



Martin Bird's Prayers for Monday 12th – Sunday 18th April

Monday

Reading – John Chapter 3, verses 1 to 8

Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.” Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.” “How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked.

“Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!” Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

Lord Jesus, we come to you today, and we ask for your Spirit to come upon us. We are born again, born again in you and through you. May your Spirit truly come upon us just as you said to Nicodemus, so we can be reborn of water and the Spirit. Thank you Lord Jesus, that we can come to you, and ask this, knowing it will be done, because you are our Risen Saviour. Thank you that we are truly born again – thank you our true Messiah

Amen

Tuesday

Reading – John Chapter 3, verses 7 to 15

You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” “How can this be?” Nicodemus asked. “You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven - the Son of Man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.”

Lord Jesus, Son of Man, we know that you have been lifted up and we know that because of that, we can claim eternal life with you and your Father God for our own. May our belief in you remain strong throughout our lives, our faith in you be unswerving, and may we come to you, safe in the knowledge that our eternal life is assured. In your name we pray,

Amen

Wednesday

Reading – John Chapter 3, verses 16 to 21

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

Lord God, as Easter has been and gone, we read John 3, verse 16, knowing that Jesus is your Son and, not only did He come to earth, but that he was crucified – dying a horrible death to save us from our sins. He was then risen again to show the world that what he said is true – he is your one and only Son. Thank you Lord God for sending Jesus to earth to save us and thank you that you love us so much you want us to be saved. May your whole world come to know that wonderful truth for themselves – that you sent Jesus because you love everyone on earth so much that leaving us unsaved was not an option. We are all saved – let us all now live as saved people, free from sin, and bring your message of salvation to all that we can.

Amen

Thursday

Reading – Colossians Chapter 2, verse 16 to Chapter 3, verse 11

Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind. They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow. Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”? These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence. Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

Lord Jesus Christ, thank you that we died with you and we are risen with you. Let us show that in our lives by setting our hearts and minds on things above and not on earthly things. Help us to put to death in our lives all those things that belong to our earthly nature and rid ourselves of all the evil things that separate us from you. Our lives are hidden with Christ in God. May we remember that when you appear we will appear with you in glory. Help us to live our lives determined to tell as many people as we can this good news, rather than keeping it to ourselves, so more and more people may come to you. And help us to remember that living our lives for and with you, we also should know that all people are the same because they are all your children. Help us to treat all people the same – with love and joy.

Amen

Friday

Reading – John Chapter 6, verses 1 to 15

Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the signs he had performed by healing the sick. Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. The Jewish Passover Festival was near. When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "It would take more than half a year's wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!" Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.

Lord Jesus, when you fed the 5,000 people saw you as a prophet who is come into the world. May we, when we look around us, see you, the Son of God, at work in everything, whether that is in the blossom on the trees, the flowers in our gardens, the birds that visit us, the weather that is so changeable or simply just the fact that we are alive. The people there saw 5,000 people fed – we see the world that was created by you, through your Father God, and we know that you are the Son of God. May the whole world come to see that too.

Amen

Saturday

Reading – John Chapter 21, verses 15 to 19

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

Lord Jesus, when we see you reinstate Peter in this reading, it gives us great hope. We know that Peter denied knowing you three times, and we know that we, in our lives, are always in danger of denying you too, and that sometimes we give in to temptation and do just that. Lord, help us to keep you in our hearts and minds so that, when the opportunity comes to deny you, we would turn our backs on it and come back to you. But also help us, when we do slip up in our lives, just as Peter did, to come back to you, truly repent, and go out and show the world just how much we love you. We love you so much, Lord Jesus – so may our lives be a reflection of that love.

Amen

Sunday

Reading – 1 John Chapter 3, verses 1 to 7

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure. Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him. Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

Father God, you have shown us such love. You have lavished such love on us that we don't deserve. Because of that love we can call ourselves children of God, because that is what we are. And we know that we have such hope that when your Son appears, we shall be like Him, for we will see him as he is. May we be purified by you in our lives, through your Son Jesus Christ and turn away from sin. And may you help us not to be led astray but to always do what is righteous. In your name we pray, Amen