



Connection

Sunday 4th July
Fifth Sunday after Trinity



Collect

Almighty and everlasting God,
by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church
is governed and sanctified:
hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people,
that in their vocation and ministry
they may serve you in holiness and truth
to the glory of your name;
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen

2 Corinthians 12: 2-10

I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. And I know that such a person – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows – was caught up into Paradise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat. On behalf of such a one I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. But if I wish to boast, I will not be a fool, for I will be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think better of me than what is seen in me or heard from me, even considering the exceptional character of the revelations. Therefore, to keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.’ So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

Mark 6: 1-13

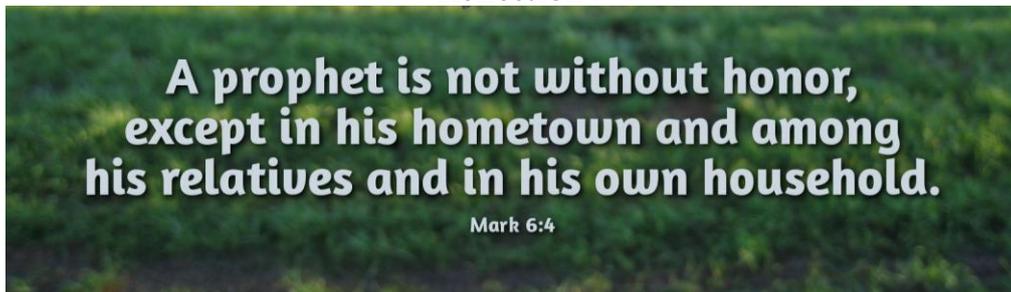
Jesus came to his home town, and his disciples followed him. On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, 'Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?' And they took offence at him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Prophets are not without honour, except in their home town, and among their own kin, and in their own house.' And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. And he was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went about among the villages teaching. He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. He said to them, 'Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.' So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

Post Communion Prayer

Grant, O Lord, we beseech you,
that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered
by your governance,
that your Church may joyfully serve you in all godly quietness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Reflection



This week's reflection is by Stuart Currie, Chaplain to the Bishop of Worcester. You can listen to the podcast at:

<https://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/your-faith/prayer-worship/sermon-podcasts>

Mark 6:4: "Then Jesus said to them, 'Prophets are not without honour, except in their home town, and among their own kin, and in their own house.'"

I wonder if you have heard of the mind-set problem? Here is an example. Little Johnny was beside himself with joy when for his birthday he was given the pet tortoise he had set his heart on. At his birthday party, all his friends shared his excitement, albeit with just a tinge of envy. Oh how he loved his pet. Then, one day, Johnny went to feed it, but it would not come out of its shell. Next day, same no show. And the next and so on for what seemed like for ever. Heart broken, Johnny realised that the tortoise was no more. What to do? Well, the very least he could do was to give it a proper send off. He invited round all the friends who had been at his party. Together they constructed a ritual fit for a tortoise, chose a suitable resting place, dug a hole, and placed the lifeless shell on a red velour cushion. Johnny bore the cushion aloft as they set off in solemn procession down the garden. They got to the spot, put the cushion down for a few final words. And, yes, you've guessed, out popped the tortoise's head. What a shock! 'Now what do we do?' asked a friend. 'I know,' said Johnny, 'Let's bury it anyway.'

That's the mind-set problem. You gather information, you make a plan, you do the preparation, you have a definite aim in view – and nothing is going to stop you. Your mind is set. And it is a serious and persistent problem. Even Jesus comes up against it. Early on in his mission to bring healing, peace and love, he goes to his home town. There he goes into the synagogue and teaches with such wisdom that everyone is amazed. He restores some sick people to health. The crowds can hardly believe their ears and their eyes. And this is where the mind-set kicks in. 'Wait a minute, we know this man. He grew up here. We know his family. He can't possibly have become so wise, he can't possibly be a real miracle worker. Must be a trick' And so fixed and firm is this mind-set that Jesus is unable to continue there with his mission of love, peace and healing. He and his friends leave home and move to places where minds may be more open.

So, how to get over the mind-set problem? The first thing to say is, it isn't easy. The great civil rights leader Dr Martin Luther King once said 'I do not believe that nonviolence will achieve miracles overnight. Men (yes, he did say men – he would be more inclusive today) are not easily moved from their mental ruts or purged of their prejudiced and irrational feelings.' In today's world the problem is often made worse by the way the internet is used. People log on to sites which reinforce and intensify their preferences and prejudices instead of challenging and purging them. Change will take time. And changing minds is not just about booting out bad thinking, it is also about improving good old ideas and learning from new experience and teaching. This is the time of year in the church where new ministers are given authority by the bishop to take leading roles in the mission of the church. They are ordained. And usually ordained ministers do not go to their home town or village. Like Jesus' friends, they go to unfamiliar places where they are not known. There they will bring different perspectives, new wisdom, fresh ideas to open the hearts and minds of the people so they can hear anew the wonderful news of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen. They will bring enthusiasm, passion and love of God and of people, all of which, I pray, will reinvigorate those who already know and love the Lord Jesus, and will open the minds and hearts of those who do not yet have faith, so that they too may come to share in God's healing, peace and love.



Requests for Prayers

We pray for all those who are sick everywhere and for those who have asked for our prayers and for their carers: Roy and Margaret Putnam, Edward Bunn, Brian Bolam, Wendy Dufty, Yvonne Seward, Andy Caddell, Gayle Richards, Laurence Alexander and Jill Chapman.

We continue to pray for: Percy and Sharon Blizzard, Jackie Pickford, Clive Hunt.

We pray for those who are in residential care: Sheila Bigland-Gibbons, Barbara Milton, Rita Sheppy and David Wilkinson.

We pray for those who have died everywhere: For Pat Farey and Jane Rogers and their families. And also for those whose anniversary of death falls at this time.

Church Services

The church services this week will be at:

10.30am St Mary's, Elmley Castle - Canon Roger Spiller

10.30am Holy Trinity, Eckington – Bishop Michael Hooper



The Rota for July 2021

Date	Church	Time	Minister
11 th July	St John the Baptist, Beckford	10.30am	Reverend Allison Davies
	St Giles, Bredon	10.30am	Reverend Catherine Lack
18 th July	St James, Defford	10.30am	Reverend Allison Davies
	St Michael's Bricklehampton	10.30am	Canon Roger Spiller
25 th July	Chapel of Ease, Bredon's Norton	9.00am	Reverend Catherine Lack
	St Faith's, Overbury Family Service including the baptism of James Prior	10.30am	Reverend Allison Davies
	Licensing of Reverend Katryn, St Mary's, Elmley Castle	4.00pm	Bishop Martin Gorick



News from the Diocese

Prayers and diocesan news can be found at www.cofe-worcester.org.uk

Wheels for the World provides life-changing mobility along with the hope of the Gospel to people impacted by disability around the world.

Colin Reeves, who used to live in Pershore but has recently moved to Eckington, used to chair Wheels for the World and it was also a previous Pershore Lenten Project.



Last week the BBC filmed wheelchair refurbishment at the WFW depot and are due to feature it in their Songs of Praise programme on 18th July 2021. A date for your diaries!



Reverend Allison Davies

Vicar of Eckington, Defford with Besford and Associate Priest for the churches of the Bredon Hill Group