

Tavistock Methodist Circuit – At Home Service – Sunday 12th September, 2021

(Prepared by Prim Skedgell)

Call to worship – Praise the Lord all nations! Extol Him, all peoples! For great is His steadfast love toward us; the Lord's faithfulness endures for ever. Then, let us praise the Lord. (based on Psalm 117)

Hymn – Be still 1. Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One is here.
Come, bow before Him now, with reverence and fear.
In Him no sin is found, we stand on holy ground.
Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One is here.

2. Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around;
He burns with holy fire, with splendour He is crowned.
How awesome is the sight, our radiant King of light!
Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around.

3. Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place,
He comes to cleanse and heal, to minister His grace.
No work too hard for Him, in faith receive from Him;
Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place.

Prayer – Father we come to You now to thank You for the wonder of Your creation – the huge mountains and the tiniest living creatures that we can't see with the naked eye, the huge oceans that cover so much of the earth, and each tiny raindrop – the millions of people throughout our world and the fact that You know each one – Father God how great You are. Thank You Father that because of Your love for us You sent Jesus, Your Son, part of Yourself, into this world, born in such a humble way, living our life with all its ups and downs. Thank You that He taught us how to live each day: then suffered and died in our place, rising on the third day, so conquering death once and for all. WOW. Thank You and praise You Father. Then you gave us Your Holy Spirit Holy to live in each one of us who have given our lives to You, where He remains and witnesses and guides us every moment of every day. Thank You Father for Your great gifts to us. We give ourselves to You for this short time and pray that You will be very real to each of us in our homes, that we may truly feel Your presence and that You will speak to each of us the word that we need to hear. We love You Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We share together – **The Lord's Prayer**

Hymn - O for a thousand tongues to sing

1. O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise
The glories of my God and King, the triumphs of His grace!

2. My gracious Master and my God, assist me to proclaim,
To spread through all the earth abroad the honours of Thy Name.

3. Jesus – the Name that charms our fears, that bids our sorrows cease;
'Tis music in the sinner's ears 'tis life, and health, and peace.

4. He breaks the power of cancelled sin, He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean, His blood availed for me.

5. He speaks; and listening to His voice, new life the dead receive;
The mournful, broken hearts rejoice; the humble poor believe.

6. Hear Him, ye deaf; His praise, ye dumb, your loosened tongues employ;
Ye blind, behold your Saviour come; and leap, ye lame, for joy.

7. See all your sins on Jesus laid: the Lamb of God was slain;
His soul was once an offering made for every soul of man.

8. In Christ, our Head, you then shall know, shall feel, your sins forgiven,
Anticipate your heaven below, and own that love is heaven.

Find your Bible and read **Mark 8 vs.27-30**
James 3 vs.1-12

Reflection – Consider the best way to watch what we say.

James doesn't mince his words as he gives challenging instruction of how to use a very small yet powerful muscle – the tongue. He has a particular warning for those who aspire to be teachers for they will be more severely judged, but he acknowledges that we all stumble at times and no one is perfect in every respect!

He uses illustrations to prove his point 1) bits in the mouth of horses to make them obey the rider and 2) rudders to steer powerful ships even in strong winds. Likewise, the tongue although small, is capable of amazingly powerful outbursts – like a small spark that sets a forest on fire (we had an incident a few months ago where there was a large moorland fire behind Mary/Peter Tavy which proved very difficult to contain and burned for many hours) – a reminder of the potentially destructive influence of the use of wrong words. He reinforces the power of the tongue by comparing our responsibility for it with trying to tame an animal, while we are able to tame all sorts of animals – no one can tame the tongue.

How can we watch our words? (James 3 vs 1-2) Self-control – What we say and don't say are both important. Proper speech is not only saying the right words at the right time, but also controlling our desire to say what we shouldn't. Gossiping, putting others down, bragging, manipulating, false teaching, exaggerating complaining, flattering and lying. Before you speak ask – 'is what I want to say true, necessary, kind?' We need to think about what we are going to say - engage brain! Even if we can't totally control it (**v8**) we can still learn enough control to reduce the damage our words can do. If we ask Him, the Holy Spirit will give us increasing power to monitor and control what we say, so if we are offended, having been criticised or something, we won't lash out as the Holy Spirit will be healing our hurt.

