

safety of heaven, but invites us all to be partners with him, to join our love to his love, and reach out to the suffering people in our world. This means reaching out to our sick friends, welcoming the stranger to church, visiting people we know who are depressed, or who need words of reassurance and hope. We are to see the face of Jesus in the faces of these people and minister to them in the same way Jesus has ministered to us in our times of need. But Jesus' parable goes even further than this. He is talking about the least important. People whom others regard as insignificant. People who are easily forgotten. People who are out of sight so out of mind.

This parable is about how our faith in Jesus and our worship ought to penetrate and be interwoven with the ordinary everyday things of our lives.

Here is a story of which there are a number of versions. Conrad, the old cobbler, dreamed one night that the Master would come to be his guest. He was up as the sun was rising and set about decorating his little shop with bright flowers and greenery. He set the table with milk and honey and bread and waited.

While he was waiting, a beggar walked down the street came barefoot in the driving rain. Conrad called him in and gave him a pair of shoes. And then an old woman came bent from the weight of a heavy burden. He lifted the load off her back and shared his food with her. And finally, just before the day was about to fade away into darkness, a little child came. Her eyes were wet with tears. Conrad gave her a glass of milk and led her back to her mother. But the divine guest never came. Conrad was disappointed. Then soft in the silence a voice he heard:

"Lift up your heart, for I have kept my word.

Three times I came to your friendly door;

Three times my shadow was on your floor.

I was the beggar with the bruised feet;

I was the woman you gave to eat;

I was the child on the homeless street!"

This is what Jesus meant when he said, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers (and sisters) of mine, you did for me."

The least are those who can't afford to put a meal on the table for their children, those struggling to make ends meet because they have lost their jobs due to the pandemic. Those who have lost a loved one and are grieving, people who have lost their homes because of conflict and disasters around the world. And that's just a drop in the ocean of human suffering around us. These are the people that cause us to look the other way. But at the same time, these are the people whom Jesus claims to be among. Or better, it is in the face of these people that we see Jesus. "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers (and sisters) of mine, you did for me." You know there's a question that I have often

been asked and that is - how far should we go in our caring? Who should we care for - and who, if any, should we not care for? How can we be sure that the truly needy get what they need while those who would suck us dry do not? Or should we even worry about that? You know I can't answer these questions for you. This is something that each of us needs to struggle with on a case by case, day by day basis. But I can tell you that Christ is all around us in the faces of those who need our help.

As an individual, we can hardly make a dent in all the human misery in our world, but together we can. This text from Matthew's Gospel comes just at the right time as we begin our preparations for Christmas. Christmas is the celebration of God's greatest gift to us - Jesus Christ. This gift from God gives us a renewed relationship with God through forgiveness and the hope of life forever in heaven. So, let us reach out to "the least" of the world and our community, and make a special offering to our Lord in the face of those we meet. Amen.

HYMN - SHINE JESUS, SHINE

LORD, THE LIGHT OF YOUR LOVE is shining,

In the midst of the darkness, shining;

Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us,

Set us free by the truth You now bring us,

Shine on me, shine on me.

Shine, Jesus, shine,

Fill this land with the Father's glory;

Blaze, Spirit, blaze,

Set our hearts on fire.

Flow, river, flow,

Flood the nations with grace and mercy;

Send forth Your word,

Lord, and let there be light.

Lord, I come to Your awesome presence,

From the shadows into Your radiance;

By the blood I may enter Your brightness,

Search me, try me, consume all my darkness.

Shine on me, shine on me.

As we gaze on Your kingly brightness

So our faces display Your likeness.

Ever changing from glory to glory,

Mirrored here may our lives tell Your story.

Shine on me, shine on me.

THE peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of

God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always.

Amen.



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Welcome to Issue #36. Can you believe it! This week Revd Mark brings us God's Word. Next Sunday there will be an opportunity to share in our Holy Communion service. Please have a piece of bread and perhaps a little wine ready.

