

LAY PREACHERS' BULLETIN – JULY 2025

July's lectionary notes have been provided by The Rev. Chris Wall, Deacon, St. Aldhelm Vulcan.

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EPISTLE: [Galatians 6:\(1-6\), 7-16](#)

GOSPEL: [Luke 1:1-11, 16-20](#)

Epistle: Galatians 6:(1-6), 7-16

It is possible that St Paul's letter to the Galatians was written somewhere around AD 48 during the time that he evangelized this area. In Paul's time Galatia was a Roman province, today it forms a part of Turkey.

As I read this, I consider the man who experienced a profound conversion and suffered in the name of our Lord Jesus, his unwavering faith is reflected in this letter, and this jumps out at me as I read. St Paul is reaching out to a church in crisis, a church being exposed to false teachings, and this letter gives me the impression of him just wading in and trying to get them back onto the path with his teaching, but more so reminding them of the one truth, the truth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

This short passage of scripture is loaded with wisdom that reaches us today and we can all take something from it. Indeed, we have to consider that this may apply even more relevantly today, in the light of our society of consumerism and man-made distractions.

‘Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow.

‘Do not be deceived: We fool ourselves if we think we can teach the word in any way other than the spirit forming our thoughts and words, and pretend God isn't listening. People should never teach misguided words that are an affront to God or to his creation in order to fan an ego, or lead people down the wrong path.

God is not mocked: People may not realize false teaching if they have not yet been taught the Gospel in any depth, and this makes them an easy target to lead them down the wrong path. However, St Paul's words ‘God is not mocked’ means that God does know. We can't hide anything from the divine. The world in general could do with sitting with these 3 words for a while, and indeed for us all in personal retrospection, reminding ourselves that every thought and feeling is known to God.

For you reap whatever you sow: These familiar words are to be interpreted with the eternal in mind. We live in a huge agricultural landscape here, and I, like you, associate sewing with Springtime and harvest as the late summer or fall. However, unlike the farming industry, every present moment in our life of faith is seeding time for us. The harvest will be the blessings of the eternal life that we live in. If we sow seeds when it suits us in the pursuit of the flesh, the temporary fixes of the world, the harvest will eventually be disappointment, emptiness, perhaps upset to those around us and an eternal hunger, if it is not quenched by the embrace of God's love. If we sow seeds from the spirit, seeds that draw people together into eternal lives, and we endure in Christ, the storms of life, in the knowledge that even though this course is tough, we are living the most true form of life. We will be true to God and ourselves, true to the journey, true to picking up our cross and carrying it, the harvest will be joy, salvation, and the eternal.

Try to spend this next week being alert to the false teachings of the world. Try to realize something in particular that attempts to lead you in a direction that is opposite to what you feel in your heart. It could be at work, or while driving, watching tv or at the grocery store. Pray as soon as possible, thanking God for this realization, and use it to strengthen your faith and resolve.

Gospel: Luke 10:1-11, 16-20 (Jesus Sends Out the Seventy)

Background:

To get a feel for the mission and the instructions our Lord Jesus issues to the 72, I feel there is need to read over the preceding verses within Luke's Gospel account focusing on (5:57-62). A prevailing sense of 'no looking back' and mission must be prioritized if one chooses to follow Jesus. **9:62** *"No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the Kingdom of God."* This leads us into the sending out of the 70.

10:3: "See I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves."

This sounds like a very reasonable cause for concern! We have to realize though, that the 70 had been following Jesus and bearing witness to his ministry for a while now, Jesus has prepared them. They are not going out helpless, they are going out with spirit and courage. A rare discipline of being like a lamb enables them to remain calm in the face of confrontation and adversity, to trust in the Lord. This we must show in the world today, shining our lights, looking and sensing the enemy, the world that will come after us, and keep our composure in it all, this will demonstrate the Gospel to the world and set examples people will find hard to forget.

10:4 "Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road."

In these words, Jesus is teaching the 70 to trust in the Lord, it's like a final commitment, leave it all behind and live the Gospel, they will realize that God always provides. Also, that this is not a vacation where they will visit interesting places, this is business, and we will be travelling light. In a way we can read into this passage that as people of the modern world we are in some cases weighed down by certain types of worldly possessions that may take our focus from God.

To greet no one on the road hammers home the importance of spreading the Gospel, they were not to get bogged down in secular conversations, they were to be deliberate and focused on the Gospel message. They will lay the

foundations of the early church, and stage the building blocks of the kingdom of heaven.

Think about how much time we spend on possessions that may perhaps be not that essential, and idle talk, especially complaining. Time we could spend in the word, time in precious silence and prayer, time caring for the mental and physical wellbeing of those in our lives and checking in with ourselves as well.'