Get our hearts right (James 3 vs 9-12) – These verses are a great challenge to us – our contradictory speech often puzzles us. Sometimes our words please God and are right for the situation, other times they are violent and destructive. The tongue gives us a picture of our basic human nature – we are made in God's image, but we have also fallen into sin. Wonderfully, God works to change us from the inside out. The Holy Spirit purifies our hearts and gives self-control so that if we listen to Him, we will only speak words that glorify and please God. The fruit that we produce should be fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Let the Holy Spirit take control of the **whole** of our lives, including our tongues.

The passage from **Mark 8** is a reminder that we need to recognise who Jesus is, and believe in Him personally. It's not enough to just know what others say about Him, we must know, understand and accept Him personally – we move from curiosity to commitment and from admiration to adoration. We need to deliberately live our life for Jesus in action. Jesus says

in **v34-36....** - Read these verses. In verse **38** we are reminded how important the spoken word is again – Jesus’s words, and our words/attitude in our world - what we do and **say**. Words of Jesus that we may find difficult to accept – **v.36..** - Read this verse. Jesus constantly turns the world’s perspective upside down with talk of first and last, saving and losing. He gives us here a choice. We can reject Jesus now and be rejected by Him at His second coming, or we can accept Him now and be accepted by Him then. Rejecting Christ may help us escape shame for the time being, but it will guarantee an eternity of shame later. Follow the example of Jesus, forget about looking after your own interests.

If we are committed wholeheartedly to Jesus, giving to Him every moment of each day, the words that we speak will only be words of building up, showing love and care. If we are God’s people our words should demonstrate this.

I pray that each of you will know the power of God’s Holy Spirit in your life every moment of every day and that He will be Lord of your tongues. God bless you. Amen.

Hymn – Dear Lord and Father of mankind

1. Dear Lord and Father of mankind, forgive our foolish ways;
Reclothe us in our rightful mind; in purer lives Thy service find,
In deeper reverence, praise.

2. In simple trust like theirs who heard beside the Syrian sea
The gracious calling of the Lord, let us, like them, without a word
Rise up and follow Thee.

3. O sabbath rest by Galilee! O calm of hills above,
Where Jesus knelt to share with thee the silence of eternity,
Interpreted by love!

4. With that deep hush subduing all our words and works that drown
The tender whisper of Thy call, as noiseless let Thy blessing fall
As fell Thy manna down.

5. Drop Thy still dews of quietness, till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress, and let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.

6. Breathe through the heats of our desire Thy coolness and Thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire; speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still small voice of calm!

Prayers of confession and intercession – Father we think of our families, Church, work, sport, sharing meals, driving the car – during the past week – everyday situations. We think now of those spoken words that we know were judgemental, catty, unkind, suggestive, untrue – Lord we bring those occasions to You and ask Your forgiveness...(silence) Words can wound or heal. We pray that You will use our tongues to bring words of healing, love, encouragement, hope and that You will give us Your grace to apologise to those we have hurt in any way and seek their forgiveness.

Lord, we commit to You those things ahead of us this week and pray that in all of our dealings, every moment of every day, You will be Lord of our tongues, as we stand alongside those with money worries....(silences) no home....the sick....lonely....bereaved....worried....afraid....those who’ve started new schools and are vulnerable.

Lord we commit to You too those who live in areas of the world where there are so many problems – ‘natural disasters’/war/poverty’ - Afghanistan (silences) - (particularly for Christians who are living in fear for their lives)...Syria....Haiti....Nigeria and many countries in Africa....much of Asia...central and south America...Father touch our pockets to give to relieve suffering, keep us on our knees, to remember so many suffering and needy people.

Amen

Hymn – I want to walk with Jesus Christ

1. I want to walk with Jesus Christ all the days I live of this life on earth;
To give to Him complete control of body and of soul.

Chorus – Follow Him, follow Him, yield your life to Him,
He has conquered death, He is King of Kings;
Accept the joy that He brings to those who yield their lives to Him.

2. I want to learn to speak to Him, to pray to Him, confess my sin;
To open my life and let Him in, for joy will then be mine.

Chorus

3. I want to learn to speak of Him, my life must show that He lives in me:
My deeds, my thoughts, my words must speak all of His love for me.

Chorus

4. I want to learn to read His word, for this is how I know the way
To live my life as pleases Him, in holiness and joy.

Chorus

4. O Holy Spirit of the Lord, enter now into this heart of mine;
Take full control of my selfish will, and make me wholly Thine.

Chorus

Love to you all and hope we shall meet soon!!

Blessing – Let the door of our heart be always open to You, O Lord that we may mark Your entrance, embrace Your presence, hear Your voice, seek Your strength and hold fast to You for ever.

Amen.