

4th October 2020 – Trinity 17

Collect – The 17th Sunday after Trinity

Gracious God,
you call us to fullness of life:
deliver us from unbelief
and banish our anxieties
with the liberating love of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

OLD TESTAMENT – Exodus 20.1-4, 7-9, 12-20

Then God spoke all these words:
I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.
You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.
You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.
Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy. For six days you shall labour and do all your work.
Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.
You shall not murder.
You shall not commit adultery.
You shall not steal.
You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.
You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.

When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance, and said to Moses, 'You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die.' Moses said to the people, 'Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin.'

NEW TESTAMENT - Phillipians 3.4b-14

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

HYMN FOR REFLECTION

Lord of all life and power
at whose creative word
in nature's first primeval hour
our formless being stirred,
you made the light to shine,
O shine on us, we pray,
renew with light and life divine
your church in this our day.

Lord of the fertile earth
who caused the world to be,
whose life alone can bring to birth
the fruits of land and sea,
teach us to use aright
and share the gifts you give,
to tend the earth as in your sight
that all the world may live.

Lord of the passing years
whose changeless purpose stands,

our lives and loves, our hopes and fears,
we place within your hands;
we bring you but your own,
forgiven, loved and free,
to follow Christ, and Christ alone,
through all the days to be.

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GOSPEL – Matthew 21.33-46

Jesus said: 'Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watch-tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, "They will respect my son." But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance." So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?' They said to him, 'He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.'

Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the scriptures: "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes"?'

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.'

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.