

18th October 2020 – Morning Service

Rev Josephine Soon

Call to Worship - Revelation 3:19-22

I reprove and discipline those whom I love. Be earnest, therefore, and repent. Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come into you and eat with you, and you with me. To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

The Lord is saying: 'Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking....' What a wonderful privilege that the Lord of all creation desires to come to us. Let us welcome His presence and pray.

We welcome you our God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. You are the God whom heaven and earth adore; from earth and from the angel host, you are to be praised and glorified forever. Amen.

StF 1 – All people that on earth do dwell

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| 1) All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice:
Him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell;
Come ye before him and rejoice. | 4) For why, the Lord Our God is good;
His mercy is for ever sure;
His truth at all times firmly stood,
And shall from age to age endure. |
| 2) The Lord, ye know, is God indeed;
Without our aid he did us make:
We are his folk, he doth us feed;
And for his sheep he doth us take. | 5) To Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
The God whom heaven and earth adore,
From earth and from the angel host
Be praise and glory evermore. |
| 3) O enter then his gates with praise;
Approach with joy his courts unto;
Praise, laud, and bless his name always,
For it is seemly so to do. | |

William Kethe CCL No. 515642

Prayers

Let us ask God to help us to be free from our own pre-occupations, from the desire for wealth and those things belong to the world....refocus on the things of God, the Kingdom of God.

Dear God, thank you for the many kindnesses we have experienced in this time of Pandemic: old friends reconnecting, some households learning about togetherness, others learning new quieter rhythms.

Creator God, creation is so much with us, through sights, sounds, tastes, fragrances; we pause to give thanks for something in nature (Autumn leaves & rain & fruits etc.) that gave us joy this week.....[PAUSE]

Father God, you have brought people into our lives, we pause to give thanks for our experience of joy or peace with others we had this week.....[PAUSE]

Lord God, still, we sometimes disregard You.

We asked forgiveness for a time this week where we rejected your voice.....[PAUSE]

We ask forgiveness for a time this week where we have disturbed or destroyed the peace of another person.....[PAUSE]

We pray for someone who is in our hearts, who we know needs joy and hope.....[PAUSE]

We pray for a place and a person in the world that is on our hearts that needs your peace.....[PAUSE]

God of grace, You hear both our prayers and our complaints.....[SILENCE]

We long for You today. Lord, save us. Thank you for hearing our prayers and answering them.

We love you, our God, Creator, Strength and Redeemer. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come;
thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the
glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**

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.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are
yours now and for ever. **Amen.**

Reading: Matthew 21: 33-46 - The Parable of the wicked tenants

"Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit. The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. Last of all, he sent his son to them. 'They will respect my son,' he said. But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him and take his inheritance.' So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end," they replied, "and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time." Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes'? Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed." When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus' parables, they knew he was talking about them. They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet.

This Word of God comes to us through the Scriptures. May the Holy Spirit enlighten our mind and heart as I proclaim the Gospel teachings. May the Spirit prompt all of us to respond to you, Jesus.

Sermon – Jesus the Cornerstone

The Parable of the Wicked Tenants is the 2nd parable of the trio.

The structure of this parable:

1. The setup of the vineyard, v 33
2. The sending of the servants to receive the harvest
 - 1st group, vs 34-35
 - 2nd group, v 36
 - The Son, vs 37 - 39
3. The punishment – the transference of the vineyard, vs 40 - 41
 - The unbelief/ rejection of the stone – the cornerstone
 - Consequence ~ transfer of the kingdom

That was only days before His crucifixion, the Lord Jesus wept and mourned that His people had missed the day of their blessing and sadly announced:

43 *"Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be **taken away from you** and given to a people who will produce its fruit."*

The word 'you' refers to God's people - the Israelites, those religious leaders, the Jews in Jesus' time. This word speaks to us today – all who are called Christians, God's children. We are the chosen race: the 'Heir' who will inherit 'the Kingdom of God'

- that through us all the nations of the earth will be blessed
- through us the Messiah will be alive in others' lives and to be a light to the Gentiles
- through Jesus Christ all people on earth will be a people of righteousness

All because Jesus is the Son of David, the King of the Kingdom of God. However, the Israelites do not believe; they questioned Jesus' authority (Matthew 21: 23-32).

By whose authority Jesus came into Jerusalem as a King?

By what authority that Jesus cleansed the Temple?

That Jesus 'drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves' (Matthew 21: 12).

We must pray and ask the Spirit to help us to overcome our unbelief. Once we are in the house of the Lord, we are in. We must not wander between in or out of the house of God in a childish way. But to be faithful, commit to this relationship with God and with one another.

We must do all we can to live out the teachings of Jesus at all times so that our friends and family may know that we belong to Him.

