

# Daily reflections and prayers 21st-27th September 2020

(Based on the Common Worship Lectionary)

## Monday 21st September

Ps 49

Matt 9:9-13

### 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:

*Jesus' call to Matthew came right in the middle of his ordinary work day and despite the fact that Matthew must have been tied up with his balance books ; he does not hesitate or delay in order to balance the books, but gets up and follows. It can be easy to separate our life into secular and spiritual and to assume that we are more likely to hear God call or speak to us when we are at prayer or in church; but we have to be open, deeply open to hear God in the ordinariness of our day to day life. Jesus' inclusivity challenges those around him who simply can't imagine that God would call a tax collector. Jesus is quotes from Hosea, in v13 to remind them that all the rituals and sacrifices and purity practices will be utterly meaningless without mercy and love and kindness and compassion towards others.*

### A prayer:

Help me today to be mindful of the many ways your grace seeks entry into my life. Help me respond generously and without delay to your calls. Amen

### Prayer Focus:

- Pray for yourself and for those you know and love
- Pray for those going to university, especially for the first time with all its challenges

## Tuesday 22nd September

Ps 36

Acts16:25-40

### 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:

*Take some time today to ponder the words of this Psalm. What does it mean to put your trust under the shadow of God's wings? v7. How often we find ourselves fretting about things rather than actively putting our trust in God. Paul and Silas did this in the other reading in the middle of a really unfair and potentially dangerous position. They were able to demonstrate their trust in God as they turned to worship and song. When we focus on God rather than the problem then we are so much*

*more able to trust God and really understand what it means to be under the shadow of his wings*

### A prayer:

We know that following you does not mean all our problems go away; help us to trust you in the middle of all we find difficult. Amen

### Prayer Focus:

- Pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray for those facing economic difficulty now.

## Wednesday 23rd September

Ps 34

Acts 17:1-15

### 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:

*Taste and see that the Lord is good says this Psalm (v 8). What does that image conjure up for you? It speaks I think of something that goes far deeper than understanding with our mind or intellect only. It implies that we should be able to experience the Lord with all our senses and to deeply digest and be nourished by Him. We see that image when we share communion too that we are asking God in Jesus to become a deeply integral part of our lives and one that whilst it does not banish all the problems or the suffering nevertheless always offers hope because God is fully present with us.*

### A prayer:

Please help us to follow you more closely, get to know you more deeply, and to love you more faithfully . Amen

### Prayer Focus:

- Pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- For those grieving loss and suffering pain

## Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September

Ps 37:1-11

Acts 17:16-34

### 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:

*In in a world of turmoil, anxiety and sometimes fear; there are constant pressures to be doing things. We often end up thinking that if we work harder or smarter or faster that we can end up dealing with them and 'get things right' . The ongoing pandemic has shown us that we often have far less ability to control the things around us than we would like. Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him (v7) says the Psalm; and honestly sitting still and being patient is not easy for the majority of us all of the time. Paul is patient in Acts, he listens , he watches he take sin his surroundings and when offered*

*an opportunity he can make a connection with the Athenians because he has patiently waited . We need to be the same, patient to hear God for ourselves, patient for opportunities to show his love to those around and a willingness to at least sometimes be still.*

**A prayer:**

Help us to be still, and to patiently wait to hear and see you act in our lives and in the life of our community

**Prayer Focus:**

- Pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray for the community we live in, that we may see God at work.

**Friday 25th September**

**Ps 31**

**Acts 18:1-21**

**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:**

*One of the things that I love about the psalms is their honesty. v22 tells us that the writer felt as if God could not see him when things were at their worst; I had said in my alarm, "I am cut off from your sight.". Whilst we know that God is always present and has promised never to leave us, there are definitely times when we feel unseen. Paul in the reading in Acts has a specific vision which answers his need at the point at which once again he has been abused and rejected, Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent v 9 he hears God say to him. But even Paul did not always have this type of reassurance and we know that Jesus himself felt as if God could not see him on the cross. The psalm starts and ends with a statement of trust and a statement of intent to consistently trust God whatever the feeling.*

**A prayer:**

Please help us to seek you and put our trust in you even when our emotions and feelings make it seem as if you are far away.

**Prayer Focus:**

- pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray for schools and students as they continue this half term

**Saturday 26th September**

**Ps 43**

**Acts 19:1-7**

**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:**

*Paul's first question to the believers he meets is not how or where they were baptised but rather do they live their lives filled with, and guided by the Holy Spirit? We need to recognise that our life of faith in Jesus Christ is not only about any specific event that might have taken place in journey of our faith. Those moments -- if and when they happen -- are gifts from God to be treasured, but they constitute starting points, not ending points. If Paul had met these disciples again a couple of years later and asked them the same question I'm sure he would not have been satisfied if they had said yes remember when we met you last, he would want to know how is the Holy Spirit living in you today ?and I think that is a question worth directing to ourselves and our own communities of faith today.*

**A prayer:**

Please fill us with your Holy Spirit and help us to live lives that

**Prayer Focus:**

- Pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray for our churches as they meet in person and online

**Sunday 27th September**

**Ps 78:1-7**

**Matt 21:23-32**

**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 gospel reminds us of something we often forget: words can be meaningless. Promises are empty when not followed by action. The first son is arrogant but his action shows his goodness. The second son sounds co-operative but fails to keep his promise.*

*The challenge of the parable is that words on their own are not enough it is rather about whether we honour God and live out our faith with our actions and obedience.*

**A prayer:**

Make us obedient to your call on our lives and in our day to day actions. Amen

**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 .