



Connection

Sunday 10th October 2021
Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity



Collect

O God, forasmuch as without you
we are not able to please you;
mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit
may in all things direct and rule our hearts;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Hebrews 4: 12-end

The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And before him no creature is hidden, but all are naked and laid bare to the eyes of the one to whom we must render an account. Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Mark 10: 17-31

As Jesus was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, 'Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: "You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honour your father and mother."' He said to Jesus, 'Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth.' Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, 'You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.' When he heard this, he was shocked and

went away grieving, for he had many possessions. Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, 'How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!' And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, 'Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.' They were greatly astounded and said to one another, 'Then who can be saved?' Jesus looked at them and said, 'For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.' Peter began to say to him, 'Look, we have left everything and followed you.' Jesus said, 'Truly I tell you there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age – houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields – but with persecutions – and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.'

Post Communion Prayer

Holy and blessed God,
you have fed us with the body and blood of your Son
and filled us with your Holy Spirit:
may we honour you,
not only with our lips
but in lives dedicated to the service
of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Reflection

The sermon this week is from Jonathan Kimber, diocesan Director of Ministry and Discipleship.



You can listen to the podcast at www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/your-faith/prayer-worship/sermon-podcasts

Cultures vary with respect to telling it straight. Should you be blunt in your speech, normally or never? In some cultures, perhaps Italy and part of America, the done thing is always to say it as you see it. In at least some parts of England, that would be dreadfully impolite. One must save face for the other person, avoid embarrassing them or showing them up. Of course, that can go hand-in-hand with gossiping about them behind their back. Different pockets within the diocese of Worcester will have their own conventions. Different families have their own subculture. I wonder how direct you normally are speaking to others? I wonder how you prefer others to speak to you?

The Bible includes examples of very direct speech, and also of very effective indirect speech. For an example of the latter, take the unenviable task given to the prophet Nathan: point out to the King that his adultery and murder weren't pleasing to God. Nathan did so by telling a story, a parable, about a rich man who stole the treasured lamb of a poor man. Once David's righteous indignation was aroused, Nathan revealed his strategy: you are that man – you stole the beloved wife of the poor man (and then had him killed).

The poet Emily Dickinson counsels similarly:

Tell all the truth but tell it slant, she says. Why is that?

The Truth must dazzle gradually

Or every man be blind

In his parables, Jesus often told it slant, coming in sideways, leaving people stories and paradoxes to puzzle over and ponder. The truth would be revealed to those who were keen to discover it.

In today's encounter with the rich young man, however, there is nothing slant about Jesus' speaking. He tells it straight. He is unambiguous and direct.

His message to the rich young is this:

'You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.'

It's certainly not very English, is it - being so direct, and talking about money, both in the same sentence.

So why did Jesus do it? Why did Jesus voice such an extreme prescription? What was going on?

Well, we're told precisely why Jesus said what he said. When the man ran up to him and knelt before him, asking for Jesus guidance, we are told that Jesus, looking at him, loved him. Jesus was motivated by love. He wanted what was best for this man. He wanted that which would enable him to flourish. He wanted him to know the abundance of God's goodness. He wanted God's purposes to be worked out in this young man's life.

It was because Jesus loved him that he spoke so directly to him.

The challenge for the young man was whether to hear and accept what Jesus said to him. His initial response was not positive. We are told that he went away grieving, because he had great wealth. It was a very challenging message to hear. However, tradition suggests that he may have come to a change of mind, and ended up as one of Jesus close followers.

As with many of us, it can take a while to process major news, or a major challenge.

The poet TS Eliot said that humankind cannot bear very much reality. The truth often hurts. However, the truth also sets us free, if we can be humble enough to accept it, to embrace it, and to adjust our lives accordingly.

As the letter to the Hebrews puts it, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing and penetrating, able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Put like that, it sounds painful. But the word of God is the instrument of life, love and liberation. It speaks to truth that sets us free. With the rich young man, it seems that his possessions, perhaps intended as a safety net, had ended up entangling him. The word of God cut through that web of entanglement, and set him free.

The question for us is this: do we want to know the truth, to see the truth, to open our eyes to reality?

If so, let's ask God to help us hear his living and active word – through Scripture, through other people, through everyday events, in and through our pondering. God, looking at us, loves us. God, looking at you, loves you. May we hear and embrace what God would say to us.