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EPISTLE: [Colossians 1:1-14](#)

GOSPEL: [Luke 10:25-37](#)

Epistle: Colossians 1:1-14

This letter to the people of the city of Colossae in the Roman province of Asia was written by Paul while he was imprisoned in A.D 62. He had never met them, the church in Colossae had grown under the ministry of Epaphras, who Paul had sent out to preach the Gospel. The Christian community was again being impacted by false or incorrect teaching and outside influence. This is one of the most completely focused and centered books about our Lord Jesus Christ in the bible.

1:3 In our prayer for you we always thank God, the father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I often nudge myself as I consider in prayer or my daily ponderings how much we ask of God. Almost daily I feel inclined to just thank God for being able to breathe and look at the sky, to have the backs of people in my life, to be able to execute God's will in the small world around me. Thanksgiving should always be in our prayers even when we are at the lowest point in the valley, because we are never truly alone, we have a friend in Jesus who is always with us.

Paul continues in thanking God leading us into verse **1:5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven.**

Just through realizing our thankfulness, we are reminded, and our spirits lifted by what lies ahead for us all. Yes we should strive to be present in our daily lives, but keep in our hearts the journey ahead, and what awaits us in heaven. In a way this sets us free to live the eternal life. To value living in Christ as so much higher than worldly wealth and gain.

1: 11-12 May you be strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with

patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the saints in the light.

Paul prays for strength, and in particular endurance. It is difficult to live in life's struggles, particularly in sickness, and we should be there for each other as the body of Christ. Our troubles in life, if navigated with mindfulness of our thoughts and feelings (the spirit) and the example of Lord Jesus life, while tough can lead us to the joy of realizing that we could not have made it through by our own strength alone, through faith we were strengthened by the grace of God.

Try to spend the coming days pinpointing things we should be thankful for, things that often go by unnoticed. Your tough days in life have made you strong through your faith, even if you don't realize it. Look to endurance and patience in your daily lives.

Gospel: Luke 10:25-37 (The Good Samaritan)

A well-known lesson to us all that is only explained within the Gospel of Luke. The good Samaritan describes one of the many ways that the kingdom of heaven works here on earth. However, in the lead up to this parable we learn a lesson from a lawyer questioning Jesus about the inheritance of eternal life.

10:25-28 A lawyer asks Jesus “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” and Jesus asks the lawyer “*What is written in the law? What do you read there?*”. The lawyer answers the questions well, demonstrating knowledge of the word. The lawyer had the knowledge of the law and was seeking to confirm his righteousness but was not aware of the depth of the law. Jesus was always very kind and respectful to all those around him, demonstrating love of thy neighbour, however in this culture gentiles were looked down upon. In only a way our Lord Jesus could, he called the lawyer out on it. Jesus says “*do this, and you will live.*” I believe that Jesus was saying you have got the words and teaching correct, now go and live this.

10:29-37 This portion of the scripture is Jesus sharing the parable of the good Samaritan with the lawyer and those who were present. It reaches us today; I hope in crystal clear understanding. A message that all people can understand. Jesus' words do more than teach, his parables hit the heart, they go deep into us, and change lives immediately. In this parable we realize it is difficult to not look upon others as left or right, rich and poor, culturally different and so on. The world seems to happily put us in boxes without us asking our permission. The Samaritan didn't see a person of a different social class or culture, the Samaritan saw **a person that needed help**. This is loving thy neighbour or having each other's back despite differences.

Perhaps try and reflect upon the reading of the word in church and privately, and then asking oneself am I actually doing this according to Jesus Christ. I examine myself in many situations on a regular basis because our faith is a life of growth, and a presence in the world that often requires mindful course corrections as the world bumps into us. The saying 'what would Jesus do?' is helpful in many situations, but we should be mindful of not waiting for a chance to do as Jesus did, because we should be trying to live in Christ every minute of the day. We are the word, and more 7 people will come to the Gospel if they see this word in thought and deed in their daily lives.

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EPISTLE: [Colossians 1:15-28](#)

GOSPEL: [Luke 10:38-42](#)

Epistle: Colossians 1:15-28

As I wrote earlier in these notes the focus on our lord Jesus Christ continues here in Paul's letter to the Colossians.

2:20 Through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of the cross.

Through our baptism, through our faith and through our seeking forgiveness and repentance we move to be reconciled to God. It is through Jesus' suffering and sacrifice of his body and blood on the cross that we are able to seek this. It was God in the flesh that was crucified. This incomprehensible sacrifice achieved so much, including hope and eternal life. God welcomes everyone and deep down humanity knows the truth, people can turn their back to this gift of grace, but God does not turn his back on them.

2:25 I became its servant according to God's commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known.

Paul explains his mission, his steadfastness in his sufferings on behalf of the church which is the body of Christ. He preaches with warnings and lessons to spread the Gospel, he cares that everyone is prepared and well grounded in their faith, just like many other teachers, clergy etc have done and still do today, the Gospel must be heard, and it must be heard true. We the faithful who take partake in the Eucharist must be mindful of every opportunity provided by God to present the Gospel to others in word and deed.

