



Heacham Parish Church



Sunday 17th October 2021 – Trinity 20

Opening music – Adrian plays a chorale prelude on 'Abridge' by C S Lang, 'Be thou my guardian and my guide'

It's Sunday the 17th of October. A very warm welcome in the name of the Lord. Welcome wherever you are engaging with this service. Thank you to all who make the several expressions of this service possible.

We hold silence and prepare our hearts to worship.

Father of all creation we ask that you would lead us now as we prepare to worship you. Help us to see you, hear from you and praise you in spirit and in truth, for we ask in the precious name of Jesus. **Amen.**

O Lord, open our lips.

and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Give us the joy of your saving help

and sustain us with your life giving spirit.

Blessed are you, oh Lord our God, creator and redeemer of all, to you be glory and praise forever. From the waters of chaos you drew forth the world and in your great love fashioned us in your image. Now, through the deep waters of death you have brought your people to new birth by raising your son to life in triumph. May Christ your light ever dawn in our hearts as we offer you our sacrifice of thanks and praise.

Blessed be God, father, son and Holy Spirit. Blessed be God forever. Amen.

We hold silence again before we make our confession.

Jesus says "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand". So let us turn away from our sin and turn to Christ confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Lord God we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and repent. Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrong doing and cleanse us from our sin. Renew a right spirit within us and restore us to the joy of your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord enrich us with his grace, and nourish us with his blessing; the Lord defend us in trouble and keep us from all evil; the Lord accept our prayers and absolve us from our offences for the sake of Jesus Christ our saviour. **Amen.**

Hymn: **The Servant King (MP162)**

1 From heaven You came, helpless babe,
entered our world, Your glory veiled,
not to be served but to serve,
and give Your life that we might live.
*This is our God, the Servant King,
He calls us now to follow Him,
to bring our lives as a daily offering
of worship to the Servant King.*

2 There in the garden of tears
my heavy load He chose to bear;
His heart with sorrow was torn,
'Yet not my will but yours,' He said.
This is our God . . .

3 Come see His hands and His feet,
the scars that speak of sacrifice,
hands that flung stars into space
to cruel nails surrendered.
This is our God . . .

4 So let us learn how to serve
and in our lives enthrone Him,
each other's needs to prefer,
for it is Christ we're serving.
This is our God . . .

Bible reading – Mark 10:35-45 read by Terry Brown

A reflection – by Penny Sutton

We recently worked our way through Paul's letter to the Ephesians which concentrated on the Church, God's 'new creation' of a multi-national, multi-cultural society with Jesus at its head. It is relatively easy to apply Paul's teaching to our lives and Church in 21st century Western Europe despite being thousands of miles and two thousand years apart because God's 'new creation' is also ageless. As we open Mark's gospel, we step back to a different era and a very different situation as we read how that 'new creation' came into being.

Helpfully for us, Mark's gospel was written primarily for gentiles and at this stage describes simply what happened rather than exploring the meaning and implications of events. This is set firmly in the Theocracy. God ruling his chosen people, Israel.

The Church does not exist, and the disciples have no idea what their future holds. They can't get their heads around the idea that money can't buy you a way into the Kingdom of God, and when Jesus tells them for the third time what will happen to him in Jerusalem, they are totally inept and perplexed.

Mark portrays these leaders of the Early Church in their full humanity, getting all manner of things wrong and yet, this is the 'management team' upon whom God chose to build his Church. As Jesus said earlier in the chapter, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God." Looking at the twelve as potential managers, they all lack relevant background and are mostly uneducated. None of them aspired to be preachers or teachers and they don't appear to have any concept of team working. Individually, Peter is emotionally unstable and given to fits of temper while his brother Andrew is a follower with no apparent leadership skills. James and John place personal family interest above loyalty to their colleagues. Matthew is an outcast from Jewish society due to his occupation while Nathaniel and Thomas question everything. The only man to demonstrate potential by his motivation and interactions with people was Judas!!! This conventional human wisdom is the very reverse of that which God chose.

Worldly, human society says you should strive for position, prestige, and power. Sell yourself, push yourself forward, and that is exactly what James and John did. They wanted to be the 'power behind the throne' in God's Kingdom with authority just less than that of Jesus. Their request was rooted in the normality of human nature and their Jewish culture. Jesus recognised this and answered accordingly using the metaphors of 'cup' and 'baptism' which portray judgement and suffering in the Old Testament. He makes clear that his followers will experience judgement and suffering and that the occupants of the places to his right and left have already been determined

by God the Father. With the benefit of hindsight, we know the first to occupy these positions were two robbers on adjacent crosses at Golgotha. The other ten disciples weren't any better. They were angry because James and John had 'stolen a march' on them. If they'd thought about it, they would have done the same thing. All twelve were behaving as human beings but this is not God's way.