Harvest Time



Collect

Eternal God, you crown the year with your goodness
and you give us the fruits of the earth in their season:
grant that we may use them to your glory,
for the relief of those in need and for our own well-being;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Joel 2: 21-27

Do not fear, O soil; be glad and rejoice, for the LORD has done great things! Do not fear, you animals of the field, for the pastures of the wilderness are green; the tree bears its fruit, the fig tree and vine give their full yield. O children of Zion, be glad and rejoice in the LORD your God; for he has given the early rain for your vindication, he has poured down for you abundant rain, the early and the later rain, as before. The threshing-floors shall be full of grain, the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. I will repay you for the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent against you. You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame. You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I, the LORD, am your God and there is no other. And my people shall never again be put to shame.

Matt 6: 23-33

But if your eye is unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! "No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?—And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Post Communion Prayer

Lord of the harvest, with joy we have offered thanksgiving for your love in creation
and have shared in the bread and wine of the kingdom:
by your grace plant within us a reverence for all that you give us
and make us generous and wise stewards of the good things we enjoy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Requests for Prayers



God of the heavens and the earth,
You call us to share in the care of your creation
and to bring food and fruitfulness from field and farm.
Hear our prayer for all who make their living on the land
and make us grateful for the work of their hands
and for the generosity of your provision.
We ask this in the name of Christ. Amen.

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, Brian Bolam, Yvonne Seward, Laurence Alexander, Ros and Rob, Jo Gunner, David Fenton, Michael Leven and his wife Allison and daughter Sophie, Matt Oliver and his family, Andrea Randles and her husband and daughter, Frances Fairclough and her husband Robin and their children and grandchildren and also for Sky Redfern and her family.

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

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

We pray for those who have died everywhere: Pru Dowson (Elmley) and her family; John Monks (Defford) and his family; Sharon Blizzard (Eckington) and her family; Deryck Hallwood and his family. And also for those whose anniversary of death falls at this time.

If there is someone or something that you would like us to pray for, please email eckingtonvicarage@hotmail.com and we will include them on the prayer list



Church Services

9.00am Bricklehampton– Rev Katryn
9.00am Besford – Bishop Michael Hooper
10.30am Elmley Castle Harvest – Rev Katryn
10.30am Ashton-u-Hill Harvest – Rev Catherine Lack
10.30am Bredon Climate Change – Lay lead
4.00pm Overbury Harvest – Rev Katryn

Rota for October 2021

Date	Time	Place	Presiding
17 th October	9.00am	Eckington	Reverend Allison
	9.00am	Overbury	Reverend Katryn
	10.30am	Bredon	Reverend Allison
	10.30am	Great Comberton	Reverend Katryn
	4.00pm	Bricklehampton (Harvest)	Reverend Katryn
24 th October	9.00am	Elmley Castle	Reverend Katryn
	10.30am	Bredon	Reverend Alison Maddocks
	10.30am	Defford	Reverend Allison
	10.30am	Teddington	Reverend Katryn
31 st October United Service	10.30am	Eckington	TBC
	6.00pm	Eckington All Souls'	Lay lead

Midweek Communion at 10am

13th October – Overbury – Reverend Katryn Leclezio
20th October – Little Comberton – Reverend Allison Davies
27th October – Defford – Reverend Catherine Lack



Small Discussion/Interest/Bible Study Groups in the Bredon Hill Group

Anyone interested in participating in a small group discussion or forming a small group meeting in a home is invited to a meeting at 7.30pm on 18 October (Monday) at Little Comberton Village Hall.

We hope to find out what sort of groups people are interested in joining? Some may wish to join a group which meets twice a month for prayer, discussion, and mutual support. Others may wish to join groups which meet around a topic or Book of the Bible, or area of interest for four to five weeks at a time. Some may wish to do both.

Come along with your ideas, your interests and we will gather the information and see what we can offer in the Parishes around Bredon Hill.

Parish Administrator Contacts in the Bredon Hill Group

If you need to contact one of the Parish Administrators in the Group; their details are:

Eckington/Defford cum Besford

Rachel Tebbatt – every Tuesday 9.30-12.30

Email: eckingtonvicarage@hotmail.com Telephone: 01386 750203

Elmley Castle Benefice

Jane Moore – every Wednesday 9-12

Email: rectoryoffice@btinternet.com Telephone: 01386 710394

Bredon & Bredon's Norton

Chris Leighton – every Tuesday 9-12

Email: parishsecretarybbg@outlook.com Telephone: 01386 881349

Beckford Benefice

Chris Leighton – every Friday 9-12

Email: parishsecretarybbg@outlook.com Telephone: 01386 881349

Administrative Coordinator

Alison Khan – Monday to Friday 10-1

Email acbhteam@gmail.com Telephone: 07984 748059



Rev Allison Davies



Rev Katryn Leclezio