

KSAT Worship Service for Sunday –16th August 2020

THEME – ‘You have great faith!’

Gathering Prayer

We gather here, Lord, ready to focus totally on You. Help us to be brave enough, like the Canaanite woman (in today’s reading) to ask the questions we would like to ask and be open enough to hear You answer. In our worship today, speak to us, Lord. We are listening. **Amen**

As we begin our service this week, listen to the words of

MP 1180 – Open the eyes of my heart, Lord <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wutmEjdbedE>

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart
I want to see You, I want to see You

To see You high and lifted up, shining in the light of Your glory;
Pour out Your power and love, as we sing holy, holy, holy

Prayer

Gracious and loving God, help us to recognise that **all people** are precious children in Your eyes; and teach us, O God, the profound challenge of responding to the good news that ‘there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for **all** are one in Christ Jesus. **Amen**.

SingStF 17– With gladness we

worship <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oyQSVLECoG4>

With gladness we worship, rejoice as we sing, free hearts and free voices how blessed to bring;
The old, thankful story shall scale Thine abode, Thou King of all glory, most bountiful God.

Thy right would we give Thee, true homage Thy due, and honour eternal, the universe through,
With all Thy creation, earth, heaven and sea, in one acclamation we celebrate Thee.

Renewed by the Spirit, redeemed by Thy Son, Thy children revere Thee for all Thou hast done.
O Father! Returning to love and to light, Thy children are yearning to praise Thee aright.

We join with the angels, and so there is given from earth Alleluia, in answer to heaven.
Amen! Be Thou glorious, below and above, redeeming, victorious, and infinite Love!

Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Living Lord, we praise You that You are a God who loves. You have given us a marvellous world, to live in and to share with all Your people. You, O God, love everyone equally, and we thank You that we are each unique. We thank You that each one of us has so much to give to – and receive from – each other. Thank You for each new experience that You give us and, in all things, may we always look to You, our Lord and our God. **Amen**

Lord, sometimes we look as though we are listening to others, but we confess that our attention is often anywhere but where it is supposed to be.

Forgive us, Lord, for missed opportunities.

Sometimes we are too distracted by our own concerns. We care only for ourselves and listen only to those who say what we want to hear.

Forgive us, Lord, for missed opportunities.

Sometimes we don’t listen to people because we don’t like them or because they are different from us. Sometimes we have bad and unhelpful thoughts.

Forgive us, Lord, for missed opportunities.

Sometimes we don’t listen to You, Lord, because we are too busy or a bit frightened about what You might say to us.

Forgive us, Lord, for missed opportunities. Amen

For all our missed opportunities and sins of thought, word and deed, Jesus says, ‘Your sins are forgiven. Go and sin no more!’ – and Lord, we are truly thankful. **Amen**

Lord's Prayer

OT Reading– Isaiah 56 v 1, 6-8

¹ This is what the LORD says: "Maintain justice and do what is right, for My salvation is close at hand and My righteousness will soon be revealed.

⁶ And foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD, to minister to Him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be His servants, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to My covenant—⁷ these I will bring to My holy mountain and give them joy in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on My altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations."⁸ The Sovereign LORD declares— He who gathers the exiles of Israel: "I will gather still others to them besides those already gathered."

Sing MP 1072 – In Christ Alone <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16KYvflc2bE>

In Christ alone my hope is found, He is my light, my strength, my song
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace when fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My Comforter, my All in All, here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone! - who took on flesh, fullness of God in helpless babe.
This gift of love and righteousness, scorned by the ones He came to save
Till on that cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay, Light of the world by darkness slain:
Then bursting forth in glorious day up from the grave He rose again
And as He stands in victory sin's curse has lost its grip on me,
For I am His and He is mine bought with the precious blood of Christ

No guilt in life, no fear in death, this is the power of Christ in me
From life's first cry to final breath, Jesus commands my destiny
No power of hell, no scheme of man, can ever pluck me from His hand
Till He returns or calls me home here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

NT Reading – Matthew 15 v 21-28

²¹ Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. ²² A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to Him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly."²³ Jesus did not answer a word. So His disciples came to Him and urged Him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us."²⁴ He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."²⁵ The woman came and knelt before Him. "Lord, help me!" she said.²⁶ He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs."²⁷ "Yes it is, Lord," she said. "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table."²⁸ Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed at that moment.

