

## **Ripon and Lower Dales Circuit**

### **Worship at Home –**

**Sunday 4th September 2022**

#### **Call to worship**

Let us with all creation, shout in joy and praise:

God made us, loves us, saved us!

Blessed be the name of the Lord!

#### **Hymn 67**

This is the God we adore,  
Our faithful, unchangeable friend,  
Whose love is as great as His power,  
And neither knows measure nor end:

'Tis Jesus, the first and the last,  
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;  
We'll praise Him for all that is past,  
And trust Him for all that's to come.

#### **Prayers of Praise**

Heavenly Father, we come to worship You,  
To bring our thanks and praise.  
At times like this words seem inadequate,  
We only want to rest in Your presence,  
Feeling Your love around and within us,  
letting our love flow back to You.  
Thank You for all the gifts given for our  
wellbeing and enrichment,  
But, above all, for the gift of Jesus, Your Son,  
our living Lord.  
We love You because You first loved us  
And showed Your love perfectly in Jesus.  
Accept our worship, thanks and praise,  
Great Creator and Loving Parent God. **Amen.**

#### **Lord's Prayer**

#### **Psalm 1**

<sup>1</sup> Oh, the joys of those who do not  
follow the advice of the wicked,  
or stand around with sinners,  
or join in with mockers.

<sup>2</sup> But they delight in the law of the LORD,  
meditating on it day and night.

<sup>3</sup> They are like trees planted along the  
riverbank,

bearing fruit each season.

Their leaves never wither,  
and they prosper in all they do.

<sup>4</sup> But not the wicked!

They are like worthless chaff, scattered by  
the wind.

<sup>5</sup> They will be condemned at the time of  
judgment.

Sinners will have no place among the  
godly.

<sup>6</sup> For the LORD watches over the path of the  
godly,

but the path of the wicked leads to  
destruction.

#### **Talk**

I remember eleven years ago being lucky  
enough to go on a cruise up the Nile; and  
watching the fringe of trees edging the river  
as we sailed by. Beautiful green trees with  
roots going down to the fertile soil, watered  
by the river. A contrast to the desert beyond  
them.

This is how the Psalmist describes people  
who have faith in God and live it, he calls  
them Godly people.

And the first thing he says about them is that  
their lives are joyful; a living faith in God does  
not produce killjoys. It is the same with us  
who know God through His Son, Jesus and  
God's great gift of the Spirit. For one the fruits  
of the Spirit is joy.

Godly people are not plaster saints, but  
people who live in the real world, not hiding  
from it, but doing their best to walk with God  
and so live strengthened and encouraged by  
His grace.

And on our life's journey our roots are  
nourished by reading our Bibles. The more  
we know the scope of God's Word, the more  
resources we have to guide us in our daily  
decisions. And meditating on God's Word is a  
source of happiness, God keeps us fresh,  
mentally and morally. A light in our eye and a  
spring in our step.

We are not taken in by fading material  
pleasures, though God's love and grace we  
can overcome such temptation.

Not so the wicked, this means, not just criminals, but those who walk away from the will of God and His Word and so do not have strong roots. They are depending on desert sand, not good soil, and so are blown away by the storms of the world.

Faithless lives drift along without direction, leading to destruction. But we who journey through life in faith travel joyfully to an eternal Home with God.

Trees and fruits have no freedom of choice, but we do, it's God's gift to us.

So, have you chosen and will you try to live it, with God's help all the way, or do you wander aimlessly in the shifting sand of the world's desert?

There is judgement coming, do not forget it.

## **Luke 14 v25-33**

### **The Cost of Being a Disciple**

<sup>25</sup> A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them, <sup>26</sup> "If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple. <sup>27</sup> And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple.

<sup>28</sup> "But don't begin until you count the cost.

For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it? <sup>29</sup> Otherwise, you might complete only the foundation before running out of money, and then everyone would laugh at you. <sup>30</sup> They would say, 'There's the person who started that building and couldn't afford to finish it!'

<sup>31</sup> "Or what king would go to war against another king without first sitting down with his counsellors to discuss whether his army of 10,000 could defeat the 20,000 soldiers marching against him? <sup>32</sup> And if he can't, he will send a delegation to discuss terms of peace while the enemy is still far away. <sup>33</sup> So you cannot become my disciple without giving up everything you own.

## **Talk**

The Psalmist describes the Godly person's walk with God as joyful and fruitful, leading to true life with God. But he does not say that it will be easy, there is no immunity to failure or difficulty, nor guarantee of health wealth and happiness.

Jesus in this reading pulls no punches, and gives those would-be disciples following Him a stark image of what following Jesus could mean, even death on a cross.

So people who follow Jesus must be totally committed when they start out, wholehearted in faith, prepared to do as Jesus summarised the commandments:-

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, And with all your soul, and with all your strength, And with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself.'

