

Welcome

Introduction God's Word invites us to: Draw near to God and he will draw near to you

Collect for Trinity 18

Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us your gift of faith, that forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to that which lies before, we may run in the way of your commandments, and win the crown of everlasting joy; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen

Hymn This is the day that the Lord has made *By Les Garrett from Psalm 116*

This is the day, this is the day, that the Lord has made, that the Lord has made;

We will rejoice, we will rejoice, and be glad in it; and be glad in it.

This is the day that the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it

This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made.

Reading Genesis 32: 22-32

22 And he arose that night and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons, and crossed over the ford of Jabbok.

23 He took them, sent them over the brook, and sent over what he had.

24 Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day.

25 Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him.

26 And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!"

27 So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob."

28 And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."

29 Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell me Your name, I pray." And He said, "Why is it that you ask about My name?" And He blessed him there.

30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

31 Just as he crossed over Peniel the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip.

32 Therefore to this day the children of Israel do not eat the muscle that shrank, which is on the hip socket, because He touched the socket of Jacob's hip in the muscle that shrank.

This is the Word of the Lord Thanks be to God

Reflection

Have you ever injured yourself - perhaps recently or long ago, and maybe you still carry the effects of that old injuries?

I have a scar under my moustache from when another schoolboy threw a dinky toy at me and it hit me in my mouth

Heather has an hockey injury from her school days (a broken big toe) that still hurts walking over three miles

My Grandad as a young man had a war injury and had to walk the rest of his life with the help of a caliper

I was always surprised in my first church that three of my most prayerful, godly ladies loved to watch wrestling on TV every Saturday, cheering as two grown men threw one another around, and stamped on one another, until one was carried out injured from the wrestling ring

Prayer at times can seem to be a bit like a battle; some churches talk about their 'Prayer Warriors'

Prayer can be both productive and painful

St James was called 'camel knees' because of his calloused knees after spending so much time in prayer

Heb5:7 says *in the days of His flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears praying to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear. He even sweat blood in Gethsemane Garden*

In the Old Testament Jacob, the deceiver, ran away from home after cheating his brother out of his inheritance. On his escape route he met the Lord for the first time. One night in a dream he saw God high and lifted up, seated at the top of a heavenly ladder on which angels ascended and descended.

Now, some 20yrs later, on his return to be reconciled with his brother the Lord again met him

Jacob's journeys (running away and returning home) started and ended with a meeting with God

Away from the travelling party, in a quiet place, Gen 32:24 says: *Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day, asking God to bless him*

That word 'man' isn't the normal Hebrew *Adam* (man from the dust) but *Eiyish* - a champion from glory (was this the pre-incarnate God/man Jesus?)

In Jacob's spiritual struggle for a blessing *God said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." and God replied, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob (the Cheat) but Israel (Princely Ruler); for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."*

Meeting God in prayer both changes us & changes things.

In fact *Jacob renamed the place from Jabbok (the place of emptying out) to Peniel (the face of God), saying "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."*

We can engage in Prayer in many ways:

-in the quiet of the evening, alone with God

-in the reading and repetition of Scripture (reminding us and God: 'this is what You, Lord, have said')

-Prayer can be experienced in the pain and tears of our hearts opening honestly to God. Tears are prayers!

-or in a struggle between our wants and God's will (like Jesus did, in the garden of Gethsemane)

At times prayer can be a bit like wrestling because we have to hold on to God for his blessing
 At Peniel Jacob wrestled in such a way that changed him
 v32 says *as he crossed over from Peniel 1st . the sun rose on him (it was a new day) and 2nd he limped on his hip* It was a new morning with a new memento
 God had touched him *and the socket of Jacob's hip was put out of joint from wrestled with the Lord.*
 The lessons from God's Word today is: Prayer is necessary, but can be both costly and life changing. And also when life is hard we are not give up. Hold on to God and he will hear, answer and bless us.

Hymn Father hear the prayer we offer *by Maria Willis*

1 Father hear the prayer we offer Not for ease that prayer shall be, But for strength, that we may ever Live our lives courageously.	2 Not for ever in green pastures Do we ask our way to be; But the steep and rugged pathway May we tread rejoicingly.
3 Not for ever by still waters Would we idly rest and stay; but would smite the living fountains From the rocks along the way	4 Be our strength in hours of weakness In our wand'rings be our guide; Through endeavour, failure, danger, Father, be thou at our side

Confession

For failing to love you with all our heart, soul, mind and strength

Lord have mercy **Lord have mercy**

For failing to love our neighbour as ourselves

Christ have mercy **Christ have mercy**

In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be.

Lord have mercy **Lord have mercy**

Absolution

May God the Father forgive you by the death of Jesus Christ his Son, and strengthen you to live his risen life in the power of his Spirit all your days **Amen**

Intercessions

-We pray for the World, naturally, socially and politically; a world abused, broken, and divided; and pray for those who lead the nations, and those who seek to restore its ecology, equilibrium, and relationships.

-We pray for our Nation, our new King Charles, our new Prime minister and cabinet; and for all those in positions of power in our Health Services, trade Unions, finance, education, law enforcement, and leisure. Give to leaders selfless servant hearts to seek the welfare of the least and lowest

-We pray for your Church, in many ways having lost its way, uncertain about the truth - what it is and how to tell it. Give to every leader a Biblical and Christ centred clarity of focus. Help each congregation to be welcoming and generous, and especially to those who are persecuted for following Jesus - the courage to fight the good fight of faith.

-We pray for our Community in the Bride Valley, our schools, our farmers and publicans, posties, and dustmen, and those struggling with age and loneliness. Make us aware of the needs of others, and to be good neighbours

-We pray for those who suffer, physically, mentally, and emotionally, through fear, pain, loss; and especially for families where relationships are strained. Make your presence a centre of peace and love in every home

For welcoming us in prayer to your throne of mercy and promising us grace for every need, we give you praise and join our prayers together in the prayer Jesus taught his disciples throughout the world to pray

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

Hymn What a Friend we have in Jesus *by Joseph Medicot Scriven*

1. What a Friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!

What a privilege to carry ev'rything to God in prayer

O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear

All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.

2. Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?

We should never be discouraged: take it to the Lord in prayer

Can we find a friend so faithful, who will all our sorrows bear?

Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness - take it to the Lord in prayer.

3. Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?

Precious Saviour, still our refuge, take it to the Lord in prayer.

Do thy friend despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer!

In his arms he'll take and shield you, we will find a solace there

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace

The peace of God that passes all understanding, keep your heart and mind in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, be amongst you

and remain with you all always

Amen

Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England.

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