

## Traditional Home service Sunday 18th April

### OPENING PRAYER

Almighty Father, who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples with the sight of the risen Lord:

give us such knowledge of his presence with us, that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life and serve you continually in righteousness and truth; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

### PRAYER OF PENITENCE

Let us admit to God the sin which always confronts us.

**Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and repent. Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin. Renew a right spirit within us and restore us to the joy of your salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.** *cf Psalm 51*

### PRAISE

Let everything be said and done in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through Jesus Christ. Sing psalms, hymns and sacred songs:

Let us sing to God with thankful hearts. Open our lips, Lord:  
**and we shall praise your name.**

**HYMN 1** (*Amazing Grace!*)

**READINGS** - Acts 3.12-19  
1 John 3.1-7  
Luke 24.36b-48

### TALK

### CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Spend some time praying for our nation, our community and our families.*

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

**HYMN 2** (*Thine be the glory*)

### CONCLUSION

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.  
Amen.

## HYMNS TO USE

1 Amazing grace, how sweet the sound  
that saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
was blind, but now I see.

2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
and grace my fears relieved;  
how precious did that grace appear  
the hour I first believed!

3 Through many dangers, toils and snares  
I have already come:  
'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,  
and grace will lead me home.

4 The Lord has promised good to me,  
his word my hope secures;  
he will my shield and portion be  
as long as life endures.

5 Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,  
and mortal life shall cease:  
I shall possess, within the veil,  
a life of joy and peace.

6 The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,  
the sun forbear to shine;  
but God, who called me here below,  
will be forever mine.

*Thine be the glory  
Risen conquering Son  
Endless is the victory  
Thou o'er death hast won*

Angels in bright raiment  
Rolled the stone away  
Kept the folded grave clothes  
Where Thy body lay

Lo! Jesus meets us  
Risen from the tomb  
Lovingly, He greets us  
Scatters fear and gloom  
Let the church with gladness  
Hymns of triumph sing  
For her Lord now liveth  
Death hath lost its sting

No more we doubt Thee  
Glorious Prince of life  
Life is naught without Thee  
Aid us in our strife  
Make us more than conquerors  
Through Thy deathless love  
Bring us safe through Jordan  
To Thy home above

Sermon Notes - Adrian Morton  
Acts 3:12-19  
Luke 24:36b-48

Well we are still in the season of Easter of course.

Our readings reflect that this morning.

I want to pick up on part of Peter's sermon, if you like, to the people.

It's a 2000-year-old message which is still as relevant today as it was then.

Because it's a message that will transform lives.

And the part I want to concentrate on is v19, Peter says:

*"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord."*

Peter & John had just healed a crippled man at the temple gate called Beautiful.

People round about were astonished by that and came running to Peter & John.

And he says to the people, look what has just happened is a consequence of Easter.

The miraculous, healing, God's kingdom breaking in is a natural consequence of Jesus rising from the dead.

And He says, 'This shouldn't surprise you!'

And actually it shouldn't surprise us as a church, today.

The miraculous, healing is a consequence of Jesus rising from the dead.

There is power in His name.

So Peter then tells them what has happened to Jesus, and then says v19:

*"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord."*

Whilst the miraculous and healing are a consequence of Easter.

So is this message.

The implications of the Easter events are that God is calling all people now to repentance.

It's the same in our Luke reading...

Jesus appears to his disciples, opens the Scripture to them about himself, and tells them:

*"Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations."*

As Easter people, the church, one of its main tasks is to proclaim repentance and forgiveness of sins.

Because that brings transformation.

Now, we've talked about repentance many times.

As its core, it means to 'change your thinking'.

To turn away from sin and to turn to God.

To become a Christian involves repentance.

As we turn from our old way of life, turn from the idols that we used to live for etc.. those things that filled out desires, our purpose... whether that was money, possessions, or fame... or whatever...

And then we change our thinking, and turn to God to live a life of faith and obedience.

To live a life whereby we allow God to fulfil our need for deepest needs for Significance, security & acceptance.

And as we continue our relationship with God, repentance is still needed.

When the Lord reveals some aspect of our lifestyle that is sinful and therefore harmful to us and others.

Or He reveals some aspect of our attitude or thinking that isn't in line with who He is...

Then He will call us to repentance...