Back to the passage

When God's people's long-awaited Messiah finally arrived, the nation had fallen into religious apostasy and did not recognise Jesus as Messiah.

They rejected Him and His teachings. **They rejected the stone, the cornerstone.**

They refused to believe His Word and even had Him crucified.

Although they were heirs of the kingdom, they had become a people who had wandered away from the Lord.

Jesus Christ, 'The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone...'

Can you imagine what the 'church' looks like when it is without Jesus Christ? It is merely an illusion for the people to believe that they are church or children of God if they are not the 'authorised' or adopted heirs of God. It is through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit that we are 'adopted' and become the heirs of God. This is God's grace, a gift. This cornerstone is the key for our identity and entitles us to future blessings.

*Matthew 21:44 Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces;
anyone on whom it falls will be crushed."*

The nature of stone – heavy and solid and hard. When a stone falls on our feet it can cause damage and hurts. When a stone is put in a wrong place and causes us to fall on it, then it will cause us to be 'broken to pieces'. However, when we put a stone in the right place, it will become a platform/step that leads us to a safer and higher place. Where do we put Jesus, the Cornerstone, in our life?

John 3:17-18 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

Jesus Christ, the Cornerstone of all people of God. He is a platform to lift the church up to the level where we may see the glory of God. God's intention to give us this Cornerstone to lead us to a safe place.

Therefore, it is crucial that we help one another to place this Cornerstone in the right place within our church life...all the time.

Matthew 21:43 "Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.

God's heart is to lift us up so that we, the children, can enjoy the fuller view (joy, love, peace, kindness...) of life. However, if the children are continually hurting and damaging 'broken pieces' by this free gift – the stone, He will take away the stone from us to a people who are willing to put the stone in the right place in their life.

Conclusion:

This passage so far, has taught us that the consequence of those who reject Jesus the Cornerstone, will be cut off from the Kingdom of God. Those who do not receive the Son of God, do not believe His authority, will not receive the blessings. Those who do not receive & accept the Son as a cornerstone in their life, do not have relationship with Jesus, will be cut off from the presence of God ...from the blessings of salvation. How should we respond to God's message today? Receive the Son and enthrone Him as your King Receive the teachings of Jesus and make them your way of life.

Song – One Day – When we all go to heaven

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|---|---|
| 1) One day You'll make everything new, Jesus
One day You will bind every wound
The former things shall all pass away
No more tears
One day You'll make sense of it all, Jesus
One day every question resolved
Every anxious thought left behind
No more fear | 2) One day we will see face to face, Jesus
Is there a greater vision of grace
And in a moment, we shall be changed
On that day
And one day we'll be free, free indeed, Jesus
One day all this struggle will cease
And we will see Your glory revealed
On that day |
| <i>Ch) When we all get to heaven
What a day of rejoicing that will be
When we all see Jesus
We'll sing and shout the victory</i> | We will weep no more
No more tears, no more shame
No more struggle, no more
Walking through the valley of the shadow
No cancer, no depression
Just the brightness of Your glory
Just the wonder of Your grace
Everything as it was meant to be
All of this will change
When we see You face to face
Jesus, face to face |

Eliza E. Hewitt, Matt Redman, Beth Redman, Leonard Jarman © 2017 WorshipTogether.com Songs CCL No. 515642

Prayers of Intercession

Lord Jesus, we come to you today and thank you for the privilege of praying for others. We've been the recipient of others' prayers so often, we understand how powerful intercessory prayer can be. We ask you first to cleanse our hearts and show us if there is any unconfessed sin in our own lives so that our prayers for others will not be hindered.

We thank you that, through your name, we can come boldly before you and pray with confidence, according to your will and know that you hear us. We lift up those in our community and in our church. Begin with those who follow you, Lord Jesus. Let them be salt and light, pointing others to you. Deepen their love for you and for the people around them. We pray for teachers and for students. We pray for all those in authority and leadership, both locally and throughout the world. Give them your mind and surround them with godly counsellors who will exercise integrity and work for justice, morality, and freedom. We pray for the lost, the hurting, the lonely, the sick, the bereaved, and those who are imprisoned—behind both visible and invisible walls. Send your comfort, your peace, and your calming presence to those who are without hope. So many needs, Jesus, but you are adequate for every need. Your name is powerful, and your power is great. So it's in your name that we pray—and believe. Amen.

STF 494 – Come thou fount of every blessing

- 1) Come, thou fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy never ceasing
Call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious measure
Sung by flaming tongues above;
O the vast, the boundless treasure
Of my Lord's unchanging love!
- 2) Here I find my greatest treasure:
'Hither by thy help I've come',
And I hope, by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger,
Interposed his precious blood.
- 3) O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be'.
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Take my heart, O take and seal it,
Seal it from thy courts above!

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The Grace & Blessing

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and evermore. Amen.

May the Glory to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, and now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.