

## Traditional Home service Sunday 11th July

### OPENING PRAYER

Merciful God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as pass our understanding:

pour into our hearts such love toward you that we, loving you in all things and above all things, may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; 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 return to the Lord our God and say to him:

**Father,  
we have sinned against heaven and  
against you.  
We are not worthy to be called your  
children.  
We turn to you again.  
Have mercy on us,  
bring us back to yourself  
as those who once were dead  
but now have life through Christ our  
Lord. Amen.**

### 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 (*Blessed assurance*)

READINGS - 2 Samuel 6.1-5,12b-19  
Ephesians 1.3-14  
Mark 6.14-29

### 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 (*it is well with my soul*)

### CONCLUSION

May God give to you and to all those you love his comfort and his peace, his light and his joy, in this world and the next; 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

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine;  
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,  
Born of His Spirit, washed in His  
blood.

*This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Saviour all the day long.  
This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Saviour all the day long.*

Perfect submission, perfect delight,  
Visions of rapture now burst on my  
sight;  
Angels descending, bring from above  
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

Perfect submission, all is at rest,  
I in my Saviour am happy and blest;  
Watching and waiting, looking above,  
Filled with His goodness, lost in His  
love.

When peace like a river, attendeth my  
way  
When sorrows like sea billows roll  
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me  
to say

*It is well, it is well, with my soul  
It is well  
With my soul  
It is well, it is well with my soul*

Though Satan should buffet, though  
trials should come  
Let this blest assurance control  
That Christ has regarded my helpless  
estate  
And hath shed His own blood for my  
soul

*It is well (it is well)  
With my soul (with my soul)  
It is well, it is well with my soul*

My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious  
thought!  
My sin, not in part but the whole  
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no  
more  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, o my  
soul!

Sermon Notes - Adrian Morton

Ephesians 1.3-14

“better news than England winning the Euros...!”

For the online service service I gave this talk the title of “better news than England winning the Euros...!”

Which I realise is a bit premature, as I recorded the talk last Friday.

But what I want to talk about is better news than that.

And I say that as someone who likes to watch football.

As someone who, if England win, will be celebrating with everyone else.

It's just that these kind of occasions are momentary.

There will be another football tournament.

Next week, win or lose, we'll still be facing the same challenges, stresses, and hopes in life...

And this first chapter of Ephesians gives us a message that is just better news...

I love Ephesians.. its one of my favourite letters.

Paul is reminding the believers of this church just what God has done for them.

Actually the letter is kind of in two parts.

The first is all about that - what God has done for us.

The second is then, 'in light of that, this is how our behaviour should be'.

So the letter as a whole is a good reminder that Christianity is always that way round. We first have to understand, get deeply rooted, what God has done for us.

Before we can start to understand, or change the way we then behave.

Which is why in our churches we welcome everyone.

it doesn't matter what you've done, what your back ground is, you are welcome here.

Because you need to understand firstly what God has done for you.

We need to know our position in Christ, before knowing His power at work in our lives.

Or in the words of Watchman Nee.. we need to sit before we can walk.

So Paul is reminding the believers of this church just what God has done for them....

*v4: Long before he laid down earth's foundations, he had us in mind, had settled on us as the focus of his love, to be made whole and holy by his love.*

*v5: Long, long ago he decided to adopt us into his family through Jesus Christ. (What pleasure he took in planning this!)*

God had planned this long ago. That we would be the object of His love. To be made holy and blameless (it says in another translation) before Him.

That we would be adopted into His family.

And God took pleasure in planning all this.

We are the object of His pleasure.

It wasn't, 'suppose we ought to put this plan into action...'

Some of us I think believe that God planned this like we plan some jobs around the house...

'Suppose I better clean the toilets they need doing...'

God has taken great pleasure in having us holy and blameless. ... adopted into His family.

*v7: Because of the sacrifice of the Messiah, his blood poured out on the altar of the Cross, we're a free people - free of penalties and punishments chalked up by all our misdeeds. And not just barely free, either. Abundantly free!*

In Christ, forgiveness is complete.  
Anything we owed, any punishment we deserved, has been placed on Christ.

Another translation says “in him we have redemption...”

Redemption is acting to save someone from error or evil.

Or the action of buying ones freedom in the case of slaves etc...

God has a redemptive love towards you and I.

There is no need we have that God hasn't got a solution for.

That's the kind of love He has for us.

We may have to wrestle with, learn the ways of God for his solution to work out in our lives.

But His love for us is redemptive.

Jesus always had a redemptive solution for any problem or situation he faced.

So he came across a dead child and he raised the child to life.

He came across some who had blind eyes he healed and the opened the eyes.

He came across a raging storm, he calmed the storm.

He always had a redemptive solution.

If we are in bondage, He wants to bring freedom.

If we living in despair, he wants to bring Hope.

If we are confused, he wants to bring clarity.

If we are sick, he wants to bring healing.

That's the love He has for us.

God never wants to shame us....

He always wants to work out a redemptive solution in us....

*v11 - It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for.*

I love this verse...

<Talk about the Archbishop of Canterbury's Father...

Newspaper headline: *DNA test reveals my secret father was Sir Winston Churchill's private secretary - Sir Anthony Montague Browne*

His mother had a brief relationship with this chap before marrying his father.

“There is no existential crisis, and no resentment against anyone. My identity is founded in who I am in Christ.”>

If our ultimate identity is that we are a Father, or Mother, or vicar, or archbishop, or footballer or whatever.. then our foundation in life is shaky.

Because all those things can be taken away or changed beyond recognition..

‘Who I am in Christ’ is our firmest foundation to live on...

When I gave my life to Christ, over 30 years ago now, I was all in.

If this was true, if Christ has done all that is laid out in this first chapter of Ephesians.

If Jesus is who He claimed to be...

Then I am all in.

I was not going to be half-hearted about it.

He could have my job, my career, my hopes and dreams.

I was going to live the rest of my life for Him.

I wasn't going to let my lack of knowledge or understanding stop me.

I wasn't going to ask Him to prove himself.

I wasn't going to expect everything to go well.

I was going to fully commit to living for Him.

*v11 - It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for.*

Finally, v13-14... *It's in Christ that you, once you heard the truth and believed it (this Message of your salvation), found yourselves home free - signed, sealed, and delivered by the Holy Spirit. This signet from*

*God is the first instalment on what's coming, a reminder that we'll get everything God has planned for us, a praising and glorious life.*

The imagery of the seal comes from the Greco-Roman world where a variety transactions would be in the form of a stamped imprint in wax bearing the "seal" of the owner or sender.

Primarily the seal denoted ownership and authenticity.

You knew who the owner was.  
And you knew it was authentic, the real thing.

In the NT it was the experience of the Holy Spirit that marked you out as authentic believers.

It showed that you were in Christ.

The other implication of this imagery is protection.

In the olden days, if you were cattle, you would be branded.  
Again it would mark you with the identity of the owner.

But it would also guarantee your protection.

From other herders.  
You couldn't be easily stolen or made part of another herd.

Having the mark of the HS on us, its like the father is saying to the heavenly host.

This one is under my protection.

Its the Father saying to you and I.  
"You have my protection until you receive your final inheritance."

<P>

I think the believers in Ephesus were mature believers.  
Yet they still needed to be reminded.. and so do we...

This is what God has done for you.

These are all the Spiritual blessings that have been bestowed upon you...

And it is certainly better news than even England winning the Euros...!"

Amen!