

Morning Worship for Trinity 10

Preparation

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts:
the whole earth is full of his glory.

Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength;
ascribe to the Lord the honour due to his name.

The whole earth is full of his glory.

The Lord shall give strength to his people;

the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts:

the whole earth is full of his glory.

Opening Prayer

Holy God,

faithful and unchanging:

enlarge our minds with the knowledge of your truth,

and draw us more deeply into the mystery of your love,

that we may truly worship you,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

Cast your burden upon the Lord:

And he will sustain you.

Create in us clean hearts O God:

And renew a right spirit within us.

Cast us not away from your presence:

And take not your Holy Spirit from us.

Give us the joy of your saving help:

And sustain us with your life-giving Spirit.

Blessed be the Lord day by day:

The God of our salvation who bears our burdens.

We confess our sins.

God the Father forgives us in Christ

and heals us by the Holy Spirit.

Let us therefore put away all anger and bitterness,

all slander and malice,

and confess our sins to God our redeemer.

(cf Ephesians 4.30,32)

Come, let us return to the Lord and say:

Lord our God,

in our sin we have avoided your call.

Our love for you is like a morning cloud,

like the dew that goes away early.

Have mercy on us;

deliver us from judgement;

bind up our wounds and revive us;

in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

May almighty God,

who sent his Son into the world to save sinners,

bring you his pardon and peace,

now and for ever. **Amen.**

Praise

O Lord, open our lips:

And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Let us worship the Lord:

All praise to his name.

Gloria in Excelsis

Glory to God in the highest,

and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,

almighty God and Father,

we worship you, we give you thanks,

we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,

Lord God, Lamb of God,

you take away the sin of the world:

have mercy on us;

you are seated at the right hand of the Father:

receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,

you alone are the Lord,

you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,

with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The word of God

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Thus says the LORD: Maintain justice, and do what is right, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed. And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, all who keep the sabbath, and do not profane it, and hold fast my covenant – these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. Thus says the Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, I will gather others to them besides those already gathered.

(Isaiah 56:1, 6–8)

This is the word of the Lord; **thanks be to God**

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Jesus went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. A Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.' He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' But she came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, help me.' He answered, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' She said, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.' Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.' And her daughter was healed instantly.

(Matthew 15:21–28)

This is the Gospel of the Lord; **Praise to you O Christ**

A reflection by Rev'd Stephen Burge

The encounter of the Canaanite woman and Jesus is one of the few passages in the Gospels where Jesus can, on first hearing or reading, seem a little rude and dismissive. At first he ignores her and then he seems to mock and taunt her, someone who in their pain and suffering has come to seek his help. Jesus even calls the woman a 'dog' – a common Jewish insult for Gentiles at the time. But, as with many Gospel stories, there is much more to this encounter than that, and it is an encounter which speaks to us directly about how we treat those around us. To understand what is going on in this short passage, we have to listen very carefully to what is being said and think more deeply about why it is being said.

The first important moment is what the Canaanite woman says to begin with. She finds Jesus and his disciples, and pleads, 'Have mercy on my, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' (*Matt* 15:22) The woman was clearly in great distress about the health of her daughter – but she was also very brave. We cannot underestimate how hard it must have been for her to go and seek the help of someone outside of her own community. Indeed the Canaanite woman was seeking the help of someone she would have perceived as being prejudiced against her.

The disciples' reaction is important too. They say to Jesus, 'Send her away for she keeps shouting after us.' (*Matt* 15:23). It seems that the disciples just want rid of her. But, the word that the disciples use actually means to 'send away satisfied' – so the disciples are not necessarily shunning her, but telling Jesus to cure her daughter, so that she would stop bothering them. We can hear a little of their frustration and annoyance with her persistence, and we can also see that they think the *curing* of her daughter will be the *curing* of her badgering them too.

We then come to the central conversation between Jesus and the Canaanite woman, which is the moment when everything changes. At first Jesus appears to dismiss her, saying "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel." (*Matt* 15:24). Jesus seems to be playing to *type*, being the person that the Canaanite woman thinks that he, as a Jewish teacher, would be. But regardless, she remains undaunted, and persists, asking him again to help her. He replies again, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." (*Matt* 15:26). Again, Jesus is playing to *type*, playing the person that she is expecting him to be' but, perhaps Jesus said it with something of a wry smile, because the woman, retorts, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." (*Matt* 15:27). This can almost come across as a bit of banter between Jesus and the Canaanite women – a bit of witty sparring with plays on words – but it is what happens through this that is important.

Jesus does not simply fulfil her request, which he could have done. Jesus could have done exactly as the disciples has asked: he could have cured the woman's daughter and have been rid of her persistent pleading. That in itself would have been a wondrous and merciful act, but Jesus desires more than that: the miracle should not just be a physical change, a change from illness to health, but it should bring about a change in her heart, her mind, and her soul. By talking to her and engaging with her, he brings out the deep faith that was clearly within her and changes her. We hear no more of the woman or her

daughter, but we can easily imagine the change and the impact that that encounter must have on them both. That conversation brought about real change within her, and that's what Jesus wants for all of us. This episode has much to talk to us about the way we engage with people who are different to us. People who are not Christians often have an impression about what Christians are like, and quite often the view is that Christians are judgemental and unaccepting of difference. We, like Jesus, should also show people that that is not who we are or what the central Christian message is about. It does also mean that we need to be very aware of how it is that we treat people who are outside of our community.

But Jesus' encounter with the Canaanite woman also teaches us about the need for a real change within ourselves. Jesus saw embers of faith within the Canaanite woman's heart, and through his interaction with her, he fanned it until it burned and glowed brightly. God may not answer all our prayers, but through prayer we are drawn into the love of God, and when we drawn into the love and grace of God, we are changed for ever and our faith is deepened. When our faith is deepened, we are, as the Prophet Isaiah says, brought to God's holy mountain, where God will make us joyful in the house of prayer (Isa 56:7). God's holy mountain, God's joy and God's grace are open and freely given to all. May we all, like the Canaanite woman, be changed through our encounters with God in prayer, and brought to the Holy Mountain, the Mountain of Joy and Grace. Amen.

Our faith

Let us declare our faith in God Father, Son and Holy Spirit

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,**

**the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession led by Catherine Wendeler

Lord, we thank you for being a part of our lives in every moment of our day, not just at Sunday worship. In manifesting yourself through the very bread we eat, you are with us in all the ordinariness of our lives. And through your presence in the everyday, the ordinary becomes charged with your grace. When we share the living bread at the altar, may we remember that we are also members of one another, working as your Church for the coming of your kingdom here on earth.

Lord, help us to live simply that others may simply live: **in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Lord, you have created this wonderful world and filled it with your abundant gifts. But we have exploited it for our own ends, and with little thought for future generations. Lord, help us now to work together as good stewards of this earth and its creatures that we may yet save it with good husbandry and your grace.

Lord, help us to live simply that others may simply live: **in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Lord, as the tide draws the waters close in upon the shore, make each of us an island, set apart with you, alone with you and holy to you. Leave us each alone with you as often and for as long, as may be. And then, when the waters recede with the turning of the tide, prepare us to carry your presence out into the busy world beyond, the world that rushes in on us, until once more the waters return and fold us back into you.

Lord, help us to live simply that others may simply live: **in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Lord, we remember before you all those for whom finding even daily bread to eat is a constant struggle. We pray for those who have been displaced by war, with their homes and communities destroyed and, with them their way of life. We pray for those who set out in uncharted waters in the hope of finding a better future for themselves and their families. We pray for all those who suffer.

Lord, help us to live simply that others may simply live: **in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Lord, according to your promise, grant eternal life to those who have died in the faith of Christ. As they were strengthened by the bread of life in this world, grant them everlasting presence in your heavenly kingdom.

Merciful Father **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

A prayer for the coronavirus pandemic

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

We join together with Christians throughout the world in the prayer that Jesus taught us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Conclusion

The Collect for the day

Let your merciful ears, O Lord, be open to the prayers of your humble servants; and that they may obtain their petitions make them to ask such things as shall please you; 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.

You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honour and power.

For you have created all things,
and by your will they have their being.

You are worthy, O Lamb, for you were slain,
and by your blood you ransomed us for God.

From every tribe and language and nation,
**you have made us to be a kingdom and priests
serving our God.**

To the One who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
**be blessing and honour and glory and might
for ever and ever. Amen. (Revelation 4.11;5.9b,10,11)**

We end with the words of the Grace, an ancient Christian prayer of fellowship, remembering that although we are not together in person, nothing can separate us from the love of God found in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all evermore. Amen.**

Please let us know if you want us to pray for you either individually or if you would like to be included on the Prayer Chain.

(admin@stmaryseatonbray.org.uk)

Reverend Joy Cousans; Reverend Stephen Burge

Material from New Patterns for Worship. Compilation copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2002

Times and Seasons: The Liturgical commission of the Church of England

