

**23rd October 2016**

**Bible Sunday**

**Sermon 730a Holy Trinity Sunningdale**

8.30 am Texts: Philippians 1. 3-11; Matt 18.21-end

Sunday by Sunday, month by month, year by year, the Bible with its God-inspired 39 OT books and 27 NT books slowly unravels God's truth for us. Some readings are obscure and take a long time to understand; theologians argue over whole sections and often still never agree; different versions are produced to respond to various groups – teenagers, children, women etc and varied approaches – dramatised, Bible-in-a-year. Sometimes an appointed reading can contain so many themes that the poor preacher has to sort out the wood from the trees!

Today readings provide two examples of what the scriptures teach us about God's vision for us can be seen this morning:

a. Philippians: Paul in prison....even there he continues his prayer and ministry..... prayer for growth in knowledge and understanding, and a ministry that reaches out, no matter how difficult his own circumstances, and he does that by defending and proving the truth of the Good News. A good example for us is that no matter how difficult life is, when the going gets tough, the tough get going...we need to be strong in our faith.

b. Matthew: tells of the forgiving and unforgiving servant- forgiveness and humility. (Reminds me of the story of the Prodigal Son)

So in return for only subjecting you to a brief input, I issue a Bible Sunday challenge: That is for you undertake to sit and read these two readings again when you have half an hour of quiet, then reflect on what it tells you about what Jesus is teaching and how you could respond.

So on this Bible Sunday let us pray for God's guidance for this church and for our lives through the scriptures. In a moment of silence we listen for Him to tell us how to serve Him best, that we may do His will, and spread the Good News. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

COLLECT FOR 8.30

Lord, we beseech thee to keep thy household, the Church, in continual godliness; that through thy protection it may be free from all adversities, and devoutly given to serve thee in good works, to the glory of thy name; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen