

Telephone19Feb22

**Welcome** to our telephone service on this last Sunday before Lent

We begin with our Confession in the words of our **1<sup>st</sup> hymn**: Dear Lord and Father of mankind *by John G Wittier*

1 Dear Lord and Father of mankind, forgive our foolish ways!

Reclothe us is our rightful minds, in purer lives thy service find,

In deeper reverence praise, in deeper reverence praise

2 Drop thy still dews of quietness, till all our strivings cease;

Take from our souls the strain and stress, and let our ordered lives confess  
the beauty of thy peace, the beauty of thy peace

3 Breathe through the heats of our desire thy coolness and thy balm;

Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire; speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,

O still small voice of calm, O still small voice of calm!

### **Bible Readings**

### **Exodus 24:12-end**

12 *The LORD said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain and stay here, and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and commands I have written for their instruction."*

13 *Then Moses set out with Joshua his assistant, and Moses went up on the mountain of God.*

14 *He said to the elders, "Wait here for us until we come back to you. Aaron and Hur are with you, and anyone involved in a dispute can go to them."*

15 *When Moses went up on the mountain, the cloud covered it,*

16 *and the glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai. For six days the cloud covered the mountain, and on the seventh day the LORD called to Moses from within the cloud.*

17 *To the Israelites the glory of the LORD looked like a consuming fire on top of the mountain.*

18 *Then Moses entered the cloud as he went on up the mountain. And he stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights.*

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

### **Matthew 17:1-9**

1 *After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves.*

2 *There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.*

3 *Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.*

4 *Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah."*

5 *While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"*

6 *When the disciples heard this, they fell face down to the ground, terrified.*

7 *But Jesus came and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid."*

8 *When they looked up, they saw no-one except Jesus.*

9 *As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."*

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

### **Reflection**

Do you enjoy Mountains. Do you like looking at them? Do you like climbing them?

In our Bible readings we see two mountains (Sinai and Tabor) Two places that give us two things to think about.

- both had **clouds**

- and both had **commandments**

1<sup>st</sup> both mountains had a cloud. Why's that special? This cloud that descended on Mt Sinai is called the Shikinah

Cloud - it was a cloud of mystery and majesty, a glory cloud that spoke of God's person and God's holy presence

By means of this cloud God was visibly saying to Israel: *I am with you*

So when this Shikinah cloud descended on the Mount of Transfiguration, no wonder the disciples were afraid.

God not only demonstrated his presence by this cloud but also declared his presence to be fully seen in Jesus.

Father God told the disciples: *This is my beloved Son.* See him and you see me

Peter in our epistle gives us his own take on this event in 2Peter1:16 He says:

16 *We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but **we were eye-witnesses** of his majesty.*

17 *For he received honour and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."*

18 *We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.*

- both mountains tell us about God's presence

- and both these mountains tell us about God's path

2<sup>nd</sup> we hear on both mountains how God gave commandments

On Mt Sinai God said: *I will give you tablets of stone with the law and commands I have written for their instruction*

These are the famous '10' given by God's to his ancient people (and to us) showing us how to be God's family.

The ten commandments on Sinai give humanity basic instructions about God, his name, his day; about family, sex, society, and our selves - how we should be truthful, caring, and selfless.

And God wrote these commands *on stone* to emphasise that his words are meant to last.

God has never rescinded these '10' - they are rules for today; that's why, and where, we're in a battle!

Sadly society is constantly against Scripture! Culture conflicts with God's commands - even in the church!

So, in Matthew 17 on the mountain of Transfiguration, God gave us an extra, simple, command - *listen to him*.

God said: **Listen to my beloved Son**

Our feet are to be fixed firm on the Great 10; but our focus to be on this one sure foundation - on Jesus!

Someone popularised this idea with **WWJD** - *What Would Jesus Do?* ..... today we ask: What does Jesus 'say' When people devalue the Bible, and especially the OT, we should ask: What did Jesus say about Scripture?

In Mtt 5:18 Jesus says: *Assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law.....not one dot or comma!* God's Word is the unchanging standard of truth

We are called to listen to God's Son and listen to God's Word.

God says: **Listen to Him**

and what does he have say to everyone today?

A few Sundays ago we read in Matt 4:17 how Jesus began his ministry by saying: *"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."* "Repent and believe the gospel" Jesus said in Mk1:15 That's his bottom line

God says: **Listen to Him**

How can we repent if we don't know what God says, and don't know his commandments?

And how can we receive forgiveness for our shortcomings if we don't know why Christ came

God says: **Listen to him** And what does he say?

Matthew 17:9 records: *As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."*

God says: **Listen to Him** as we climb the mountains of life'

-Mt Sinai gives us Commands that show us our sin and shortcomings

-and the Mt of Transfiguration points us to Christ and the transformation he gives through his cross & resurrection

This is what we, and the world, need to hear - what he says. So let's make time to **Listen to Him**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Song:** which says 'open our ears and help me to listen' Open our eyes Lord *by Robert Cull*

Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus

To reach out and touch him and say that we love him.

Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen

Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus!

Prayer is listening as well as talking. So first..... a moment of silence

Let us **pray** the **Collect** for today - which is for ourselves: Almighty Father, whose Son was revealed in majesty before he suffered on the cross, give us grace to see his glory, that we may be strengthened to suffer with him and be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory. **Amen**

We pray for others

-the world with its chaos of war in Ukraine, environmental disasters in Turkey and Syria; and all forgotten places.

-the church that has met in Synod, and its after effects; for our Archbishops, bishops and clergy to hear and uphold God's Word; for the work of the Bible Society bringing God's Word to the nations; and for the church worldwide - especially for those abroad who are belittled and suffering for their faith

-our nation with strikes and financial constraints, injustice and violence, ignorance and selfishness; giving thanks for those who seek to help the needy

-our communities in the Bride Valley and for a new editor for the Bride Valley News

-the sick, sad and suffering; those needing to hear message of hope; and especially those for those facing death

**Lord's Prayer**

**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:** How firm a foundation *by Robert Keen*

1. How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent Word;

What more can he say than to you he hath said, you who unto Jesus for refuge have fled.

2 Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed; for I am thy God and will still give thee aid;

I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand, Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

3 When through the deep waters I call thee to go, the rivers of grief shall not thee overflow;

For I will be with thee in trouble to bless, and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

4 The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose I will not, I cannot desert to its foes;

That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake, I'll never, no never, no never forsake.

**Blessing** Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless in the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to God only wise, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. 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 toward you and give you peace - this day and evermore Amen

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