

Tavistock Methodist Circuit – At Home Service – Sunday 20th February, 2022

(Prepared by Prim Skedgell)

Call to worship – O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord. For He alone is worthy, for He alone is worthy, for He alone is worthy, Christ the Lord. We'll give Him all the glory, we'll give Him all the glory, we'll give Him all the glory, Christ the Lord.

Song - Father we love You

1. Father we love You, we worship and adore You,
Glorify Your Name in all the earth,
Glorify Your Name, Glorify Your Name, Glorify Your Name in all the earth.

2. Jesus, we love You, we worship and adore You.
Glorify Your Name in all the earth,
Glorify Your Name, Glorify Your Name, Glorify Your Name in all the earth.

3. Spirit, we love You, we worship and adore You.
Glorify Your Name in all the earth,
Glorify Your Name, Glorify Your Name, Glorify Your Name in all the earth.

Prayer –

Living God, we come to worship You, praising you for the past and trusting You for the future. We come to join our will to Your will, to make your purpose our purpose, and Your love our love. We come in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

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

Hymn – God's Spirit is in my heart

1. God's Spirit is in my heart; He has called me and set me apart.
This is what I have to do - What I have to do.

Chorus – He sent me to give the good news to the poor,
Tell prisoners that they are prisoners no more,
Tell blind people that they can see, and set the down-trodden free,
And go tell everyone the news that the Kingdom of God has come
And go tell everyone the news that God's kingdom has come.

2. Just as the Father sent me, so I'm sending you out to be
My witness throughout the world - the whole of the world

Chorus

3. Don't carry a load in your pack; you don't need two shirts on your back;
A workman can earn his own keep – can earn his own keep

Chorus

4. Don't worry what you have to say; don't worry, because on that day
God's Spirit will speak in your heart – will speak in your heart.

Chorus

Please find your Bible and read – **Luke 6 vs.27-38**

Reflection –



This passage that we share comes after the Beatitudes as recorded in Luke's gospel and the title in my Bible is – Jesus teaches about loving enemies. Those who actually heard this teaching of Jesus were God's people, under Roman occupation of their land. The Romans oppressed God's people, so this first sentence would probably have turned many away from Christ, because there is no way they would love the Romans. Jesus wasn't talking about affection here, he was talking about an act of will. You can't 'fall into' this kind of love, it takes conscious effort. Loving our enemies means acting in their best interests.

Jesus gives His hearers good advice as to how to put this in hand – practical outworking of love. He goes on to say. Do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who ill-treat you. Jesus says, we should pray for them, and think of ways to help them. So hard for us to do, we read what it says here, but can we do it? Do we think that our personal experiences are different and this doesn't apply to us? How often do we pray for those who we feel have wronged us in some way? Turn the other cheek – give away your clothes if someone is in need – give to those who ask and if anyone takes what belongs to us, don't demand it back – If someone steals from you – what do you do? Do to others as you would have them do to you.

Jesus loved the whole world, even though the world was in rebellion against God. When He was on the cross, He prayed for those who crucified Him – Father forgive them. In the face of awful suffering and wrongful punishment, He prayed. Jesus asks us to follow His example by loving our enemies. Grant your enemies the same respect and rights as you desire for yourself.

I came across this a couple of weeks ago in a little book of daily readings that I use – 'In the model prayer which Christ gave to His disciples He linked together the divine and the human forgiveness. While we pray to God to forgive our countless and enormous sins, we are taught to extend to others who harm us in little ways the same forgiveness which we ask for ourselves. Let us keep no bitterness in our hearts for a moment. Let us put away all grudges and all ill-feelings. Let us remember the good things others do to us and forget the evil things. Then we can pray sincerely, 'Forgive us as we forgive'. If we cannot do this, I do not know how we are going to pray at all for forgiveness'. Sometimes we repeat the Lord's Prayer 'parrot-fashion' and don't think of the significance of those words. We ask the Lord to forgive us in the same way as we forgive others.....