Sing – There's a wideness in God's mercy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kamADrIPEDs&list=PLtIOPDPU7NuU4QCTBqjgQGF-wGdDmlzNx&index=57>

There's a wideness in God's mercy like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in His justice, which is more than liberty.
There is no place where earth's sorrows are more felt than up in heaven,
There is no place where earth's failings have such kindly judgement given

For the love of God is broader than the measure of our mind;
And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.
But we make His love too narrow, by false limits of our own,
And we magnify His strictness, with a zeal He will not own.

There is plentiful redemption in the blood that has been shed;
There is joy for all the members in the sorrows of the Head.
There is grace enough for thousands of new worlds as great as this;
There is room for fresh creations in that upper room of bliss.
If our love were but more simple, we should take Him at His word;
And our lives would be illumined in the joy of Christ our Lord

Prayer

Reflection – Rev Stephen Radford

Matthew 15v28 – Jesus answered, ‘Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted’.

The gospel reading this week is taken from Matthew 15 – a chapter connected with food - from rules about eating, to the condemnation of the Pharisees, to crumbs under the table, to the miraculous feeding of the 4000 and the seven basketsful of leftovers.

In the centre of this chapter, unseen is the daughter of a Canaanite woman and her encounter with Jesus! This is the only encounter and miracle of Jesus outside of Israel – symbolic of Jesus’ full purpose of salvation for the Gentiles. Jesus is taking time out with His disciples in preparation for His sacrifice on the Cross – or more specifically to prepare His disciples for His death on the Cross.

The Canaanite woman, with single-mindedness, seeks out the source of healing and hope – where the Pharisees criticize and the disciples are ‘dull’. She sees, in Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah, the only One who could save her child. Her prayers are persistent and powerful and Jesus earnestly encourages her testimony. Her faith moves from ‘Son of David’, a human miracle worker, to ‘Lord’ – proclaiming Jesus to be the Messiah. She grasps ‘the crumbs of Christ’ for they are more than enough and her persistent prayer is rewarded. The future of her daughter is transformed from death to life. *‘I sought the Lord and He answered me’ (Psalm 34v4).*

The rest of our reflection is in two parts: ‘Faith Tested’ and ‘Faith that brings the Blessing’.

Faith Tested

Chris Brannigan, an ex-soldier, is walking, barefoot, the 700 miles from Land’s End to Edinburgh – nearing the end of his journey recently in the Durham area.

What caught my eye was his banner slogan **‘How far would you go for your child?’** His daughter, Hasti, a beautiful 8-year old, has a rare genetic disorder, which is incurable. When interviewed, he said, ‘Every step now is like walking on broken glass! But as I hold the collection bucket, I imagine the handle as Hasti’s hand and this gives me the strength to go on!’



How far would you go for your child? The phrase immediately made me think of the Canaanite woman and her daughter, who had an incurable disease. How far would she go? And how far did God go in Jesus to save us?

Jesus’ confrontation with the Pharisees had led Him to comment how easy it was to eat the right things and wash, but how much harder to love the unlovely and unlovable. What matters to God is not so much how we act, but why we act! As Thomas Aquinas commented, ‘Man sees the deed, God sees the intention!’

The Canaanite woman’s faith is tested fully: she is seemingly ignored, her continual cries criticised – but she persists. The disciples tire of her wailing and want to send her away – hardly the act of compassion Jesus seeks. Do we stop and see the person, their heart, their need?

She is then rebuffed as Jesus says He was ‘sent only to the lost sheep of Israel’. Appreciating the sharp divide between Jewish Rabbi and Canaanite woman, she (normally unheard, unseen and acutely aware she may not deserve anything) takes her chance and falls on her knees at Jesus’ feet crying, Lord, Help me!’

We were dead in our trespasses and sins, deserving nothing from God – and yet Christ Jesus died for us – the godly for the ungodly; it is by grace through faith we are saved, when we cry, ‘Lord, help me!’

