

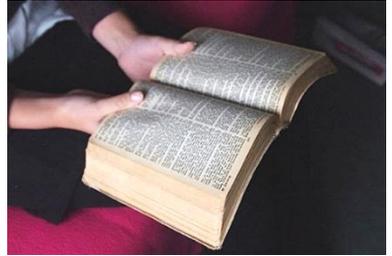
# Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2020

## The paper-version Service

***The church is meeting on paper, online and on Sunday at 9.30am in the Building***

All of our services are online [www.goodshepherdfourmarks.org.uk](http://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:*** Father God, we thank you that you reveal yourself to us as the Almighty God and Saviour. Thank you for your investment in us. Help us to invest in you with all that we are. We ask your forgiveness for our failure, for things done or left undone. We receive your grace and thank you for your mercy. Help us to walk forwards full of your Spirit and declaring your Kingdom in words and deeds to the glory of your name. **Amen**

### ***Song:***

*Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul  
Worship His holy name  
Sing like never before, O my soul  
I'll worship Your holy name*

For all Your goodness, I will keep on singing  
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find

The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning  
It's time to sing Your song again  
Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me  
Let me be singing when the evening comes

*Bless the Lord, O my soul*  
And on that day when my strength is failing  
The end draws near and my time has come  
Still, my soul will sing Your praise unending  
Ten thousand years and then forevermore

*Bless the Lord, O my soul...*

You're rich in love and You're slow to anger  
Your name is great and Your heart is kind

*Bless the Lord, O my soul*

**Read:** Luke 9:18-27

***How much does it cost?*** (A summary of the talk given by Howard Wright).

Being a disciple is an apprenticeship. The first apprentices of Jesus followed Jesus around, learning from his every word and move, and practiced these words and moves, joining in the business.

Today, as we celebrate Harvest, Jesus challenges us about our investment.

In Karamoja, harvest is a serious issue and requires life and death decisions. To have a harvest, you need to be willing to invest what could have been today's food. Imagine being hungry and having to decide, do I plant this corn, hoping for much more corn to come, or do I grind it up for food today?



Jesus calls us to invest, that we might harvest. Verse 23 tells us, *'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross*

*daily and follow me.'* To take up a cross was a clear sign of your death. Jesus is calling us to be utterly invested – to throw everything in with him.

The Living Bible puts it: *'Then he said to all, "Anyone who wants to follow me must put aside his own desires and conveniences and carry his cross with him every day and keep close to me!'*

And the Message translation has it: *'Then he told them what they could expect for themselves: "Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You're not in the driver's seat—I am. Don't run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I'll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to finding yourself, your true self. What good would it do to get everything you want and lose you, the real you?'*

Being a Christian is not about us, our rights, comforts, this is about following Jesus. Denying self – not a popular modern concept – we are the entitled generation! But Jesus makes plain, what have we gained if we lose our souls?

We pursue more: more stuff, more power, more comfort, when what we need is to pursue a person, the person of God in Jesus.

We will have to let God have our resources, gift and skill, time, and

money, and, perhaps most difficult, hand over our values and dreams. Jesus is the master we follow, and he models this investment. Read Philippians 2:6-8.

So, if we invest, what will we harvest? By giving up our lives over to God, we gain life. Verse 24, *'For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.'*

The farmer places one corn kernel in the hope of thousands – each plant produces two to four cobs, each cob contains 500-1,200, an average of 2,400 kernels from just the one invested!



Peter has glimpsed who Jesus is in his mind and declares it with his words – Jesus has healed the blind, the paralysed and the demon possessed and just fed 5,000 people from 5 loaves and fish.

And beyond these glimpses of God's glory, in the following verses of this chapter we read about the transfiguration with a further grasp of the magnificence of God. But even more so, Peter is about to see the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus.

How tragic that we might grind the kernel of corn for a thimbleful of flour, when the superabundance of God awaits!

Jesus' the master craftsman models to us giving up all, as we read earlier from Philippians. That passage continues: Read Philippians 2: 9-11

Jesus' questions are addressed to us too? Who do the crowds say I am? Who do you say I am?

C.S. Lewis in *Mere Christianity* says, "A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic or the devil of Hell. You must make the choice. Either this man was and is the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him, and kill him as a demon: or you can fall at His feet and call him Lord and God."

So, who do you say he is? And now, what are you going to do about it? What will you sow, and what will you reap?

**Prayers:** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:6)

- Pray for this day, and the coming week
- Pray for the nations, their leaders, and peoples pray for justice, mercy, peace, and hope.
- Pray for individuals, for neighbours, for family and friends
- Pray for the Church



**Collect for 17th after Trinity:** Almighty God, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you: pour your love into our hearts and draw us to yourself, and so bring us at last to your heavenly city where we shall see you face to face; 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.

**Church Services:** Sunday 9.30am with safety measures in place.

**APCM:** Our annual meeting will be held on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> October, we are hoping to meet in the building with online access. We will be electing new churchwardens, Deanery Synod Reps and PCC members. Please be praying for those God is calling – perhaps yourself!

To check your **Electoral Roll** entry, please contact Matt.



A free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers