

**Welcome** to our Service, wherever you are, on this last Sunday of Trinity - Bible Sunday

God's Word says: *Blessed are they whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the LORD. Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart.*

As an **Opening Prayer** we will sing Come Holy Ghost our hearts inspire *by Charles Wesley*

1. Come, Holy Ghost, our hearts inspire, let us thine influence prove;  
source of the old prophetic fire, fountain of life and love
2. Come, Holy Ghost - for moved by thee, thy prophets wrote and spoke -  
Unlock the truth, thyself the key, unseal the sacred book.
3. Expand thy wings, celestial Dove, brood o'er our nature's night;  
On our disordered spirits move, and let there now be light.
4. God, through himself, we then shall know, if thou within us shine;  
And sound, with all thy saints below, the depths of love divine.

And now we make our **Confession**

For failing to love you with all our heart, soul, mind and strength	Lord have mercy	<b>Lord have mercy</b>
For failing to love our neighbour as we love ourselves	Christ have mercy	<b>Christ have mercy</b>
We turn to you for forgiveness and ask	Lord have mercy	<b>Lord have mercy</b>

**God' Word promises** *If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness* So.....

May Almighty God forgive us by the death of his Son and strengthen us to live his risen life in the power of his Spirit all our days **Amen**

**Readings Old Testament Isaiah 55: 1 - 11**

- 1 "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.
- 2 Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance.
- 3 Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you - the sure mercies of David.
- 6 Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near.
- 7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.
- 8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD.
- 9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.
- 10 "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
- 11 So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

The epistle comes from **2 Timothy 3 .14 -4-5**

- 14 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them,
- 15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.
- 16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,
- 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.
- 1 I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:
- 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.
- 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;
- 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.
- 5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry

**The Gospel** comes from **John 5: 36b -end**

- 36 But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish - the very works that I do - bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.
- 37 "And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form.
- 38 "But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe.
- 39 "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.
- 40 "But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.
- 46 "If you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.
- 47 "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

**Reflection**

What's your favourite food? We all enjoy eating, but, is what we eat 'good' food or 'junk food'?

Isaiah says: *Eat what is good.* But what is good food? Just look on the internet

- NHS has a site called **Eat Well ...Live well**

*Eating a healthy, balanced diet is an important part of maintaining good health, and can help you feel your best*

- Medicalnewstoday.com says: *The top fifteen healthful foods are: Nuts, pulses, and grains, fruits, vegetables, and berries, fish, meat, and eggs eaten in balance and moderation.*

However when Isaiah says *Eat what is good* he isn't just talking about food for our bodies, but food, nourishment, for our soul

What gives us life and health .... and develops us spiritually? God says through Isaiah 55:11 *it's My word ... that goes forth from My mouth*

and Paul agrees with that

When writing to young Timothy he said in 2Tim3:15 *from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.* Tim's Mum and Gran had an 'Open the Book' project (like us in school)

We Open God's Book because the Bible says: *ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God (it is "God breathed") It is profitable for doctrine, for reproof for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete (fit/strong) thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

Paul in his first letter to Timothy wrote: What holds you and the Church of God up is *THE pillar - the pillar of Truth*

Truth is not a nebulous, situational, variable thing but a clear black & white, 'hard copy' thing.... it's *the Word of God*, the eternal, unchanging 'truth' infused by the Spirit and enlivened by *prayer*

Paul (whilst encouraging Timothy to personally feed on this good food) warned him about bad food... *a time will come when people will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, having itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers who will turn their ears away from the truth ....to fables* Reinterpretation very often means removal!

Paul had already warned about this in his first letter .... *the Spirit expressly says: in latter times (and that's the time WE live in) that some will depart from the faith (they had it and lost it) How? by giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons (Satan is behind all deception, deviation, & destruction); those 'deceived' deceivers ... speak two faced lies (in hypocrisy) because their own conscience has been seared with a hot iron*

Similarly Jesus denounced the religious leaders of his day saying: *You do not have God's Word abiding in you.*

*You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; (having a Bible doesn't save) these Scriptures are they which testify of Me; and you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.*

How do we know truth from error? Error shows itself

1. when Jesus and his Work is moved from the centre of our faith; and 2. when Jesus and his Word is moved from the centre of the church's teaching.

We need Jesus in our hearts.... and the Bible in our heads

It's not just about having a bible but reading and feeding on it daily like food *Eat what is good* says Isaiah

In these days, more and more, we need God's Word to counteract the deceits and lies of Satan.

