



Daily reflections and prayers

14th-20th September 2020

(Based on the Common Worship
Lectionary)

Monday 14th September (Festival of the Holy Cross)

Psalm 22: 23-28

John 3:13-17

Opening Prayer:

Loving God, as I read your word, speak to me I pray and lead me into your truth. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Reflection:

Psalm 22 begins with the most anguished cry in human history: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" These are the words that Jesus took on His lips at the depth of His suffering on the cross. At the Cross lies the basic paradox of our faith in Jesus Christ. We believe that the suffering of Jesus brought us salvation; the cross reveals the vast breadth and width of God's love. But because of the cross and what Jesus accomplished there the failure that at the beginning of the psalm seemed certain is now swallowed up in victory. This success will not just be personal or individual but will be worldwide. The praise rests on the abundant promise: "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you..."

A prayer:

Thank you for the cross and for the love that God has for me. Help me to respond to you in praise and with a wholehearted commitment to follow you

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for yourself and for those you know and love
- Pray for kindness and generosity in all our doings.

Tuesday 15th September

Psalm 8

Acts 13:44-52

Opening Prayer:

Loving God, as I read your word, speak to me I pray and help me to see you more clearly. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Reflection:

I have always loved this psalm, since I heard a song on which it was based as a teenager. The idea that God not only created us but 'crowned us with glory and honour' really struck me. This psalm says so much about how God values us. It says that there are no worthless people in this world. Today, whether you interact with a business owner, a homeless person, an immigrant, or a thief, each one is one whom God has "crowned with glory and honour" by making them human. I wonder how it would change how we think of and treat people if

we reminded ourselves each day as we smiled at them that God has crowned them that way.

A prayer:

Remind me today that each person I see, meet or read about is a person whom you have crowned with honour and glory in their humanity

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray for schools, teachers and students
- Pray for those in rent or mortgage arrears

Wednesday 16th September

Psalm 119: 1-32

Acts 14:8-28

Opening Prayer:

Loving God, as I read your word, speak to me I pray and lead me into your truth. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Reflection:

The story of Paul and Barnabas in Lystra begins much like the story of Peter and John at the Jerusalem temple in Acts 3. However In Acts 3, the people are filled with wonder and amazement, which provides Peter an opening to proclaim that this healing has happened through faith in the name of Jesus the Messiah. In Acts 14, a chaotic scene erupts among the Gentile crowds as they interpret what has happened from their own religious presuppositions. Acts gives us a glimpse of the challenges faced by the earliest missionaries proclaiming the gospel in a multi-cultural, multi-religious world. The words and deeds of Jesus' disciples could easily be misunderstood by people with a wholly different set of presuppositions. How will the gospel be heard amidst so many competing voices and worldviews? While there is no simple answer to that question, the story of Acts does lift up the vital importance of authentic missional leadership. "Today as always, the Spirit calls leaders to be servants and not masters, to abandon self-centered agendas and delusions of grandeur, and to engage humbly and creatively in this great adventure of translating and proclaiming the gospel in a world of stunning diversity." (E Johnson 2012)

A prayer:

Help us to demonstrate your love in all we do and say

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray for those grieving loss and suffering pain
- Pray for our world leaders

Thursday 17th September

Psalm 15

Acts 15:1-21

Opening Prayer:

Loving God, as I read your word, speak to me I pray and lead me into your truth. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Reflection:

Acts 15 describes a hinge moment in the history of the Church. There is a disagreement over what is necessary or those gentiles who follow Jesus, do they have to add something else in this case circumcision. Peter's previous experience is significant in a new understanding that it is faith in Jesus that matters. The passage though reminds us that through history humans are in danger of adding things 'to the good news of Jesus'. And differences in practice have been responsible for splitting churches and creating significant division amongst Christians. The psalm reminds us that God looks at our heart, it our response to God, demonstrated in our love for others that matters most

A prayer:

Help us we pray to walk in your ways and to love those around us.

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray for those struggling with their emotional and mental health

Friday 18th September

Psalm 19

Acts 15:22-35

Opening Prayer:

Loving God, as I read your word, speak to me I pray and lead me into your truth. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Reflection:

CS Lewis said this about Psalm 19 "I take this to be the greatest poem in the Psalter and one of the greatest lyrics in the world," In the first 6 verses it speaks of natural revelation. God seen in all creation around us... We need to learn to look more closely...to Look to the mountains and see everlastingness... Search both day and night and watch for the glory of it... Listen to the silence and hear wonder speak... Look to the horizon to hear a word about eternity... Look to the sunrise and enjoy God's forever-promise... Look to the seasons and live God's rhythm... (R Hamilton 2019) The following verses remind us of God's specific revelation through his word which can transform lives and which we experience most in Jesus the word made flesh

A prayer:

Open our eyes to see you in the world around us and thank you

Prayer Focus:

- pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray for our neighbours and our community

Saturday 19th September

Psalm 23

Acts 15:36-41

Opening Prayer:

Loving God, as I read your word, speak to me I pray and lead me into your truth. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Reflection:

This is a familiar Psalm,...If "Thou art with me" is the focal point of the Psalm, and if "I shall not want" is the beginning of a new life of being satisfied with God, then the end of our life with God is this: "I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.". All of us yearn for connection and somewhere to be at home. Some of us work for it, fight for it, struggle with it yet our relationship with God offers us a place of safety even in the darkest places and a home which lasts eternally.

A prayer:

If thou art with me.....I shall not want. Be with me O god we pray

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray for our churches and communities

Sunday 20th September

Psalm 105:1-5

Matt 20:1-16

Opening Prayer:

Loving God, as I read your word, speak to me I pray and lead me into your truth. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Reflection:

The landowner introduces a new style: people work hard, but here work has dignity, and even those who did not manage to find work for the whole day receive enough to safeguard their dignity. The rules of the kingdom are different: they go beyond strict justice, and create respect and solidarity. The owner knew that what he was offering the workers was minimal and to give a person less, would lead to hunger He went beyond justice motivated by compassion. 'the kingdom of heaven' often stands for God, and the central revelation here is just how generous God is. Think of the generosity of God the Father and ask that your heart may be opened.

A prayer:

Thank you for your generous compassion to us God, make us generous to others

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- But today, let us also pray for those who are mourning loved ones today, for whatever reason.
- Pray for the week ahead for all its challenges and opportunities that we may make Christ known in all we do and say .