Faith that brings the Blessing

Ignored, marginalised – the church is often seen as irrelevant! Trapped in the swirling uncertainty of the pandemic, it seems that pubs rather than prayers are more important.

So when Jesus begins the following conversation with a rebuff, 'It's not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs' – as a Canaanite – she accepts the challenge and replies that 'even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the table!' These words, have become part of our Communion Service Liturgy – 'We are not worthy to gather up the crumbs But it is Your nature always to have mercy'.

Jesus is amazed at the faith in the woman's reply! She knows only Jesus can heal her child, if He will (*Salvation is found in no-one else –Acts 4v12*).

She makes the misery of her child her own! Her love accepts the silence, the disciples disdain and the rebuff and her love relies on hope of Christ's compassion

Are we "filled with compassion ... for all the people who live on the earth" as the song says? Do we need to be filled with Christ's passion and stirred to action? (MP 828) What heart do we have?

This woman's actions challenge our ideas of:

- Identity – who is part of Jesus' church?
- She may have been a Gentile but she is a child of God by faith!
- So who may be speaking into our church community? Do we hear them? Do we value the voice of the outsider? (See the post-service songs)
- If a doctor or nurse refused to treat a patient because of their class or family, how would we react? Do we truly share the good news with everyone – or do we decide who we will speak to and who not?
- How far will you go to save one of God's children who is lost? Will we go as far as the Canaanite woman?

William Barclay says, 'The woman brought to Christ a gallant and audacious love, a faith which grew until it worshipped at the feet of the Divine, an indomitable persistence springing from an unconquerable hope, a cheerfulness which would not be dismayed – and she found in Christ the answer to her prayer.

Jesus said, 'You have great faith. Your request has been answered'.

May our prayers be bold, our compassion encompass all, and our faith in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ be 'great' – like the Canaanite woman! **Amen**

Sing – Thumamina (Send me Jesus) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=axbo9Wqri5Y>

Thuma mina. thuma mina, thuma mina, somandla.

Send me, Jesus; send me, Jesus; send me, Jesus; send me, Lord.

Lead me, Jesus; lead me, Jesus; lead me, Jesus; lead me, Lord.

Fill me, Jesus; fill me, Jesus; fill me, Jesus; fill me, Lord.

Prayers of Intercession

Jesus sees us all in love and grace and we are going to base our prayers of intercession around a song by John Bell (Iona Community) called 'Jesus Christ is waiting'.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OS7cDdtTgXE&feature=emb_title

Jesus Christ is waiting, waiting in the streets; No one is his neighbour, all alone he eats.

Listen, Lord Jesus, I am lonely too. Make me, friend or stranger, fit to wait on you

Loving God, we pray for all who are waiting today: waiting for good news, waiting for bad news, waiting for contact from a friend or family member, waiting for life to return to something like it was a few months ago. In the Bible it says that 'those who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength'. We pray, God, that You will help us to wait on You, to listen to You, to seek You. We pray that those who are waiting will receive strength from You. We pray for

Jesus Christ is raging, raging in the streets, where injustice spirals and real hope retreats.

Listen, Lord Jesus, I am angry too. In the Kingdom's causes let me rage with you.

God of justice, we pray for all who are angry today: angry at unfairness, angry at being ignored, angry at being mistreated. We thank You, God, that You became human in Jesus and experienced a range of human emotions including anger. We know that injustice and exploitation make You angry. May it make us angry too. We pray that You would use our anger to motivate us to act for good. We pray that we will not be overcome by anger or become bitter.

*Jesus Christ is healing, healing in the streets; curing those who suffer, touching those he greets.
Listen, Lord Jesus, I have pity too. Let my care be active, healing just like you.*

God of comfort, we pray for all who are seeking healing today. We pray for those who are suffering physical pain, those who are suffering mental turmoil, those whose faith is suffering the attacks of doubt. We pray that You would bring healing and wholeness. We give thanks for all those who put their time, energy and skill into healing others

*Jesus Christ is dancing, dancing in the streets, where each sign of hatred He with love defeats.
Listen, Lord Jesus, I should triumph too. Where good conquers evil, let me dance with you.*

