



## Daily Readings, Reflections and Prayers

Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> – Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>  
June 2020

### MONDAY 22 JUNE

The selected readings for today are:

- Romans 12v14-21
- Matthew 7v1-5

#### Opening Prayer:

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

#### Verse for the day:

*Matthew 7v1*

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged."

#### Reflection:

Judging others is so easy, and so natural. We look at people and, without even realising it, make judgements about them. We look at their clothes, their looks, the colour of their skin; we listen to how they speak and, without meaning to, we make judgements about the kind of person that they are.

Sadly, recent events in the news, most particularly the tragic murder of George Floyd, and the renewed emphasis on racial justice have reminded us all that snap judgements based on how people look are a real problem and have seriously negative impacts on many people's lives.

So, Jesus' words in Matthew 7v1-5 are a valuable challenge to us.

"Do not judge" (v1). This is the ideal, isn't it? And we must work towards this. May God help me to be less judgemental and less inclined to judge people by how they look.

"First take the plank out of your own eye." (v5). This is a biting challenge isn't it? Before I can judge anyone else, I need to look at my own life. And, when I do, I will be reminded that there is plenty in my heart and mind that doesn't really honour God. A whole plank of it!

Perhaps we should each spend a few moments today repenting of our tendency to judge others and praying for God's help as we seek to see all people as God sees them.

#### A prayer:

*Loving Father, thank you that you judge me completely fairly, and yet with love, grace and understanding. Help me to be less judgemental of others. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

#### Prayer Focus:

- Firstly, pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- But today, let's pray for all those who suffer prejudice and discrimination. May they find help and comfort in God, and may our society become more just and fair.

## TUESDAY 23 JUNE

The selected lectionary readings for today are:

- Psalm 85
- Matthew 7v7-12

### Opening Prayer:

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

### Verse for the day:

*Matthew 7v7*

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find."

### Reflection:

This is a passage full of both hope, and challenge.

The challenge is that all of us have, at some time, asked God for something and not received it. And so we find these words of Jesus challenging.

But if we do, I think we're missing the point. These words of Jesus don't mean that God will give us whatever we want. It means that God will bless us, and provide for us and give us good gifts (v11) and that, as we seek him, we will find him, and receive his blessing.

And that is where the hope comes in. We can be totally sure that God has good things in store for us, in this life and in the next. And so, let us hope in the Lord. Put your trust, not in money, or your career, or even in other people; instead put your trust and your hope in God.

### A prayer:

***Loving Father, thank you that you are good and that your plans for us are always for our best. Help me to listen to your voice above all others, and not to be swayed by other voices that might draw me away from you. Amen.***

### Prayer Focus:

- Firstly, pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- But today, let us also pray for those working in the Health Service; for doctors, nurses and all other health care professionals.
- Then declare to God that you are, today, putting your trust in Him.

## WEDNESDAY 24 JUNE

The selected lectionary readings for today are:

- Jeremiah 17v7-8
- Matthew 7v13-23

### Opening Prayer:

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

### Verse for the day:

*Matthew 7v17*

"every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit."

### Reflection:

What fruit does my life produce? That's a tough question for me to ask myself, but an important question.

Every word and every action is like a seed sown into the tilled earth of our community and our family. What fruit will grow from the seeds that I have planted?

If I am full of Jesus and his love, then my seed will be loving and the fruit that grows will bear that out. If I am full of selfishness and greed; if my words are marked by unkindness or anger; then thistles and weeds will grow.

As Jesus said: "every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit."

If I'm honest then I'm a bit of a mixture; I guess we all are.

May God help me to be more full of Jesus and his love, and so may the fruit of my life bring love and blessing to others.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

### A prayer:

***Loving Father, help me to root out selfishness, anger and greed, and to be filled with the teaching of Jesus your son; and may the fruit of my life bring blessings to others and glory to you. Amen.***

### Prayer Focus:

- Firstly, pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- But today, let us also pray for teachers, for support staff and for our schools. Pray also, of course, for all children, whether learning at home or in school.
- But let's also pray for our neighbours who, like us, face a degree of isolation. May God be with them, and may they draw closer to God at this time.

## THURSDAY 25 JUNE

The selected lectionary readings for today are:

- Psalm 1
- Matthew 7v24-27

### Opening Prayer:

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

### Verse for the day:

*Matthew 7v24*

Jesus said: "everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."

### Reflection:

There's a verse in the book of James that I always find challenging; it says:

*"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."* (James 1v22)

Like most of us, I have listened to hundreds of sermons, attended countless Bible-study groups, and read the Bible thousands of times. Sometimes, it really hits home and makes a real impact in my life; but on other occasions, I'm afraid to say, it goes in one ear and out the other.