To change our thinking...

*"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out..."*

I don't know anyone who doesn't regret something that they have done in the past.

Or something they have said.

Or something they didn't do which they knew they should have done.

The message of Peter, and the promise of Easter is that your sins will be wiped out.

Removed.. cancelled... forgotten about.. as if we had never sinned.

Many of us have done the Bishop's Lent course on Hebrew.

Which reminded us over and over the superiority of the New Covenant we are in.

Heb 8:12 - *"For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."*

It means we do not need to carry any guilt or shame about the past...

Sometimes I think we have enough faith to believe that God forgives us.

But we still carry a residue of guilt, or shame around with us.

Some of us think we should carry these things as a kind of penance... we must deserve some kind of punishment for the wrongs we've done...

But the consequence of Easter is that we don't have to...

Any punishment was laid on Jesus on the cross.

We need to have a level of faith to believe we have no guilt, or shame to carry.

I love this quote from Bill Johnson and Kris Vallotton:

*"Religion rubs our noses in the past to keep us humble. Reviewing the sinfulness of our past in order to become humble is a perversion. It actually creates shame and shame is a poor counterfeit of humility. Shame is the fruit of humiliation that works against the truth. To maintain consciousness of our sinful past to help us become more humble is the cruelty of a religious spirit; it requires us to keep something in our minds that isn't in God's. In reality it is much more humbling to live in the liberty of unearned forgiveness. When we are forgiven the King gives us permission to live as though we had never sinned".*

*"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out..."*

It really is good news...

And let's not get confused about the consequences of our sin.

Which we may still have to live with..

So for example, suppose after an argument with my neighbour, in a fit of rage I go round and smash their windows.

Their windows are smashed...

That will need some kind of restitution.

My relationship with my neighbour will need repairing.

That might take years...

So I may have to live with the consequences of my sin..

But if I've come to the Lord in repentance for my unrighteous anger.

Or for my taking offence, for whatever was really going on for me, deep down..

And I seek His forgiveness, then my relationship with Him is completely restored.

I still have the full rights as a Son to the King.

I'm still able to boldly approach His throne... His presence.

His blessings are still open to my life...

And He chooses to forget our sin.

Some of us come to God to ask for forgiveness over things he knows nothing about..

Why, because He's forgotten our sin...

We may remember it, but He has chosen to forget...

Our sin has been wiped out. The slate is clean... It is as if we hadn't sinned...

We need the faith to believe that.

We need the faith to believe we need not carry guilt, or shame..

We need the faith to believe our conscience has been cleansed.

*“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.”*

The word for ‘refreshing’ also means ‘spiritual strength’...

Times of refreshing, our spiritual strength come from being in the presence of the Lord.

I love that... if we want to be strong spiritually, then we have to learn to abide in Him.

To spend time in His presence.

To cultivate a lifestyle of worship.

This is so countercultural.. we often think to be the most effective for the Lord we have to be busy.

We have to be achieving lots of things.

Have lots of programmes, lots of initiatives, read lots of books...

And I’m not advocating laziness...

But Spiritual strength comes from abiding in His presence.

Finding a quiet place, shutting the door, acknowledging His presence is with you.

And spending time in that place.

Opening your heart to him.

Allowing Him to get to know you...

Enjoying just being with Him, not having to achieve anything other than being with Him...

Its from those times that we will discover we are being more fruitful....

One of the downsides of being online is that you really don’t know who is watching!

Maybe you are someone who isn’t even a Christian.

Who has never gone through the process of repentance and receiving God’s forgiveness.

Just do it, life is short.... change your thinking... sign up to Alpha if you need more time!

Jesus died on a cross for you...

He was raised to life so you could live for God.

Getting to know Him and inheriting eternal life.

It really is good news!

Maybe you have been a Christian for a number of years.

Maybe you are one of those people who love to carry guilt and shame around with you.

So much of Christianity has been about rules and punishment...

You know when Peter messed up and disowned Jesus three times...

Jesus restored him quickly by asking, Do you love me... do you love me...

It isn’t about rules and punishment, its about keeping in this relationship of Love with God.

There is no need to carry guilt and shame around with us...

We sometimes forget how much God loves us.

How much he has done to ensure we live in relationship with Him.

Easter really is good news...

Amen.