

Service for Week 4th -10th Aug 2025 By
Chaplain Andy

Our Opening Prayer.

Loving God, there are times when we find life difficult, when we look to the future fearfully wondering what good it can possibly hold.

Help us to understand that the truth of resurrection is not just limited to the future, to life after death, but is about the present, to life now!

Help us to realise that it speaks not just about eternal issues but about daily life- the ordinary, the commonplace and the mundane. Even there, especially there, you bring resurrection.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name.....,

Amen

Bible Reading Luke 12:32-40

"Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

"Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like men waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he

comes and knocks, they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them.

It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the second or third watch of the night. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."

Holy words, Holy wisdom,

Thanks be to God.

Reflection

The gospel writers in different ways convey Jesus' teaching on 'being ready'. In Mark's gospel Jesus' parable is about a man on a journey, in our reading today it is about servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet.

In Matthew's gospel we get a longer account of ten unmarried ladies who were waiting for a bridegroom to turn up for his wedding banquet. You may remember the story -how five of them had extra oil for their lamps and the other five did not bring extra oil with them. What happened? The five that



ran out of oil had to leave to buy more oil and while away the bridegroom turned up for the banquet. When the five then returned from the shop they could not get back into the banquet and were turned away. Jesus in telling this story makes the point that we should be like the five that had extra oil- they were ready and were able to enjoy the banquet.

These slightly different accounts of Jesus' teaching, some scholars believe, are about the end of time. An event that the book of Revelation describes in an allegorical way. Some believe that there will be a time when the world ends and Jesus will return in glory. Scientifically it is thought that our world will become inhabitable due to the sun getting hotter- but not for another billion years!

Two thousand years ago in Judeah the idea that the world would end soon was a popular belief. Just as there have been faith-based groups with a similar way of thinking in our time.

It is my belief that what Jesus was teaching his disciples about was not the end of the world but instead teaching them to prepare, to be ready for the time that he would be no longer with them. This was a time before his death on the cross and his resurrection. Before the time of Pentecost when God made his disciples, and us, aware of the

presence of his Holy Spirit. When that happened in the upper room it was in effect Jesus returning to be with us through God's Holy Spirit. When Jesus teaches his disciples to be ready he is preparing them for the persecution they will face when he leaves them. It was a wakeup call to ensure his followers were getting ready for life without him, to put aside their earthly worries and move closer in their relationship with God.

Today, Jesus has the same message for us to be ready by having a closer relationship with God. Are you moving closer or moving further away? If you are feeling further away from God, it is good to be reminded that Jesus came to make a personal relationship with God easier. It is through the humanity of Jesus, his life and teachings, that God revealed his love and will for our lives, which is brought about by God's Holy Spirit within us. It is what gives our lives meaning and purpose here and helps us to be ready for the time when our spirit goes to be with God for evermore.

Amen

Closing Prayer.

Loving Jesus, may I live each day not just in the context of the here and now but of eternity, knowing there is nothing in heaven or earth that shall ever finally be able to separate me from your love.

Amen. Prayers inspired by 'Prayerfully Yours' by Nick Fawcett