HYMN - HALLELUJAH TO THE LAMB!

LORD, I STAND in the midst of a multitude, of those from every tribe and tongue.

We are Your people, redeemed by Your blood, rescued from death by Your love.

There are no words good enough to thank You;

there are no words to express my praise,

but I will lift up my voice,

and sing from my heart, with all of my strength.

Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Hallelujah! to the Lamb.

Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

by the blood of Christ we stand.

Every tongue, every tribe,

every people, every land;

giving glory, giving honour,

giving praise unto the Lamb of God.

Lord, we stand by grace in Your presence, cleansed by the blood of the Lamb.

We are Your children, called by Your name,

humbly we bow and we pray.

Release Your power

to work in us and through us

till we are changed to be more like You.

Then all the nations will see

Your glory revealed, and worship You

Hallelujah....

Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess that You are Lord of all!

Hallelujah.... (x2)

Giving praise unto the Lamb of God!

Giving praise unto the Lamb of God!

Jesus Christ, Lamb of God!

LET US PRAY

Heavenly Father, we come to you poor and yet rich, weak and yet strong, with the prayer that your promise may be fulfilled in Jesus Christ, our dear Lord and Saviour. Let the time come when the heavens open and a new light shines over the earth, a time when people will praise and thank you and receive everlasting peace and happiness with you. Remember our nation and all who work for the good of our country. May your name be honoured, dear Father in heaven, may your kingdom come and your will be done on earth as in heaven. Amen.

HYMN - FATHER GOD

FATHER GOD, I WONDER

how I managed to exist

Without the knowledge of Your parenthood and Your loving care.

But now I am Your son,

I am adopted in Your family,

And I can never be alone,

'Cause Father God, You're there beside me.

I will sing Your praises,

I will sing Your praises,

I will sing Your praises,

Forever more.

I will sing Your praises,

I will sing Your praises,

I will sing Your praises,

Forever more.

Our Family

God made us a family
We need one another
We love one another
We forgive one another

We work together

We play together

We worship together

Together we use God's word

Together we grow in Christ

Together we love all men

Together we serve our God

Together we hope for heaven

These are our hopes and ideals

Help us to attain them, O God

Through Jesus Christ our Lord

Amen

If we refuse to admit that we are sinners, then we live in a world of illusion, and truth becomes a stranger to us. But if we freely admit that we have sinned, we find God utterly reliable and straightforward— He forgives our sins and makes us thoroughly clean from all that is evil.

The Bible urges us to admit and confess our many sins and evil ways. We are warned not to try to hide them from God, but to confess them to Him honestly and frankly. It is then that, in His mercy, God promises to forgive us. This is something we ought to be doing at all times, particularly when we meet together to thank God for what He has done for us, to praise Him, to hear His word and to ask for those things which we need for both our bodies and souls. I, therefore, ask all of you to join me humbly and sincerely in saying together—

WORSHIP SHEET #36
Sunday 22nd November 2020

ALMIGHTY AND MOST MERCIFUL FATHER, we have wandered from Your Way like lost sheep, following the inclinations of our own hearts. We have broken Your holy laws. We have ignored the things we should have done, and have done the things we should not have done. As You have promised, show us Your mercy, Lord; spare those who sincerely confess their sins and restore those who are truly sorry; so Lord, give us strength to live a godly and upright life, that will bring honour to Your Holy Name. For Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

ALMIGHTY God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who does not desire the death of a sinner, but rather that we should turn from our sinfulness and live.

God pardons and delivers all those who truly repent and wholeheartedly believe His Holy Gospel.

Let us therefore ask Him to grant us true repentance, and also the power of His Holy Spirit, so that our lives may please Him both now and always.

With such help, we know we shall have the joy of being with Him in the life to come. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. 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.

