



Daily reflections and prayers 31st August-6 September 2020
(Based on the Common Worship Lectionary)

Monday 31st August

Psalm 98

Acts 8:26-40

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:

At the heart of the reading in Acts is a willingness to listen carefully to what God is saying and respond. Philip's conversation with the Ethiopian not only opened his eyes to the truth about Jesus and helped bring him to faith but in doing so meant that the good news of Jesus was no won its way to a different continent. It is so important to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit and to be obedient. We trust in our own human abilities and programmes far too much. Sensitivity and obedience to the Holy Spirit accomplish far more than any human activity by itself

A prayer:

Lord, please teach me to listen to you. Help me to hear that still small voice and to obey you when you direct me. Amen.

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for yourself and for those you know and love
- Pray for staff ,children and parents as they return to school this week

Tuesday 1st September

Psalm 103:1-12

Acts 9: 1-19a

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:

It took a thunder-bolt, an unsaddling, and sudden blindness, to bring Saul to the point where he stopped long enough to meet Jesus and experience a change of heart in Saul. The bible makes clear that God works in very different ways to what we would expect; this man who has been trying to wipe out Christians is 'the chosen

instrument' to bring the gospel to the gentiles ..a group who he would have seen as complete outsiders. God is able to transform all of us....maybe for most of us it is a slower process but it can be equally powerful

A prayer:

Lord Please work in our lives and transform us that we may be instruments for you in our homes and communities

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray for those seeking to make decision about their future education or training

Wednesday 2nd September

Psalm 110

Acts 9: 19b-31

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 early Christians were trying to figure out what it meant to be the Church and how to live by the power of the Holy Spirit. They were seeking to fulfil their mission in Christ an, and now Saul comes along. They have feared this man for some time, but now he is on their team, and they are still afraid of him. Transformation by Christ can make people uncomfortable, when something changes, because of Jesus, everything can be different. The old way of living is gone and the new has come. Maybe it would have been clearer cut for the disciples if Saul had continued to persecute them, than it was to initially have Saul working alongside them. Danger isn't always a bad thing, though. When we are called out of our comfort zones and into the unknown we learn to lean into and Christ, and to trust more deeply.

A prayer:

Lord help us to lean into you in faith and trust as we step outside of our own comfort zones I your name Amen

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray for those who are struggling with the economic effects of the pandemics
- For those grieving loss and suffering pain

Thursday 3rd September

Psalm 113

Acts 9:32-43

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 Psalm is a hymn of praise to God and the focus of that praise is how God acts for those who are living lives which are marginalised, socially, economically even emotionally. This was demonstrated powerfully in the person and life of Jesus who healed the paralysed (Mark 2) and raised the dead (Mark 5)...and here in Acts ..Peter demonstrates the same message once gain through two miracles which powerfully echo Jesus' ones. The church here looks and sounds like Jesus and so it should, and so it should! Christ is Lord of His Church. As the Church walks with Jesus the Church looks more and more like Jesus....and that we are called to know as church to act for those who are marginalised as Jesus did

A prayer:

Lord enable us to become more like Jesus every day, and as we seek to serve you in our lives by your power work through us.

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray for those who are unwell and needing care

Friday 4th September**Psalm 139****Acts 10:1-16****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 story in Acts of two people, with two visions is a significant turning point in the story of the early church. It is God directing these events, not Cornelius and not Peter, and if the Gentiles are now being invited into the community by God, God must also be preparing Peter to welcome them as Gentiles by accepting their food as clean. He may still be puzzling over the vision and struggling with his understanding of it, but God is using this to start to shift his thinking and with it although Peter might not recognise it yet some deeply held beliefs or maybe even prejudices

A prayer:

Lord, as the psalm says, you know us in and out. Please challenge those prejudices we hide and transform us by your spirit.

Prayer Focus:

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

Saturday 5th September**Psalm 121****Acts 10: 17-33****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 this next instalment we see God's work starting to take shape. Peter listens to the spirit and obeys but he's quick to point out that he is not doing what Jewish people were expected to do....he sees that God is showing him clearly that all the barriers that humans put in place between each other are broken down completely in God's kingdom.

A prayer:

Please make us aware of the barriers we create between ourselves and others and give us grace through your spirit to change.

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for your own needs and for your loved ones.
- Pray for our churches and all they are doing as they reopen

Sunday 6th September**Psalm 149****Matt 18:15-20****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 gospel reading tells us what Jesus expected of the early church in dealing with internal conflicts. Jesus is Emmanuel, "God is with us". He is with us in our Church community. Jesus is gently reminding us that by being members of the church community, we are responsible for one another, we are to actively work for reconciliation, we are to practice forgiveness and build each other up in faith, and in all these things as we come together in Jesus name he is present with us. None of that is easy, we are all capable of being hurt and hurting others, forgiveness can be costly

A prayer:

Dear Lord Let us trust and believe in what you say and seek your wisdom in resolving difficult situations. May we believe in the giftedness of those who hurt us. They too are loved by you.

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.