Consider the location of your parish and how it would be able to encourage people to the Gospel when the world pulls in all directions for attention. Perhaps a day of peace, a day or even a couple of hours where people can

come and unplug from the stresses of life, to just sit in community and fellowship.

Gospel: Luke 10:38-42 (Martha and Mary)

This Gospel passage underlines the importance of God's word being above and beyond all the distractions and stresses of the world. Jesus is kindly invited into Martha's home, and Martha is becoming a slightly overwhelmed host. Martha is frustrated at her sister Mary who is not helping, instead she chooses to sit in the moment and listen to Jesus.

10:39 She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying.

I have a nice picture of this in my mind, Mary fully composed and not wishing to miss a single word. She has an awareness of who is speaking and feels the utmost importance of it. She sits to listen which gives the impression of Mary giving her full attention to Jesus, the world can wait. This is really important to consider in our busy modern lives, to make the world wait as we attend church or other activities dedicated to faith.

10:40 But Martha was distracted by her many tasks.

In this case I kind of feel that Martha was really trying to be a good host, as we all probably would if we had guests in our home. It seems though that Martha lets herself read into things too much and becomes uptight and stressed. The tasks Martha sets herself seem to be of more importance than listening to Jesus. I often wonder in some cases, not all, when I hear about someone missing church, our running around doing things becomes more important than a pause to hear the word in the presence of the Holy Spirit. In the modern world we are busy people, for our spiritual health and general well being we must pause, seek silence, and listen.

10:41 “Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; 10:42 “there is need of only one thing, Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.”

Mary's attentiveness to Jesus is an example of how we should be today when we have opportunity to hear the word, and when we have precious time in our own private study of the bible. We imagine ourselves sitting at Jesus' feet. Jesus seems to congratulate Mary on following her heart. Jesus says Martha's name twice which is like he is saying, please come Martha, he feels how wound up she has become and needs to realize what is more important.

Think about how attentive we are, do we sometimes struggle to push our daily tasks out of our heads when hearing or reading the word? The word is forever, many things we fret over our temporary.

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EPISTLE: [Colossians 2:6-15, \(16-19\)](#)

GOSPEL: [Luke 11:1-13](#)

Epistle: Colossians 2:6-15, (16-19)

Within these passages Paul explains that being rooted in Christ, the Colossians and indeed everyone in the faith should not have the need to turn the ear to other teachings. There is only one truth, we have all we need in Christ.

2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ.

Paul was not putting down philosophy in this passage, such as Platonism or Stoicism. Philosophy is a useful part of our learning and growth. The word philosophy was used to describe more things in the ancient world than we do today. What Paul was aiming at was the deceitful use of it, in order for it to mix with the Christian way of thinking which ultimately takes a mind away from Christ. This was occurring in Colossae and is still a danger today.

2:19 not holding fast to the head.

The teaching in Colossae has been drawn away from Christ, this is what Paul means by holding fast to the head. We witness this today in the world within many movements that do not keep Christ as their absolute and primary focus. Without our savior as the head of our body, we do not grow in the spirit, and we drift in worldly misconceptions.

Think about what you may experience in your daily life that influences or attempts to take your mind away from Christ. If you can pinpoint something, seek out and learn about the spiritual armour that will protect yourself from it. Ask for this to be included in prayer by people close to you in your family or fellowship.

Gospel: Luke 11:1-13 (The Lord's prayer)

11:1 He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of the disciples said to him, "Lord teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."

Notice that throughout the Gospels we read about Jesus in prayer. This is the Lord God praying, this example alone puts it as foundational to our faith. This connection with the Divine is how we live in our natural state, it is for want of a better way of explaining it, a prescription, and when in this routine of prayer if one were to miss it, a disconnection can be felt. Notice how the Apostles wait until after he has finished, they are not disturbing Jesus in prayer. Think about it, you walk in on someone praying, perhaps before church, you tiptoe away apologizing quietly, it is a profound bump up against a divine connection that you have sensed.

11:5-6 And he said to them, "*Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread for a friend of mine has arrived and I have nothing to set before him.'*"

When we pray the words 'give us this day our daily bread', we are asking for God to sustain us day by day. Here in this passage, we see that the only reason this man is knocking on the door at midnight is because of his friend arriving. We not only pray to God for our daily bread, but for that of other people as well, and we do this in our private and liturgical prayers.

11:7 And he answers from within, "*Do not bother me; the door has already been locked.*"

Only with persistence and constant knocking will this person get out of bed, no doubt full of complaints and give you what you need so they can get back to sleep. However, I am sure we all have that one good neighbour who will help, and we can approach their door with confidence anytime of day and know it will be answered because of kindness and love. God also wants us to come to him in need and prayer because God is pleased with it, Jesus said "*Ask and it shall be given.*" God wants his children to come to him, to keep persistently knocking on the door, God will answer our prayer in due

time when the time is right. As I said earlier in these notes, we must remember to be **thankful** every time we pray, and praise God for our salvation.