Jesus sat them down and patiently explained yet again, the totally different pattern of the Kingdom of God where true greatness is humble service. He contrasted the way his disciples should have been, with the Roman Empire under whose 'iron fist' they all lived. They had made the mistake of following the wrong example. Instead of using Jesus as their role model, they were emulating the glory and authority of Roman rulers, men who loved position and authority. Their definition of greatness was askew. Jesus told them "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all"

I said earlier that Mark simply describes events rather than looking at meanings and implications. At verse 45 we have the exception to that rule. Here he explains how the death of Jesus secures our salvation. The concept of paying a ransom is used to explain the 'new creation' access to salvation. The price is the death of Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour of the world and that price has been paid.

Three thoughts to take from this passage: -

1. None of us is useless, hopeless, or helpless in God's sight because "all things are possible with God"
2. Each one of us has been divinely called and equipped to serve.
3. The price of salvation has been paid for every person who will put their faith in Jesus Christ.

Prayers of Intercession - Led by Rene Smith

Gracious and always loving Father, through Jesus Christ our saviour, you have invited us to bring our intercessions to you, confident that you will hear us.

As we pray for situations which seem so complex and so often beyond our understanding, come Holy Spirit and hear our prayer.

[Pause]

We pray for those who have difficult decisions to make. In government, in the community, in school, in the workplace and in our homes. Holy Spirit, bring wisdom and guidance that the right decisions will be made.

[Pause]

We bring to you those suffering the consequences of bad choices. Those in prison, those burdened by guilt, those consumed by regret, and we ask you to help them find forgiveness and peace in Jesus.

[Pause]

We pray for those whose decisions are made for them. The unwell, the elderly, those all over the world in places of oppression. We pray for those who, for the sake of others have to accept decisions they do not wish to accept. Grant them peace we pray.

Guard us all please Lord, from false information, damaging conspiracy theories and dangerous ideologies. Holy Spirit please be present in all these situations and guide us into the ways of truth.

[Pause]

We pray for those paralysed by indecision, the stressed, the fearful and those whose circumstances keep changing beyond their control. Holy Spirit, please help them.

[Pause]

We pray for those who, at this moment, are making desperate choices. Whether to flee their home, whether to tell the truth, whether to go on living. Loving Father, grant them the comfort of your presence, the understanding that you love them and the incomparable gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, and Father, where we are your hands and feet to these suffering ones, help us to demonstrate the love of Christ, responding to each of your children in distress as He would.

[Pause]

Father we hold up to you those who we personally know of whose situations are particularly difficult. The sick, the dying, the bereaved, the confused and those who feel desperation for all sorts of reasons.

We pray for those who have asked for prayer. We do not know them all personally but honour their asking and pray in faith that you know all there is to know and will answer all prayers in the way that is best.

[Pause]

Hear us Father now as we pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us.

The Lord's Prayer

The Creed

We believe in God, the father almighty creator of heaven and earth.

We believe in Jesus Christ, his only son our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Hymn: Be still, for the presence of the Lord (MP50)

1 Be still, for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One, is here;
come bow before Him now
with reverence and fear:
in Him no sin is found –
we stand on holy ground.
Be still,
for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One, is here.

2 Be still, for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around;
He burns with holy fire,
with splendour He is crowned:
how awesome is the sight –
our radiant King of light!
Be still,
for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around.

3 Be still, for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place:
He comes to cleanse and heal,
to minister His grace –
no work too hard for Him.
In faith receive from Him.
Be still,
for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place.

Closing prayer

**Almighty and everlasting God, we thank you that you
have brought us safely to the beginning of this day.
Keep us from falling into sin or running into danger,
order us in all our doings and guide us to do always
what is righteous in your sight, through Jesus Christ
our Lord. Amen.**

**The Lord bless us and keep us, the Lord make his face
shine upon us and be gracious to us. The Lord turn his
face towards us and give us His peace. And the blessing
of God the father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit
be with us and remain with us always. Amen.**

Closing music – *Adrian plays a chorale prelude on 'Leoni' by
C S Lang 'The God of Abraham praise'*

Church Contact:

Rev. Dan Tansey tel. 01553 390615/07928825060

Or email: dan@churchinthewoottons.net

Church Office tel. 01485 572539 (answerphone)

Or email: heacham.church@gmail.com
