

Christ Church, Ipswich

Sunday 24th May 2020

Sunday Worship

Seventh Sunday of Easter

With Revd Neil Coulson

Hello, I hope you are all well. As we worship God together this week, we reflect on Jesus' prayer for his disciples in John 17:1-11 and we pray that he is glorified in our lives. Let us worship God.

A gathering prayer

Mighty God, we gather in humility to worship you.
Caring God, we bring to you our concerns.
Glorious God, we exalt your holy name.
Unite us – make us one in you,
that your love may strengthen and empower us. **Amen.**

A prayer of approach

Lord of all glory, we come before you
seeking your wisdom,
that we may glorify you through our thinking;
seeking your love,
that we may glorify you through our emotions;
seeking your strength,
that we may glorify you at all times;
seeking your perseverance,
that we may glorify you in all places.
Show us how to live,
that our lives shine with your glory,
and those who encounter us may know you
and that you are at work in your world. **Amen.**

Hymn: Christ Triumphant, ever reigning

Christ triumphant, ever reigning,
Saviour, Master, King,
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,
hear us as we sing:
*Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name.*

Word incarnate, truth revealing,
Son of Man on earth!
power and majesty concealing
by your humble birth:
Yours the glory...

Suffering servant, scorned, ill-treated,
victim crucified!
death is through the cross defeated,
sinners justified:
Yours the glory...

Priestly King, enthroned for ever
 high in heaven above!
 sin and death and hell shall never
 stifle hymns of love:
Yours the glory...

So, our hearts and voices raising
 through the ages long,
 ceaselessly upon You gazing,
 this shall be our song:
Yours the glory...

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A prayer of adoration

God of majesty and might,
 your glory shines throughout the universe:
 from the highest heaven to the deepest sea;
 in all the creatures you have made;
 in the seasons that shape our living.
 Your glory shines through who you are
 and through what you do.
 The power of your glory
 touches your creation and exalts it.
 To you we offer our worship;
 to you we offer our praise;
 before you we come in adoration. **Amen.**

Bible Reading: John 17:1-11 (NRSV)

Jesus prays for his disciples

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

"I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one."

Reflection

Jesus' farewell speech draws to a close with a prayer for his beloved disciples, that is for those gathered around him in that quiet room before his soon coming death and also, for all of us who follow him today. Jesus brings the new community of believers, a community created as a direct result of his work of revealing God to them, before God in prayer. It is a beautiful prayer, isn't it? The words of this prayer remind us of the opening words of John's Gospel and they disclose the great depth of Jesus' love and care for his followers in what is often a harsh and unwelcoming world for people of faith. As we saw last week, Jesus promised them the gift of an Advocate, an Intercessor, a Comforter in the sending of the Spirit. Now, he prays that they will also have the wonderful gift of *'eternal life'*; this precious gift not so much about a gift of immortality and a future life in heaven as is traditionally thought, rather it speaks to us about our life right now being shaped and sustained by the knowledge of God as revealed to us by Jesus Christ. Throughout this prayer, we see that these deeply loved disciples belong to God, and Jesus entrusts them, and us today, to God's loving care and draws them, and us today, into a glorious life filled with the knowledge of God.

We reflect further on this glory that Jesus hopes we'll now share in. In this prayer, Jesus prays fully aware that his *'hour has come'*. *'Glorify'* here refers to him making visible the presence of God. Jesus prays that the events of his soon coming dark and difficult hour will complete his revelation of God. This is quite a different view of glory compared to the *'dazzling light'* type of glory that usually comes to mind! We see also that Jesus says that he has been glorified in his disciples and we in turn, in this our time seek to live a *'God aware'*, *'God-orientated'* life that bring him glory. Such a life includes our knowing and understanding God and yet I believe it also provokes us to think about how we live in unity as a Christian community and how we act as disciples today. Perhaps in seeking to glorify God, like Jesus, we also aim at *'finishing the work'* that God has given us to do here *'on earth'*. And what might our God-ordained work be? Well, if I may, here are just a few examples:

- Show mercy, justice and humility before God (Micah 6:8)
- Share the gospel of love and draw others into a life of discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20)
- Care for those who are in need around us (James 1:27)
- Do good and share with others (Hebrews 13:16)

As we seek to live a God glorifying life in ways like these, may we know and experience the strengthening and sustaining presence of the glorious God at work in our lives. Amen.

Hymn: In my life, Lord, be glorified

In my life, Lord,
be glorified, be glorified;
In my life, Lord,
be glorified today.

In your church, Lord,
be glorified, be glorified;
In your church, Lord,
be glorified today.

Our Prayers of Intercession

We bring before God our concerns for our world:

where there is war we pray for peace;
 where there is sickness we pray for health;
 where there is despair we pray for hope.

Cast all your anxiety on him,
because he cares for you.

We pray that you would be active in health care, especially during this pandemic:
 in the work of doctors and dentists, psychiatrists and psychologists, nurses and health professionals,
 administrators, pharmacists, researchers and all who work in health and social care.

Cast all your anxiety on him,
because he cares for you.

Guide our activity in the church:

may we find ways to grow;
 may we always honour you;
 may we serve our communities.

Cast all your anxiety on him,
because he cares for you.

We hold in your love those whom we love:

those who are sick;
 those who are sorrowful;
 those who are worried and concerned,
 those who need guidance and direction.

Cast all your anxiety on him,
because he cares for you.

We pray especially for those in need of your healing and help.

We continue to hold Jo, and all the Robertsons, in our prayers.

We are thankful that Pat Smith is feeling much better and we keep her in our prayers.

We are sorry to hear from Ann, Isobel's daughter, that Isobel has had some falls. Following a short stay in hospital, Isobel is now in Bluebell Lodge for rehabilitation for perhaps 2 weeks. Hopefully, she may then spend some time in Prince George House. May she know God's healing and blessing at this time.

A moment of quiet for your own thoughts and prayers for those in need.

Cast all your anxiety on him,
because he cares for you.

Come to us, God of glory.
 Hear us, heal us and shine through our lives.

Cast all your anxiety on him,
because he cares for you.

Amen.

Rejoicing in God's love and care,
we pray with confidence as Jesus has taught us....

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 those 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.

The Blessing

May the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be upon us all,
and those we love,
today and always,
Amen.

The Grace

(As we do each week in this season, we say the words of The Grace imagining that we are saying them together, to one another, in our Sanctuary)

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all,
for evermore.
Amen.**

May God bless you all richly,
With our love and best wishes to you and your families,

Neil