

Daily reflections and prayers 28th September -4th October 2020

(Based on the Common Worship Lectionary)

Monday 28th September

Ps17

Acts19:8-20

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 psalmist describes a world in which arrogance callousness and indifference are commonly seen alongside bribery, corruption and violence. It's no surprise that at times he feels as if he is surrounded by evil and is desperate for God to do something about it. He could be commenting on society today couldn't he? People still prey on others, powerful people can and do abuse their power and position. The values of society, left to its own devices, have always been at odds with God. We must carefully examine all that we consider to be important. God's standards are different than those of the larger world. Acts also shows us that; when people see and recognise the power of god in their lives then it transforms them

A prayer:

Let's pray for God's transforming power to be evident in our lives

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for yourself and for those you know and love
- Pray for patience with the restrictions and care for others

Tuesday 29th September

Ps 150

John 1:47-51

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:

Jesus witnessed some aspect of Nathanael that seemed to surprise him; God knows who we are, seeing how our hearts are moved even in quiet and hidden times – 'under the fig tree. In reply Jesus hinted at a new level of disclosure and intimacy between himself and Nathaniel at the same time as he pointed his eyes to the heavenly realm and to the angels as messengers of God. We too are encouraged to look towards Jesus, to glimpse the heavenly realm as we spend time in prayer and are invited into a closer intimacy with God.

A prayer:

Please grant that I may see you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray for those returning to college or university
- Pray for those for whom the future is uncertain

Wednesday 30th September

Ps119:57-80

Acts 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:

A large part of the Acts reading seems to be giving us rather mundane details, names of places and people; but most of us do live our lives in what can seem the mundane and it's there that we are called to live out our lives for God, amongst the bills, the shopping, the housework, the job, the disturbed nights. We learn that Paul is concerned for others, wants to encourage them, he was passionate; he was single minded, courageous, a mentor and a disciple. It's in that mundane context that the miracle in vs 7-12 takes place, falling asleep in a church service no less.....but Paul's care and concern for the individual together with God's power is demonstrated. The psalm is an encouragement to seek God's word to be active and living in our lives every day, even in the most mundane moments.

A prayer:

Please help us to seek your word that we may know your power in our lives

Prayer Focus:

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

Thursday 1st October

Ps 63

Acts 20:17-38

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 the events of his life, David looked beyond the usual superficial and this-worldly human viewpoint to see. This Psalm reflects the fact that David loved God with a holy passion and was not afraid to express this in words. Paul's farewell speech to the Ephesians also demonstrates his passionate commitment to following God and seeing His hand in all that he sees and does . This is something he has spent time with the church teaching them and discipling them, but he is now passing on that responsibility to them. If we are passionate about God and what he has done, then we too will be prepared to express it in words not only to God in prayer and praise but as we share Jesus with others.

A prayer:

Deepen our love for you Oh God and make us willing to share what we know about you with others.

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray as we think of harvest time for all those involved in food production and distribution,

Friday 2nd October

Ps 54

Acts 21:1-16

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:

David promises a vow of praise when he is delivered from a very difficult situation, a promise to publicly acknowledge what God has done for him .Paul already has and will face further difficulty and persecution but I was struck in this reading at the pain he felt on leaving the Ephesians and the number of times he has to say farewell to people who have supported him, loved him and encouraged him, It's not exactly the same, but I wonder how many of us are feeling the pain of separation from others, the pain of not being able to hug and chat and say goodbye properly. Like Paul and David, I think we need to both recognise that difficulty and pain will be present but also to learn to recognize God's grace in our lives in specific ways, and be prepared to acknowledge that when we are together.

A prayer:

Help us to see the many ways you bless us and lead us even in the middle of pain and hurt

Prayer Focus:

- pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray for teachers and students as they continue this first half term
- Pray for our neighbours and our community

Saturday 3rd October

Ps 65

Acts 21:17-36

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:

Jerusalem for Paul , like for Jesus, is a dangerous place. One presumably he could have chosen to avoid, yet he felt strongly that it was right to return there and to share with the church in Jerusalem in person the way God was working through the countries around. Paul knew that going to Jerusalem would culminate in tragedy. Yet, as with Jesus before him, such tragedy would eventually

result in triumph. We are not promised as Christians a life free of difficulty and sometimes doing the right thing will result in persecution; yet we are promised that God creator and sustainer of the universe as the psalm puts it is ever present and walks with us.

A prayer:

Thank you that you are with us every step of the way, and that nothing we face is bigger than you are

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray for our churches and all they are doing as they reopen their buildings to reach out to others.

Sunday 4th October

Ps 129

Matt 21:33-46

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:

I wonder whether you have considered that every one of us has been given a vineyard by God. Our families, our communities, our work, our church, our environment are all parts of our vineyard, we have Jesus as our cornerstone, the rock on which we are building or tending (nothing like a mixed metaphor-) the vineyard. We're given it to help it bear fruit and to use the gifts we have in making that happen. I wonder how we will use our gifts today and next week to help the vineyard grow, will we put in the time , the care and the effort it needs

A prayer:

Make us caring people who use our gifts and our effort to help grow your kingdom

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 all who have been impacted in so many ways by this pandemic
- Pray for the week ahead for all its challenges and opportunities that we may make Christ known in all we do and say .