Victorious God, we pray for all who are celebrating today. We pray for those who have completed difficult tasks, those who have overcome obstacles, those who have people or occasions to give thanks for. Help us all to remember that good does conquer evil, that in Christ, life has conquered death. May the deep joy of this triumph give us all hope. We give thanks for

*Jesus Christ is calling, calling in the streets, "Who will join my journey? I will guide their feet."
Listen, Lord Jesus, let my fears be few. Walk one step before me; I will follow you.*

Thank you, God, that You call each of us by name. We pray for ourselves, as people who are being called by You today. Help us to follow You. Guide us, calm our fears and enable us to follow You one step at a time. **Amen.**

Sing MP 33 – And can it be <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQelGbKqiW8>

And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Saviour's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain—for me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! How can it be, that Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

('Tis mystery all: the Immortal dies: who can explore His strange design?
In vain the firstborn seraph tries to sound the depths of love divine.
'Tis mercy all! Let earth adore, let angel minds inquire no more.)

He left His Father's throne above—so free, so infinite His grace—
Emptied Himself of all but love, and bled for Adam's helpless race:
'Tis mercy all, immense and free, for, O my God, it found out me!

Long my imprisoned spirit lay, fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray—I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.

No condemnation now I dread; Jesus, and all in Him, is mine;
Alive in Him, my living Head, and clothed in righteousness divine,
Bold I approach the eternal throne, and claim the crown, through Christ my own.

Prayer

Compassionate God, grant us an openness of heart and mind to embrace all people as Your people. We pray for all who live in fear as a result of abuse, oppression, injustice and marginalisation. By the power of Your Holy Spirit, give us courage to fight against all forms of discrimination, prejudice and injustice. Enable us, we pray, to recognise the value and potential in people of every colour and nationality. May the love of Jesus emanate from us, so that others can be transformed for God's glory. **Amen**

The Grace

Additional reflection and songs .

The Pharisees find Jesus' words offensive – a stumbling block, when He says that God is more interested in what comes from our hearts and lips than what we eat and how we wash. They miss Jesus' message – the disciples too are slow to understand what Jesus is saying and who He is! But the Canaanite woman recognizes who Jesus really is as she calls Him 'Son of David' – in other words 'Messiah'.

Jesus doesn't reply and the disciples want to send her away, but Jesus sees in her heart the love He is seeking and is not put off by who she is or where she is from.

Please watch the two contrasting video clips – one of **Duffey** singing 'Open the eyes of my heart, Lord' (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NjYeUN2zWqI>) – which has an introduction to who he is before the song.

The second is of '**Stormzy**,' who is a British rap artist and a Christian – (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPuj6UISMhs>). This is '**Blinded by Your grace**' – a song about the amazing grace of God. This video has had over 21 million views!!

I'm blinded by your grace I'm blinded by your grace, by your grace
I'm blinded by your grace I'm blinded by your grace
*Lord, I've been broken. Although I'm not worthy You fixed me, I'm blinded by your grace
You came and saved me*

One time for the Lord and one time for the cause and one round of applause
One time for Fraser T Smith on the chords (wool!)
I feel we got one I stay prayed up, then I get the job done
Yeah, I'm Abigail's youth, but I'm God's son
But I'm up now, look at what God's done. Now I real talk, look at what God did
On the main stage runnin' 'round topless, I phone Flipz, then I tell him that we got this
This is God's plan, they can never stop this
Like, wait right there, could you stop my verse?
You saved this kid and I'm not your first, it's not by blood and it's not by birth
But, oh my God, what a God I serve
I said a prayer this morning I prayed I would find the way to another day,
I was so afraid 'til you came and saved You came and saved me and the rain was pouring
'Cause the sun faded away
Now I'm in a better place; no longer afraid; blinded by your grace You came and saved me
Now I'm in a better place; no longer afraid; blinded by your grace You came and saved me

Are the people stumbling blocks? Is it hard to hear the words they are saying? Is Jesus equally provocative or disturbing to our faith in Him?

You may also like to watch '**Crown**' by Stormzy
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EBwafIYUYrM>

*Searchin' every corner of my mind; lookin' for the answers I can't find
I have my reasons and life has its lessons and I tried to be grateful and count all my blessings
But heavy is the head that wears the crown*

Amen,