Recently I heard a Church Leader say: *You can only tell what is a lie ... when you know what is the truth.*

We will fall for deception every time when we don't know The Truth!! That's why Jesus in John 17 prayed for his followers: *Father, keep and sanctify them through The Truth - Your Word is truth*

David wrote that in Psalm 119:160 - *The entirety of Your word is truth.*

Isaiah, hearing from God, wrote: *As the rain waters the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, so shall My Word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please*

It's God's Truth (His Word) that makes for a fruitful, & fulfilling life & stops us from being deceived

In these dark, difficult and deceptive days - how we need the light of the Bible

I heard a black preacher (on emigrating to the UK) say: You Brits are wonderful: you brought us the Gospel and God's Word and now we have come to you to bring you back to it

So many in the UK are confused and ignorant about God's truth. We have our Bibles, but don't know them as we should.

The Bible Society wants to .....

1<sup>st</sup> bring the Bible to ALL Nations - especially where there's such a hunger to know what God says.

It believes what keeps people abroad going in drought, in disasters, disease, division, deprivation and despotism, in poverty as well as in prosperity ..... is God's Word That's why some of us support the *Bible a Month* project

2<sup>nd</sup> The Bible Society wants to bring people here in the UK back to the Bible through The Bible Course, Open the Book, and Bible in a Year because God's word is like food for life; it's strength and security; it's direction and light. But above all because the Bible centres on Jesus the one and only Saviour

What will transform our society, empower our churches, and save lives? ..... It's God's Word - the Bible

**Song** Seek ye first the Kingdom of God © Karen Lafferty

1. Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you

Allelu, alleluia Ref: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,

2. Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God,

Allelu, alleluia Ref: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

**Creed** We declare our faith in the words of St Paul in 1 Corinthians 15

Christ died for our sins, in accordance with the scriptures; and he was buried;

He was raised to life on the third day, in accordance with the Scriptures;

Afterwards he appeared to his followers, the apostles.

This we have received and this we believe, saying together Amen **Amen**

**Collect for Bible Sunday**

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scripture to be written for our learning, help us so to hear them, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them, that, through patience, and the comfort of your holy Word, we may embrace and for ever hold fast the hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ **Amen**

**Our Prayers** end: Lord in your mercy and the response **Hear our prayer**

We worship you as our amazing Creator God, who formed man from the dust, making him in your image, and breathing into him your Spirit of life. Thank you that in a similar way you inspired the prophets, historians and poets to write your Word, breathing into them and their words your Spirit of life. By your Word teach us to seek and follow your purposes for our lives. To be holy even as our Father in Heaven is Holy. Help those in the places of power - in Parliament and in the judiciary, in the police and armed forces - to implement what you reveal as good, right, just and true. And direct the leaders of the world to seek peace not division, and the good of others not self

Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

We worship you as our loving God and Heavenly Father. You have mercy on our frail, fallen, and fractured lives and relationships. You pardon the penitent, you bind up the broken-hearted, you direct the disobedient, you heal the hurting, and instruct the ignorant. Help all who work in the caring professions, all counsellors, & all who work in education and industry

Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

We worship you a God of unchanging truth who is our saving God. You came into our world as a babe, as a man, as a victim, an overcomer, and as transformer. You give us the Bible to direct us, your gospel to change us, and your Spirit to empower us. Help your people in the Bible Society to bring your Word to the world; and help us, both clergy and laity, to faithfully and fearlessly hold out your Word, as you are the truth that challenges and changes both society and your church. We thank you for our rector Jane, for her love of Jesus and his Word. Protect her in times of testing and temptation, and bring to us, through her and the leadership team, and the Open the Book Teams the blessing of your new life and fruit. Also in your mercy give us a new bishop of Salisbury who will be a prophetic voice to the nation. Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

And so we join our **prayers** together in the prayer Jesus taught his disciples to say:

**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 them that trespass against us**

**And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil**

**For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen**

**Song** When we walk with the Lord © *John Henry Sammis*

1. When we walk with the Lord, in the light of his Word, what a glory he sheds on the way.

While we do his good will, he abides with us still, and with all who will trust and obey.

*Ref:* Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey

2. Then in fellowship sweet we will sit at his feet, or we'll walk by his side in the way.

What he says we will do, where he sends we will go, never fear, only trust and obey

*Ref:* Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey

**Blessing**

The peace of God that passes all understanding, keep your hearts and your minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with you, your loved ones, and all those for whom you pray, this day and for evermore **Amen.**

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