of our family that it causes us to do wrong then we do not deserve God's love.

Finally in our text Jesus says 'anyone who does not take their cross and follow me is not worthy of me.' To take up your Cross in Jesus' time meant that you were going to be executed and was a symbol of death. What Jesus is saying is that if we want to follow him it means dying to our own self-will, choosing God's way over our own personal desires. **Amen**

Closing prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, help me to worship you not just for these few moments but in all my words and deeds-through the person I am and the life I lead.

Amen

Prayers inspired by Prayerfully Yours by Nick Fawcett