

At Home service 13/02/22 from Local Preacher Jack Hodge

Hymn – In Christ alone

Lyrics

In Christ alone, my hope is found
He is my light, my strength, my song
This cornerstone, this solid ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm
What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My comforter, my all in all
Here in the love of Christ I stand

In Christ alone who took on flesh
Fullness of God in helpless babe
This gift of love and righteousness
Scorned by the ones He came to save
Till on that cross as Jesus died
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid
Here in the death of Christ I live

There in the ground His body lay
Light of the world by darkness slain
Then bursting forth in glorious day
Up from the grave He rose again
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me
For I am His and He is mine
Bought with the precious blood of Christ

No guilt in life, no fear in death
This is the power of Christ in me
From life's first cry to final breath
Jesus commands my destiny
No power of hell, no scheme of man
Can ever pluck me from His hand
Till He returns or calls me home
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand

Prayer

Lord Jesus, As the new day dawns, we arise with your spirit amongst us. We remember your resurrection morning and give you praise, for you are our Lord. We long to be with you this day and thank you with our voices, our hearts, and our lives.

- **Leave silence for things you are grateful for this morning**

Almighty God, our heavenly Father: We have sinned against you, through our own fault, in thought, and word, and deed, and in what we have left undone. For the sake of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ, forgive us all our offenses; and grant that we may serve you in newness of life, to the glory of your Name

- **Leave silence for the mistakes and choices we have made this week**

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 who trespass

against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

Scripture Reading: Psalm one

Sermon

So, with the New year having come and gone, I tend to set myself a new year resolution every year, that New year resolution most of the time is to read my Bible more, and if I am honest with myself, I know that I should read my Bible more, but I often find it so difficult to actually put it into practice. So, in today's scripture reading we are going to be reflecting on Psalm one and the importance of the Bible, and whether it's been affecting us recently.

In the Psalm we have just read, in verse (2) it is written "that a righteous man is someone who takes delight in the law", **the law** is mentioned throughout the Bible and scholars state that **the law** is another word for **the Torah** which if you don't know are the first 5 books of the Bible. Which were Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

And if I am honest with myself and I do not know about you, but when things are getting tough and difficult sometimes the last thing, I want to do is read the Bible. Often reading the Bible is at the bottom of my list of the things that I need to do.

But Psalm one continues to tell us that when we do delight in God's word when it becomes part of our lives, we are like a tree that is planted by the rivers of water. This gives us a great picture to show that when a tree is by a river it has a continual source of water. It will never wither away; the leaves won't fall out because it is always getting what it needs. It may be worth examining if we are planted by the rivers of water or not.



During the lockdown, a couple of years ago I went to one of my least favourite places which is the dreaded Ikea, but one of the benefits was that I was able to buy myself a bonsai tree. However, before buying the tree I didn't realise that they can be quite difficult to look after, and the correct way to look after the tree is to water a little bit each day so that the soil is always damp, which allows the bonsai tree to grow leaves and stay nice and green.

However, because life can get busy instead of watering it every day, what I did instead was I would wait a good couple of weeks and then I would realise that the leaves are not looking good and that the soil is completely dry. So, then in a panic, I would put the tree under the shower for a good couple of minutes until the soil is nicely watered, and the leaves are watered nicely too. Now whilst this isn't the worst thing to do to a plant, it isn't the healthiest.

And if I am honest sometimes this can my way of reading the Bible, that instead of it being a part of my daily life, just like my bonsai tree I will wait until I am completely spiritually dry before picking my bible up.

Psalm one tells us that the reason why we need to read the Bible and why it is important for our lives, is because in verse 3 it says that when we are by the streams of water when we are encountering God's word daily and it's a part of our lives, we start demonstrating spiritual fruit where we have a continual source of God's wisdom and God's goodness, I do not know about you, but that is something I need for my day-to-day life.

For the next ten minutes, I was wondering if we could do a bit of reflection over Psalm one. **If you could draw on this picture down below.** As you can see, I have a picture of a tree with four different aspects of the tree.

- 1) Firstly, we have the roots, could you write down or just think in your head. What am I rooted to at the minute, is it God, or is it something else, and if so, why?
- 2) Secondly, we have the soil for the tree, right now are you like the righteous man we looked at in Psalm one or is your soil a bit dry, does your soil need a bit more watering
- 3) Thirdly, the branches do you feel that you are growing in your walk with God, if not what areas can you do to encounter God more?
- 4) Finally for the leaves, what fruit from God do you think you are developing now or are there any fruits or green leaves that you would like to grow in your own spiritual life?



Hymn – Be Thou my vision

Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art
Thou my best thought, by day or by night
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light
Be Thou my wisdom, and Thou my true word
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord
Thou my great Father, and I Thy true son
Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one
Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise
Thou mine inheritance, now and always
Thou and Thou only first in my heart
High King of heaven, my treasure Thou art
High King of heaven, my victory won
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall
Still be my vision, O ruler of all
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall
Still be my vision, O ruler of all

Prayer to finish

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ amen.