

Sunday 7 June 2020

The paper-version Service



For now, we cannot meet in the building – but the church is still open!

All of our services are online www.goodshepherdfourmarks.org.uk but this weekly sheet captures our Sunday service for those without internet.

To Begin: Find a Bible. If safe, perhaps light a candle. Find a comfortable place 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 modern song from this Sunday's Service set out below.



Opening Prayer: God of love, thank you that you welcome us into your family. We are not worthy to be called your children, and we confess our failure to you. Thank you that you forgive us, through Jesus, and offer us new life, by your Holy Spirit. Help us to respond to you today in worship, to hear your words and live them and share your Good News, your love and your glory, with our neighbours and communities today. **Amen**

Song:

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
Save in the death of Christ my God
All the vain things that charm me
most
I sacrifice them to His blood

See from His head, His hands, His
feet
Sorrow and love flow mingled down
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of Nature
mine
That were an offering far too small
Love so amazing, so divine
Demands my soul, my life, my all

Read: Ephesians 3:14-21

Living by Love (a summary of the talk given by Roy Lewis):

Paul's letter to the Church at Ephesus contains some great and often complex and challenging themes: -

- Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the World.
- Predestined to be adopted as God's sons.
- Redemption through His blood and forgiveness of sins.
- God has made known to us the mystery of God's will.
- We might be to the praise of His glory.
- Were dead in sins – but now alive in Christ.

These are just a few of the lofty themes that Paul is writing about, but I am so glad that the selection of verses chosen for me to share with you today is so straightforward. Here it is in just two short phrases: -

- Paul prayed that Christians would come to know how much God loves us.
- He furthered prayed that God would do amazing, unthinkable, unimaginable things – BUT through people like you and me.

A simple theme, but a huge challenge for us to take up and practice.

Read again Ephesians 3:16-19. What a prayer! And as we believe that God does answer prayer, and surely the

prayers of someone like Paul, then what does God want us to grasp? **It is that He really does love us.**

His love for each of us is a love without limits and that is impossible to measure. Some children say to their parents that they love them to the moon and back!

God's love is even more than to the moon and back!

- Stop and pray: "Please Lord, help me to discover, to know, to believe, to grasp and accept that you love me so very much, without condition nor limit.



Just that bit is enough – but there is more.

Read again Ephesians 3:20-21. Here is the unthinkable and unimaginable, which is WHAT GOD IS ABLE TO DO. I guess that most of us would agree with the statement that; God is a great, almighty and powerful God. But that is not all Paul prayed for believers, he prayed that God would do those great things by His power at work in us. Yes, God working in your

life, and me too. God wants us doing great things by the power of God's Holy Spirit; do not limit yourself!

Some experiences from my lifetime:

In February Sue and I spent a few days visiting our families in Wales and visited Sue's oldest sister whose husband was quite ill. He was not a believer and I had never spoken to him about God and faith. Does that strike a chord with any of you? But that day as soon as I went into the house, I just knew I HAD to pray for him and eventually asked his permission not knowing how he would respond. To my delight he welcomed it and I told him briefly about God's love and trusting Him for what was ahead. A few weeks later he was diagnosed with Motor Neuron Disease, and not long afterwards admitted to hospital where he died a few days later. The night prior to his death we phoned the family who were at his bedside, and they passed the phone to him. He was not really aware but reached out his hand for the phone when he heard my voice. I simply told Him God loved him, as much as He loved me. I assured him that if he put his trust in Jesus, he would know God's peace to face what was ahead. The next day he passed away.

Luis Palau, the famous Argentinian evangelist spoke at a church conference in Wales I attended

around 40 years ago. The Missions Department of that church had sent a Welsh missionary named David Morris to Argentina some 40 years previously. One day Morris stood in an open-air service in that country and told the people about Jesus. Palau's father that day became a Christian as did his family. Palau came to Wales to say thank you. You've never heard of David Morris, have you?

William John Frederick was a rather eccentric elderly man who I knew well when I was a young man. He referred to himself as "Little old me!" One day he visited Sue's home and asked her mother if she would like to send her children to Sunday School. She did – and if she had not, I would never have met Sue! Some years later Sue became a Christian. Since then so many of her family have become Christians that we have lost count of them. Imagine if Sue had not gone to that Sunday School! They may not have become Christians and I would never have met Sue! Thank you, God – and thank you Mr Frederick!

Can God do great things through me? Through you? I am quite certain He can and wants to.

If you have any doubts remember David Morris and "Little old me" Mr Frederick – for whom I really thank God, for more reasons than one!

Prayers: I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. (1 Timothy 2:1-2 NIV)

- Pray for the day ahead and its tasks
- Pray for the nations
- Pray for organisations
- Pray for individuals, for neighbours, for family and friends
- Pray for the Church



Collect for Today: Almighty and everlasting God, you have given us your servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity and in the power of the divine majesty to worship the Unity: keep us steadfast in this faith, that we may evermore be defended from all adversities; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, 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 to be declared over yourselves, COGS, the communities around us and our whole nation. The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26 NIV)

The Notices: If you know of others who'd like to receive this, or you'd 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.



A free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers