**Home Service Sheet 28th May 2023 (Pentecost)**

**Call To Worship                 Psalm 104:31-35**

May the glory of the Lord endure forever;  
    may the Lord rejoice in his works,  
who looks on the earth and it trembles,  
    who touches the mountains and they smoke!  
I will sing to the Lord as long as I live;  
    I will sing praise to my God while I have being.  
May my meditation be pleasing to him,  
    for I rejoice in the Lord.  
Let sinners be consumed from the earth,  
    and let the wicked be no more!  
Bless the Lord, O my soul!  
Praise the Lord!

**Opening Prayer**

Heavenly Father, on this day, many years ago, You created the Church in the holy city of Jerusalem. You did this by pouring out Your Holy Spirit to indwell and empower those to whom You granted the gift of faith. Today, we rejoice that You have allowed us, men and women, Jew and Gentile, to experience new life. Thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit, our Comforter, our Convictor, our Guide, and so much more besides, who constantly points us to Your Son to bring glory to You. Help us to continue to celebrate all that You have done now and forever. This we ask in the Name of Your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, amen.

**Hymn                                     I know not why God’s wondrous grace**by ***Daniel Webster Whittle***

<https://youtu.be/6lOHM6IfBww>

I know not why God’s wondrous grace to me He hath made known,

Nor why, unworthy, Christ in love redeemed me for His own.

***But “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able***

***To keep that which I’ve committed unto Him against that day.”***

I know not how this saving faith to me He did impart,

Nor how believing in His Word wrought peace within my heart.

I know not how the Spirit moves, convincing men of sin;

Revealing Jesus through the Word, creating faith in Him.

I know not when my Lord may come, at night or noon-day fair;

Nor if I walk the vale with Him, or meet Him in the air.

**The Lord’s Prayer**

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 that 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.

**Bible Reading                     John 16:1-15**

“I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me. But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.

“I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

**1 Corinthians 12:1-3**

Now concerningspiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.

**Reflection**

Usually on the day of Pentecost we tend to study the second chapter of the book of Acts, where Luke describes the events of that great day in Jerusalem when God poured out His Holy Spirit upon the disciples gathered together. Through the Spirit empowered preaching of Peter 3000 people were added to God’s people on that day. The birth of the Church is something to celebrate and remember as we seek to follow Jesus today, with the Holy Spirit dwelling within us. Naturally our focus tends to be on the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity. However, as we study the Scriptures we will note that the Spirit does not bring attention to Himself, but rather to the Lord Jesus. Our Bible readings today help us to see this clear teaching.

Jesus, in our first reading, from John’s Gospel, tells the disciples that “it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.” (v.7) In other words it is more helpful to the disciples, and by extension us, to have the Holy Spirit with us and within us than it is to have the Lord Jesus here in flesh. Why is this? Well perhaps part of the reason is that Jesus could only be in one place at one time when He was here bodily, whereas the Holy Spirit can be everywhere at the same time. I’m not going to claim that I fully understand how this works, because I don’t, but the Spirit’s presence and power are key to live out the Christian life as God calls us to do.

Jesus goes on to tell the disciples what the Spirit will do. We read, “he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment” (v.8). We could perhaps reword this to say that God’s Holy Spirit will enable us to understand why we need to be saved, and how we can be put right with God. As we know, salvation is found in Jesus Christ alone on account of His death for us on the cross. To speak of salvation is to speak about Jesus and to point people to faith in Him. Faith does not just mean belief in Him, that He is who He said He was, and did what the Scriptures say He did for us. It also means obedience to God, love for God and trust in God. We could summarise this by saying that we are to make Jesus Lord of our lives.

In our brief second reading, from Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, Paul writes, “Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.**”**(1 Corinthians 12:3) It is the Holy Spirit who enables us to know who Jesus is, and it is the same Spirit who enables us to submit to the authority of Jesus as Lord. To live with Jesus as Lord is to seek to please Him and obey Him in all that we do. His priorities will be our priorities. What He loves, we will love, and what He hates, we will hate too.

Returning to our first reading we also find Jesus telling His disciples about what the Holy Spirit would continue to do for them. We read that “he will guide you into all the truth” (v.13). What is the truth, and how do we know it to be true? Firstly it has to come from a reliable source, or authority, and in this instance who can have more authority than God Himself. The Spirit simply shows us what the Heavenly Father has spoken. He will help us to discern what is right, and has inspired the Scriptures so that we might learn and know the truth from them (see 2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Jesus concludes this passage by teaching the disciples about the relationship that is found between God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. They work together in unity so that Jesus is proclaimed and the Father is glorified. The Holy Spirit does not seek glory for Himself, but rather seeks to bring glory to the Father and the Son. This should tell us that any preacher who draws lots of attention to the Holy Spirit rather than the Father and the Son is not filled with the Spirit, whose very purpose is to the will of the Father and bring glory to the Son. As each of us grows in faith through the work of the Spirit within us we too should more and more be seeking to glorify Jesus through what we do, say and think. Amen!

**Prayer**

Living God, You sent Your Holy Spirit to breathe life into Your Church on the day of Pentecost.

Let us no longer be captives to fear, but messengers of Your saving Gospel message, so that many will hear and believe the good news. Strengthen and build Your Church throughout this world, empowering Your people to live out their lives faithfully and obediently as disciples. This we ask through Jesus Christ, our peace, amen.

**Benediction**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us now, this day and forevermore, amen.