

**Bulletin for Sunday 10th October 2021**

Good Morning, Friends.

We come to worship God, who knows us and loves us. For a while we put down our burdens of this last week, and acknowledge that God is all we really need...

We pause as we prepare to worship..... and then praise God as we sing:

Hymn: Immortal, invisible, God only wise (R&S 67)

Prayer: Loving God, wise and generous beyond our understanding,  
you know us far better than we know ourselves.  
As we think about our relationship with you -  
about our priorities and commitments, hopes and fears -  
may your words challenge us to grow,  
and may your love sustain us as we journey onwards....  
We ask your blessing on everything we do,  
and everything we give, in your service,  
now and always. In Jesus' name. Amen

followed by The Lord's Prayer

Reading: Mark 10: 17-31

Reflection: Jesus was a great storyteller: over and over again we read of him holding crowds spellbound as he taught them by entertaining them with stories, parables and jokes. The story of the huge, unwieldy, camel struggling to fit through the eye of a tiny sewing needle was clearly a joke - an exaggeration to make everyone laugh. But for once it didn't have the expected effect. Instead of laughing the disciples 'were astounded'. I imagine them shifting around awkwardly and frowning. They weren't rich, like the young man, but like him they thought that eternal life could be achieved by ticking off achievements on a list of 'good behaviour'. And perhaps they felt that behaving well and keeping the commandments - not stealing or cheating, for instance - would surely be considerably easier if you were comfortably off...?!

The young man was attached to things - to money and comfort and possessions - and to the idea that behaving well and keeping the laws was enough. Things and rules got between him and Jesus - between him and eternal life. He was never going to be fully committed to following Jesus as long as his wealth had such a high priority in his thoughts. Would we have done any better? Sorting out priorities and commitments can be tricky.

Eternal life can't be bought with money or by ticking off a list of tasks. Loving God is the most important thing we can do, and so we must learn to put it first.

Hymn: Jesus calls us! O'er the tumult (R&S 355)

Prayer: Compassionate God, we bring the world to you,  
knowing that there is much that needs doing...  
We pray for those in the news this week:  
all those dreading a winter with rising fuel prices;  
families struggling to afford food and housing;  
medical staff feeling overstretched and exhausted;  
politicians leaving party conferences for the real world...  
We pray for the folk, especially in our communities,  
who care and who support those in need;  
and we pray for those we love, and worry about.  
Loving God, hear all our prayers,  
spoken and unspoken, in Jesus' name. Amen

Hymn: O Jesus, I have promised (R&S 509)

Blessing: May God, who knows us and loves us just as we are,  
continue to challenge us.....  
and may the blessing of God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
be with us and with all those we love  
now and always. Amen

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Please continue to remember that we all have a part to play in caring for each other and doing what we can to keep everyone safe from Covid, which includes letting us know if you have a positive Covid test after recently being in church. Sadly it's impossible to make our churches completely risk-free.

There will be NO 'Sunday at Six' service on Zoom tonight. Back next week.

Anne Lewitt