And yet, as Jesus says in this brief but powerful parable, the words that I read are the best foundation for my life.

May God help me to read, to listen, and to obey.

### A prayer:

For today's prayer I'm going to propose that we pray the Collect for the second Sunday of Advent from the Book of Common Prayer:

***BLESSED Lord, who has caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.***

### Prayer Focus:

- Firstly, pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- But today, let us also pray for those who work in the food industries, the packers, the truckers, the shelf-stackers and the food servers. Suddenly we are aware of how important their role is.
- Pray also for God's word to take root in your life, and to bear fruit in your life.

## FRIDAY 26 JUNE

The selected lectionary readings for today are:

- Psalm 8
- Matthew 8v5-13

### Opening Prayer:

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

### Verse for the day:

*Matthew 8v8*

"Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof."

### Reflection:

Who's in charge? We have various ways in our society of indicating one's status and position; uniforms, titles, badges and name-plates upon office doors; some people even wear crowns!

And status is not all bad. When I enter a hospital, I want to know who is the surgeon, and who is the porter. I want to make sure that the right person is holding the knife!

In this amazing incident, Jesus met a centurion, a soldier in the Roman army, and this man knew who was in charge. In military terms, he was; a centurion was, as his title suggests, the leader of 100 Roman soldiers.

But when it came to the sickness of his servant and friend, he knew he was out of his depth. He could not command the sickness to go; he didn't have the authority.

But Jesus did and, somehow or other, this soldier could see that. Perhaps he had seen Jesus perform a miracle, who knows? But we do know that he recognised Jesus' authority. He had faith that Jesus was, and is, the Son of God.

### A prayer:

***Lord Jesus, I praise you because you are the Son of God and the King of Kings. May I, like this soldier acknowledge your authority and put my trust in you. Amen.***

### Prayer Focus:

- Firstly, 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. May God comfort them in their loss.
- Pray also for our Government and leaders. May God give them wisdom as they seek to lead this nation, and may their decisions be for the good of all.

## SATURDAY 27 JUNE

The selected lectionary readings for today are:

- Philippians 2v3-11
- Matthew 8v18-22

### Opening Prayer:

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

### Verse for the day:

*Matthew 8v20*

"The Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

### Reflection:

It's an astonishing thought to be aware that Jesus was virtually homeless during much of his earthly adult ministry; as he said in v 20, "The Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

Our epistle makes a similar point, speaking with astonishment at the humility of God in Jesus Christ.

The incarnation really was a supreme act of love. God loved us enough to come down from heaven and to 'humiliate' himself by taking on human form. It's like the Queen becoming a dustman if doing so would somehow save a friend.

As Christians we rightly focus on the cross as God's great act of self-sacrificial love; but the incarnation is right up there with it.

Just remember today how much God loves you. He loves you enough to degrade himself and become human; he loves you enough to live as a virtually homeless man; he loves you so much that he dies upon the cross.

Thank God today for such great love.

### A prayer:

*Lord Jesus, I praise you and I thank you for all that you endured for my salvation. I thank you for your love. Help me to love you more, because you deserve my love. Amen.*

### Prayer Focus:

- Firstly, pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- But today, let us also pray for those who are struggling financially. May across our nation have lost their jobs, or are on reduced pay, or are fearful for the future. May they find their strength and help in God.
- Pray also for those parents who are still educating their children at home, and for their children. May God's blessing and help be upon them all.

## SUNDAY 28 JUNE

The selected lectionary readings for today are:

- Psalm 40v1-5
- Matthew 8v23-27

### Opening Prayer:

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

Verse for the day:

*Matthew 8v27*

"What kind of man is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

### Reflection:

*"What kind of man is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!" (v27)*

It's a great question! No man in history before or after Jesus has been able to control nature. King Canute famously tried and failed, but Jesus calmed the storm, walked on water and turned water into wine. His power was amazing and it testifies now, as it did then, to the truth that Jesus was and is the Son of God.

This Sunday let us join with those disciples and praise Jesus who proved his divinity by calming the storm.

And whatever storms you face, be assured of this, if Jesus is with you (and He is) then all will be well.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

### A prayer:

*Lord Jesus, I praise you because you are with me and you are the very Son of God. Grant me greater faith in you and, as I face the storms and troubles of life, may I put my trust in you and find your strength and help. Amen.*

### Prayer Focus:

- Firstly, pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- For many people this virus and its consequences have either caused or exacerbated some mental health struggles. For all such people, pray for God's strength and help today.
- Pray also for the elderly, especially those who live alone; and for those struggling with Alzheimer's, either themselves or in those whom they love.