Jesus is asking us to count the cost of following Him then put Him first in our lives; love for Jesus even before that of our family. Jesus uses the word 'hate' as in making a very strong comparison. We are not to hate our family, but our Christian journey may take us where they cannot or will not follow, and we must be prepared for that before we set off.

The possessions Jesus refers to are anything that roots us to this world and fills our arms so we have no room left to carry our cross. So if we want to be followers of Jesus, if we want to start a journey of discipleship, then be realistic about what it entails. Followers of Jesus will be expected to challenge wrongs, to work for justice and put the needs of others before themselves. God's way is difficult and costly and following this way of discipleship may lead us on a journey which might be demand much from us.

But God never asks us to suffer for the sake of suffering. He never asks us to give up something good unless He plans to replace it with something better.

Jesus is not calling us to join Him in a labour camp, but to sit down with Him at a heavenly banquet, the feast of our Risen triumphant Lord.

3.

With Jesus our guide through life we will travel deeper into the core of living a loving life; living for love of God and so living for love with others. By putting Jesus first, and living for Him, we access the love and power of His Spirit and so joyfully can truly love our neighbours, our families and ourselves.

### Hymn 707

Make me a channel of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me bring your love;  
where there is injury, your pardon, Lord;  
and where there's doubt, true faith in you:  
O Master, grant that I may never seek  
so much to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood as to understand;  
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.

2 Make me a channel of your peace.  
Where there's despair in life, let me bring  
hope;  
where there is darkness, only light;  
and where there's sadness, ever joy:  
Refrain

3 Make me a channel of your peace.  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
in giving unto all that we receive,  
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

Sebastian Temple (1928-1997)  
from the Prayer of St Francis

### Luke 14 v34-35.

<sup>34</sup> "Salt is good for seasoning. But if it loses its flavour, how do you make it salty again? <sup>35</sup> Flavourless salt is good neither for the soil nor for the manure pile. It is thrown away. Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand!"

The Psalmist described a Godly person as a flourishing tree; Jesus described such a person a salt.  
Here is something to think about

### Salt

Are we worth our salt?

Salt enhances flavour and taste. Flavourless salt is fit for nothing.

Do we add something to the life of our community?

*Time to think.*

Salt removes impurities, leaches out bitterness preserves and resists decay.

Do we make people's lives more palatable, less bitter?

*Time to think.*

Salt holds a colour dye in cloth, remains behind when snow melts.

Do we have that staying power, keeping on when others would give up?

*Time to think.*

Salt raises the freezing point, and helps ice to melt.

Do we bring the warmth of love to chilly situations and cool relationships?

*Time to think.*

Salt aids buoyancy, helping us to float in the sea.

Do we hold up those who are sinking with the weight of anxiety or despair?

*Time to think.*

Salt is nature's healer, an antiseptic, soothing sores.

Do we help the healing and recovery of people bruised and wounded in body or spirit?

*Time to think.*

What good is salt that has lost its saltiness?  
Are we worth our salt?

**In Your wisdom and mercy, You forgive us through Your Son.**

**Thanks be to You, O Lord. Amen.**

### Intercessions

Most loving God, we offer our prayers for other people.

We pray for those brought low by difficult situations and by the recession,

Particularly those who find it a struggle even to exist.

**Risen Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for those brought low by violence and aggression,  
Caught up in wars or conflict not of their own making.

**Risen Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for those brought low by illness in body or mind,  
Especially those we know, . . .

**Risen Lord, hear our prayer.**

And we pray for ourselves,  
that we may serve with no thought of glory, praise or even recognition,  
Knowing that true happiness comes from doing Your will

**Risen Lord, hear our prayer. Amen.**

From each idol that would keep us,  
Saying, 'Christian, love me more.'  
In our joys and in our sorrows,  
Days of toil and hours of ease,  
Still He calls, in cares and pleasures:  
'Christian love me more than these.'

Jesus calls us! By Your mercies,  
Saviour, may we hear Your call,  
Give our hearts to Your obedience,  
Serve and love You best of all.

**Blessing**

May God who knows you intimately and cares for you passionately, bless you and lead you into the way of everlasting life  
Amen.

Jan Goodall.

Loving God,  
there is no choice I have made, no path I have taken,  
no shape I have become that is beyond your love.

There is no part of me that you don't know.  
Bless me now as I entrust to you all that has been,  
and all that is to come.  
Guide and inspire me to be more than I thought I could ever be.  
In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

**Hymn 250**

Jesus calls us! O'er the tumult  
Of our life's wild restless sea,  
Day by day His voice is sounding,  
Saying: 'Christian, follow me.'

As of old apostles heard it  
By the Galilean lake,  
Turning from home and toil and kindred,  
Leaving all for His dear sake.

Jesus call us from the worship  
Of the vain world's golden store,