We can't love people passively – love requires action. We need to take the initiative to meet specific needs. This is easy to do with people who love us, people whom we trust; but love means doing this even to those who dislike us or plan to hurt us.

In the last couple of verses in this passage we are reminded that a forgiving spirit demonstrates that a person has received God's forgiveness. Here Jesus gives us a picture of measuring grain in a basket to ensure the full amount. If we are critical rather than compassionate, we will also receive criticism.

If we treat others generously, graciously, and compassionately, however, these qualities will come back to us in full measure. We are to love others, not judge them.

Some of this passage from The Message (NT in contemporary language) – Here is a simple rule of thumb for behaviour; ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for them! If you only love the lovable, do you expect a pat on the back? Run-of-the-mill sinners do that. If you only help those who help you, do you expect a medal? Garden-variety sinners do that. If you only give for what you hope to get out of it, do you think that's charity? The stingiest of pawnbrokers does that. I tell you, love your enemies. Help and give without expecting a return. You'll never – I promise – regret it. Live out this God-created identity the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously, even when we're at our worst. Our Father is kind – You be kind.

May God help each of us to live each day with His love and forgiveness in our hearts, shared with our neighbours. Amen.

Hymn – Make me a channel of Your peace

1. Make me a channel of Your peace,
Where there is hatred, let me bring Your love;
Where there is injury, Your pardon, Lord;
And where there's doubt, true faith in You.

Chorus – O Master, grant that I may never seek
So much to be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved, as to love with all my soul.

2. Make me a channel of Your peace,
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;
Where there is darkness, only light;
And where there's sadness, ever joy.

Chorus –

3. Make me a channel of Your peace,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
In giving to all men that we receive,
And in dying that we're born to eternal life.

Prayers of intercession -



Heavenly Father, thank you that by faith in Christ, I have a new nature. I pray that I may live and grow more like the Lord Jesus in the choices I make. Father I know that I can never love those that hate and despise me in my own strength, but I pray that by Your grace You will help me to make the right choices, so that my will is aligned to Your perfect will, so that Your love flows through me to others. We pray now for those we find it difficult to love....

My love is sometimes hard and cold, I pray that I may die to self and live for Jesus Christ, so that His supernatural love may pour through me to others to His praise and glory. Give me the grace to love my enemies as Christ loved those who nailed Him to the cross – help me to say with Him – Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing. Help me to reflect the love and compassion that Christ had for me while I was a sinner and give me the

grace to love others with a Christlike love that comes from You alone. We pray now for others that we find it difficult to forgive for past hurts..... .

We pray Father that Your love in us for others may spur us to action, take our hands, our feet, our hearts and our purses Lord, use them to serve others – our neighbours..... those who need to use the foodbanks..... those who have lost loved ones and find life very difficult.... those who are unwell.... those who are lonely.... We pray too for those who are in need in various parts of the world, thinking of Afghanistan, and the many Afghans who are refugees in various other countries.... Those who suffer from civil war in Syria, Yemen, Libya, Myanmar, Mali, Columbia which is also drug related, Somalia and ethnic problems in Somalia – the list is endless Lord.....The many areas of the world where there is persecution of our Christian brothers and sisters, again the list is endless – we lift to you those in prison for their faith..... the families of those who are in prison, often not knowing whether their loved ones are alive or dead – for many years.... Oh, Dear Lord, keep us on our knees to pray without ceasing, for the many people throughout our world whose lives are full of fear and immense hardship - strengthen us Lord to serve You where You have placed us and share Your love Lord in everything we do.

Thank you Lord that You hear us. Amen.

Hymn – Brother, sister let me serve you

1. Brother, sister, let me serve you, let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too.
2. We are pilgrims on a journey, and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other walk the mile and bear the load.
3. I will hold the Christ-light for you in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.
4. It will weep when you are weeping; when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow till we've seen this journey through.
5. When we sing to God in heaven we shall find such harmony.
born of all we've known together of Christ's love and agony.
6. Brother, sister, let me serve you, let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too.

Blessing – The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face towards you and give you peace. Amen.