

Sunday 5th July

Matthew 11: 16-19, 25-30

'But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market-places and calling to one another,

"We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;
we wailed, and you did not mourn."

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, "He has a demon"; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, "Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners!" Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.'

Jesus Thanks His Father

At that time Jesus said, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

Many in recent months have been carrying heavy burdens and many more are now realising that their burden maybe heavy for a much longer time to come. As we move into the next phase of life, in these days, many will be without employment or be in a more uncertain employment position. The loss of income and routine of life on top of all the stress of 4 months of social distancing and isolation will take its toll. The burden will be heavy.

Over recent months there have been many helping carry the burden that has been upon other people. The shopping for food and essentials; the collection and delivery of medicines, the phone-call to make sure all is well; these tasks have helped carry the load for individuals and their families living at distance and unable to help.

These are some of the practical things that have been done. For many the issue that has been prominent has been that of mental weariness and there is concern for the long-term mental well being of people in our communities. There is no quick-fix to such situations but perhaps the words of Jesus are to be taken hold of.

Jesus invites people to draw near to him and take his yoke upon them. To leave behind concerns and worries is not easy for the rigours of daily life do not disappear. Jesus does not say all the struggles and stresses of life will disappear but somehow, through his grace, we are offered rest; a rest that gives us the ability to reflect on what is important and to seek the help that is available.

The admitting of a need is part of the route to a way of overcoming it; admitting to self is one stage; admitting to God is another on the route to finding the strength to move forward.

What is your burden? Admit it to yourself. What is your burden? Hand it to God and lift what he gives back to you.

Prayer

Lord God, in this time of struggle and change help me to examine myself that I may know my burden. Help me to hand the weight of life to you and take from you that which you give me the strength to bear. Surround me with those who will walk with me, assuring me, and encouraging me to keep going when I want to stop altogether. Amen