

13th June 2021

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 Service set out below.



Opening Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you that you make yourself known in Jesus, our Saviour King. Help us to recognise who you are and believe; trusting you with everything we are, thereby receiving the fulness of life you offer and becoming a sign of your Kingdom. **Amen**

Song:

Blessed Be Your Name
In the land that is plentiful
Where Your streams of abundance
flow
Blessed be Your name.

Blessed Be Your name
When I'm found in the desert place
Though I walk through the
wilderness
Blessed Be Your name.

*Every blessing You pour out, I'll
Turn back to praise
When the darkness closes in, Lord
Still I will say
Blessed be the name of the Lord
Blessed be Your name
Blessed be the name of the Lord*

*Blessed be Your glorious name
Blessed be Your name
When the sun's shining down on me
When the world's 'all as it should be'
Blessed be Your name*

*Blessed be Your name
On the road marked with suffering
Though there's pain in the offering
Blessed be Your name*

Every blessing You pour...

Bridge:

You give and take away
You give and take away
My heart will choose to say
Lord blessed be Your name. *rpt.*

Blessed be the name of the Lord...

Read: John 4:43 – 5:15.

God acts kindly: *A summary of the talk given by Howard Wright.*

The different characters in these stories wanted different things from Jesus. The crowds wanted the spectacular healings, the royal official wanted Jesus' healing presence, and the authorities wanted compliance to their authority!

What Jesus do we want? John's Gospel has introduced us to Jesus, the Almighty God among us. This Jesus is the Saviour of the whole world offering eternal life now and forever to all who will receive him, and to those who will receive him, he gives his Holy Spirit to live in them.

So, do we want Jesus but on our own terms?

The Jewish authorities, wanted Jesus, but to still be in charge, to control him. But God will not be tamed. C.S. Lewis in his Narnia stories, has the children surprised to discover that Aslan is a lion. In astonishment, one of them asks, 'is he safe?' Mrs Beaver replies, 'Safe, no, but he's good.'

When Jesus comes, he comes as the King! Will we trust him to be our Saviour and our Lord? Are willing to allow God to be in control (He is anyway!) and to change us – our securities, behaviours, attitudes, even direction.

Each of the characters in our stories faced this choice. That is, will I risk my life and my dependencies and let Jesus rule.

The authorities risked losing their monopoly on defining what's right and wrong – in other words, being in control.

The crowd risked losing that it was all about them. 'We made you famous, without us you're nothing, so dance to our tune, entertain us – we don't dance to yours, unless we like it.'

The father risked his royal reputation, his luxury lifestyle, and even his very life in siding with Jesus – Herod had had Jesus' cousin and forerunner, John the Baptist, beheaded. Signing up with Jesus was a big risk.

The paralysed man, having been sick for so long risked being well! He'd only ever been a victim. He now risks losing sympathy and income from others – he'd (literally) have to stand on his own two feet.

Each needed to examine their values, their priorities and act. And we too will need to examine our values and priorities and keep checking our focus.

Jesus says we should count the cost of following him. Read Luke 14:27-30. We may need to assess our reputation, whether we'll dance to

Jesus' tune, and allow God to be in control – to be Lord and King.

Do we want Jesus for what we can get out of him?

As we've noted, the crowd wanted to be entertained. Life could be hard and dull in those restricted (occupied and oppressed by the Roman Empire) days. Jesus provided light relief and some spice with his run-in with the authorities. Jesus was the trending new thing, and we want more glitz and headlines.

The Royal Official wanted Jesus' presence to save the life of his son. 'If I can just get Jesus there', he thought, 'my son will be healed'.

The paralysed man had set his bar low, too low; he saw his problem as just getting to the supposed-healing water – Jesus wanted to offer so much more – he wanted to heal body and soul.

The Jewish authorities simply didn't want a Messiah, especially, if it were like Jesus. But if Jesus would join their team, he could be quite useful in reinforcing themselves as God's favourites and the place of real power and authority.

'What's in it for me?' is a cry of many of our society. Is there an element of this in us?

Do I want a Jesus who is my personal chaplain, who'll look after my aches

and concerns – heal my body, but not mess with my soul? Or am I prepared for Jesus to be my Saviour and Lord on his own terms?

Accept Jesus on his terms.

Whatever the Royal Official, this worried father, had hoped for, what we read is that he 'took Jesus at his word – in other words he believed in Jesus. Read verses 49-54 again.

This is the second sign in that there was belief, and therefore transformation and life! (The first sign saw the disciples believe and put their faith in Jesus.)

Many in the crowd missed out – Jesus wouldn't be what they wanted though he was everything they needed.

The paralysed man nearly misses out but believes his healing and in obedience stands and taking his mat, walks away.

The Authorities continue to reject Jesus asking for proof when the living proof is standing in front of them.

What about us, will we put our faith and trust completely and utterly in Jesus? We will repent (turn away from sin and turn toward Jesus), believe, and receive God's healing and transformation and ourselves be a sign?

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, for neighbours, for family and friends.
- Pray for the Church.



Collect: 2nd after Trinity: Lord, you have taught us that all our doings without love are nothing worth: send your Holy Spirit and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love, the true bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whoever lives is counted dead before you. Grant this for your only Son Jesus Christ's sake, 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: Trinity Sunday: God the Holy Trinity make us strong in faith and love, defend us on every side, and guide us in truth, peace and power; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among us and remain with us always. **Amen.**

The Notices: We are now holding ticketed and socially distanced services in the building on Sundays at 9.30am. Further information on our website or by ringing our vicar, Howard.

If you know of others who would like to receive this, or you would rather not receive it; or if you find yourself isolated and not able to get neighbours, friends, or family to help, then ring Howard, 01420 563344.