O Lord open our lips
 And our mouths shall declare Your praise
 O God come quickly to save us
 O Lord make haste to help us
 Let us praise the Lord
 The Lord's Name be praised
 Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit
 As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

LESSON : Matthew 25:31-46 The Sheep and the Goats

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. ³⁴ "Then the King will say to those on his right,

'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

⁴⁰ "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

⁴¹ "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

⁴⁴ "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

⁴⁵ "He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

⁴⁶ "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

THIS IS THE WORD OF THE LORD THANKS BE TO GOD.

HYMN - LOVING SHEPHERD OF THY SHEEP

Loving Shepherd of thy sheep,
 keep Thy lamb, in safety keep;
 nothing can Thy power withstand,
 none can pluck me from Thy hand.

Loving Saviour, thou didst give
 thine own life that we might live,
 and the hands outstretched to bless
 bear the cruel nails' impress.

We would bless Thee every day,
 gladly all Thy will obey,
 like Thy blessed ones above,
 happy in Thy precious love.

Loving Shepherd, ever near,
 teach Thy lamb Thy voice to hear,
 suffer not my steps to stray
 from the straight and narrow way.

Where Thou leadest I would go,
 walking in Thy steps below,
 'til before my Father's throne
 I shall know as I am known.

THE APOSTLES CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified dead and buried; He descended into hell; the Third Day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body, And the life everlasting. Amen.

The Lord be with You.
 And with your spirit.
 Let us pray.

COLLECT - THE 25th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

STIR UP, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the wills of Thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of Thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For Grace:

O Lord our heavenly Father, Almighty and Everlasting God, Who has brought us safely to another day, keep us by Your mighty power from doing wrong, and guard us from all danger. Watch over everything we do, so that all our actions may be right in Your sight. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For Power:

O God, the Creator of peace and lover of unity, Whom to know is eternal life, and to serve is perfect freedom, guard us when we are attacked by the Devil, so that we, trusting in Your defence, may not fear any evil. Through the power of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

THE GRACE

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



HYMN - Give Thanks With a Grateful Heart

GIVE THANKS with a grateful heart.
 Give thanks to the Holy One.
 Give thanks because He's given
 Jesus Christ, His Son.
 (Repeat)

And now let the weak say 'I am strong,'
 Let the poor say 'I am rich,'
 Because of what the Lord has done for us.
 And now let the weak say 'I am strong,'
 Let the poor say 'I am rich,'
 Because of what the Lord has done for us.

(Last time)
 Give thanks.

JUST A BRIEF WORD by Revd Mark

Well, from today's scripture reading we are left in no doubt that there will be a judgement when Jesus returns and when He comes in all his glory with the angels, he will sit on His throne and all the nations will be judged. He will separate the right from the left – the sheep from the goats. To those on the right he says, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father! Come and possess the kingdom which has been prepared for you ever since the creation of the world". To those on the left he says, "Away from me, you that are under God's curse! Away to the eternal fire which has been prepared for the Devil and his angels!" So, on what basis is this judgement carried out? Why are some invited to eternal joy while others are condemned? Whether they went to the right or to the left depended on whether they recognised Jesus.

You know, it's true that we see Jesus every time we open the Bible. He reveals himself to us as our loving Saviour and friend. We see Jesus in the bread and wine at Holy Communion – his body and blood – as he forgives our sin and strengthens us to face the doubts and dangers. We see Jesus as we worship together; when we take our joy and problems to him in prayer, and when we trust him for help when the chips are down.

But the judgement story of Jesus goes beyond this and asks whether we have seen him in the face of the hungry and thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and those in prison. It would seem that the message of this parable is telling us that Christ is mysteriously present to us in those who need our help. We are called to be there for them just as God has been there for us through the death and resurrection of Jesus. We are called to show compassion and spring into action for the least important just as Christ has had compassion on us in our times of trial and has sprung into action for us - forgiving, helping and healing us when we needed it the most. We worship a God who is entangled in the suffering of humanity, in our sufferings and in the suffering of people everywhere. In fact, we worship a God who chooses not to untangle all the knots and problems of our world from the