

St. Mary's Church Cubbington



Trinity 15
Sunday 20th September

Sunday Message 20th September 2020

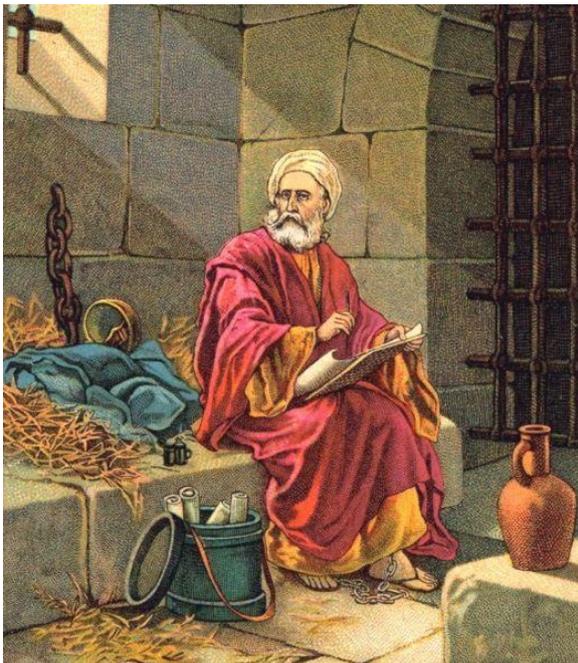
Hello again and greetings from the vicarage.

Once again, this week I haven't received any updates from the National Church, I think the house of Bishops recovery Group are still sifting through the latest Government Guidance to see what if anything applies to places of worship.

We held a Prayer Book service of Holy Communion on Wednesday and it was good to see our regular Wednesday morning congregation in church once again.

Today is the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity and the readings are from Saint Paul's letter to the **Philippians chapter 1 verses 21 to the end** and our gospel reading comes from **Matthew chapter 20 verses 1 to 16.**

Paul is writing to the Christians in Philippi and to believers everywhere. He is writing this letter from prison around 61 AD.



St. Paul in prison.

He established the church in Philippi on his second missionary journey and it was the first church on the European continent.

The people from the church have sent a gift to Paul and so his letter is in part to thank them but also to continue to encourage them.

Today's passage is a moving testimony of how Paul is feeling having had plenty of time to sit, think and pray. There would be nothing else to do as a prisoner in a Roman jail. He is awaiting trial and does not know what the outcome of this will be, would he be released or executed.



As it happens, he was released only to be re-imprisoned sometime later.

But at the time of writing this letter his fate was with the courts.

Paul's prayer was totally centred on Christ, that when the time came for his trial, he would be able to speak honestly and courageously for Jesus Christ and to help him with this, he put his trust completely in Jesus.

This shows to us the great faith and trust he held in the Lord, even when faced with possible death he was only concerned with whether he would be able to stand up for his belief.

If you don't believe in God, then all you have is worldly thoughts and everything about you is focused on the things that you see.



*St. Paul's
prison cell
in Rome.*

When you believe in God you have the joy of knowing that there is something much greater than what you see around you.

Whilst you enjoy all that is earthly it is only temporary and one day it will come to an end.

You may have heard me say that I like to think of our time on earth as a dress rehearsal. We do our best, but we also make mistakes, that's what a rehearsal is all about.

So that when we get to the real thing – which is meeting our maker in heaven we are well prepared.

Paul has a dilemma, he wants to go ahead and meet the Lord, but he also wants to stay and carry on doing God's work by spreading the Good News.

At times we hear or see people who will go to any length to survive and live a bit longer, people spending vast amounts of money to give them a better chance of living to a greater age.

This is partly to enjoy life a little longer but also because of the great fear of dying.

I can understand this if you think that dying is the end, but how much more content you would be if you knew that your earthly life is just a very short beginning to a life that last forever.

None of us know the day or the hour when we will be called to be with the Lord. Put your trust in Him that when He calls you will be ready to go and begin a new life in a perfect place.

Turning to our gospel reading, it's one of those parables that we can appreciate both side of the issue.

I can appreciate the poor chap who has worked all day in the blistering heat and is paid the same amount as the chap who has only worked for an hour.

That doesn't seem fair, however the chap who has worked all day is being paid the full days wage, he hasn't been short changed – so why is he moaning.

It is the fellow who has only worked for an hour; he is being given a full day's pay so you could say he is being over paid.



Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard

To come to that conclusion, we are working on the principle that everyone who is doing the same type of work should be paid the same amount per hour and only for the number of hours they work.

However, we are looking at this parable in earthly terms and not exploring the message that Jesus is trying to convey to us.

The parable is, I think about entering heaven. This is a controversial issue for many. Some believe that you have to be a believer and such like.

I on the other hand believe that we will all enter heaven, even those who have turned away from God or have never had the opportunity to get to know Him.

Because God made us and loves us so much that he will not let any of us slip through the net, or in the case of the lost sheep He will search us out and bring us back to Him.

The parable focuses on **Grace** a word that I often heard mentioned in church but never really understood.

Grace is God's loving actions given to us all at no cost whether or not we accept and love Him.

God's grace is what allows us to enter heaven. None of us have done enough to deserve entrance into the Kingdom simply because you don't gain entrance through works, no matter how good it might be.

We will all join God in His heavenly home one day and that is simply because He is gracious and loving.

Death is nothing to be frightened of, it might take us a while to get to where Saint Paul was when he said he couldn't decide whether he preferred to die or live.

But we could get a little closer to Saint Paul's words as we move closer to God.

I'm sure God wants us to enjoy our life here on earth and for however long it is, with the anticipation of joining Him in heaven along with all those who have gone before us.

How wonderful it will be to be in a place with God and learn about all the things that have puzzled us in our earthly life, but most of all getting to meet Almighty God face to face.

Amen.







A prayer for today.

Lord, I'm a creature of this world
and crave worldly things, not heavenly ones.

I ask you to grow a desire in me for heaven.

Help me not to be satisfied with the things of this world,
but to long for the closeness with you.

Lord thank you for the hope of heaven and the joy
that we will all have when we meet you there.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.



Reverend Graham



Something to think about

- What would your thoughts be if you were in Paul's position in jail?
- What would stop you from wanting to go straight to heaven?
- What will you miss most when you go to heaven?
- What will you gain most when you go to heaven?
- What is your interpretation of Jesus' parable?
- Who do you think will go to heaven-all or some?
- What about murderers and rapists?
- Does God love such people and if so why?
- Does death scare you, if so why?

SUNDAY 20th September 2020

Trinity 15

Altar Flowers – Mike & Vicky **GARBETT**

~~~~~

## SERVICE TODAY

Invitation only

10.00am: Common Worship

## Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September

Invitation only

10.00am: Book of Common Prayer

~~~~~



Many congratulations to
Kath Johnson
who celebrates her
80th Birthday on
Monday 21st September

~~~~~

For any of your family, friends  
and neighbours  
who have access to the internet,  
you might like to suggest  
that they look at the church's website  
where they will be able to see this  
message and other useful information.  
Also, anyone you know with  
Primary Age school children will find  
stories from 'Open The Book'.

Tell them to Google  
St. Mary's Church Cubbington.