

## Trinity 4. 10 July 2022.

### Colossians 1:1-14

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, <sup>2</sup>To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters<sup>[a]</sup> in Christ in Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

#### Paul Thanks God for the Colossians

<sup>3</sup>In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>4</sup>for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, <sup>5</sup>because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel <sup>6</sup>that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. <sup>7</sup>This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow-servant.<sup>[b]</sup> He is a faithful minister of Christ on your<sup>[c]</sup> behalf, <sup>8</sup>and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

<sup>9</sup>For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's<sup>[d]</sup> will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup>so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. <sup>11</sup>May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully <sup>12</sup>giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled<sup>[e]</sup> you<sup>[f]</sup> to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. <sup>13</sup>He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup>in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.<sup>[g]</sup>

### Luke 10:25-37

#### The Parable of the Good Samaritan

<sup>25</sup>Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus.<sup>[i]</sup> 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?'

<sup>26</sup>He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' <sup>27</sup>He answered, 'You shall 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.' <sup>28</sup>And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.'

<sup>29</sup>But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' <sup>30</sup>Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup>Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup>So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. <sup>33</sup>But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. <sup>34</sup>He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. <sup>35</sup>The next day he took out two denarii,<sup>[k]</sup> gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend." <sup>36</sup>Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' <sup>37</sup>He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'

### Sermon. Jesus Christ, our hope, our pattern and our life!

Now we have a wonderful Gospel reading today with wonderful teaching (notice the questions in it... Jesus asked over 250 questions draws out stories and builds relationship and can help find answers), and we also have a wonderful reading from Colossians, that first reading. Indeed, we have 4 Sundays with Colossians... a relatively short wonderful letter written by St Paul to the Church in Colossae. Paul was writing to a young church about Jesus Christ and the treasures of the gospel. And there are some cracking themes including:

- I. the importance of the person of Jesus: his uniqueness, his divinity. Col 1:15. Jesus is the image of the invisible God.
- II. holiness and godly living,
- III. and addressing some of the problems of the time such as with the culture of the time, the visible and invisible realm, present vs future, the heresy of Gnosticism.

Sounds rather relevant to me!

Let's look at the importance of Jesus, the Christ. God's son, God incarnate, God with skin on!

As Christians the person of Jesus Christ is absolutely vital. He reveals to us who God is... when we hear and read about Jesus... we're hearing and reading about God! Jesus is the pattern for our humanity, our way of living. Jesus shows us the way to eternal life (lawyer's question) and is indeed the giver of life (Way, Truth and Life, Resurrection & the Life, Bread of Life). It is a usual saying for Christians to say they want to be like Jesus. Jesus shows us and enables to live and be the best we can be. Paul talks frequently about having Christ 'IN US' and being 'In Christ.' We are 'Christians,' anointed ones... little 'Christ's' (St Cyril of Jerusalem).

Nicki and I did a couple of baptism preparation sessions yesterday and an important part of that preparation was explaining who Jesus is and the Cross which isn't always easy. One helpful way of doing that is talking about minus and plus. In life a load of things separate human beings from the love and life of God. We don't function well without God. We go off on one. We end up in dark places. We don't fulfil our potential and God's purposes for our lives individually and corporately. Humanity lives with the destructive power of sin and death. That's the horizontal part of the Cross... the negative. BUT God in his great love and mercy doesn't want our lives to be negative, separate from him, without hope and purpose. In his great love God sent his Son into the world to come to where we are... butchering through all the negative stuff, including sin, evil and death itself and raising us to new life. Turning our minus to plus.

Verse 13 of Colossians 1 says, He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins

We are God's children, who have been transferred from living under the reign of sin and death and darkness... to living under the reign of Christ. Our humanity is no longer wedded to sin and death and darkness... our humanity is wedded to Christ... and his life in us. Baptism is a sign of this newness of life. New name, new clothes, new family, new identity, new purpose, new life!!

With the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Son living in us we are able to live a whole new life... and Jesus is the template, the example, the pattern, the model, the prototype for that newness of life, which we may want to call 'godly living.'

### ***1. Jesus directed his life Godwards***

He exemplified faithfulness, love, worship, obedience, trust, perseverance, endurance - Jesus gave himself to his Father in loving relationship.

"Loving the Lord your God with heart, soul, mind and strength."

We do this in our praise and worship, our prayers, our bible reading, devotional study, Holy Communion and meeting with God's people.

## **2. Jesus gave himself humanwards**

-served, healed, loved, showed compassion, exercised justice, gave, associated and socialised, taught, fed people spiritually, physically and emotionally.

“Love your neighbour as yourself.”

Through his divinity and his humanity, his two natures, he showed us how to live heaven on earth. Jesus loved God (gave himself Godwards) and he loved his neighbour (gave himself humanwards).

I wish I had a powerpoint or flipchart for today...

### **Jesus was Distinctive**

Godly  
Set apart  
not of the world  
divine

### **Jesus was Engaged / Connected**

Human  
Yet sat next to them  
in the world  
human

Jesus is the ultimate example and template for godly living, and he gives us his very life, his Spirit, to love God and love neighbour.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, God is calling you, me, us to be both the distinctive and the engaged. Some of you will have a call to get loving God with heart, soul, mind and strength, that one on one love relationship with Jesus... to get it back on track... getting into prayer again, getting into Scripture again, getting into gathering with other Christians again.

Some of you will have the call to engage... to NOT pass by people in daily life, BUT to love your neighbour addressing issues with family, work colleagues, volunteering, community engagement... allowing the gospel to enter your politics, your relationships, your finances... to share the your faith in deed and word.

As God's people, as church here... KEEP looking to Jesus (author, finisher and perfecter of faith... Hebrews 12). Christ in us, the hope of glory (Col 1:27). In HIM, we are able to touch heaven, touch the holy, be transformed. In HIM we find our model for living on earth, and the One who will empower us for that living, for engaging with society and for doing relationship, doing community well. In Him we can be the best we can be as the church gathered, and as the church scattered into our homes and communities!

**Conclusion... Words from *The Cloud of Unknowing*... anonymous 14<sup>th</sup> Century work of Christian mysticism**

*My dear friend in the Spirit, up until now you have lived a good but ordinary Christian life, not very different from your friends. But apparently God is calling you to something more. Because of the love in his heart, which he has had for you from the moment of creation, he is not going to leave you alone, not about to let you off too easily. You are beginning to experience in a special way God's everlasting love, through which you were brought out of nothingness and redeemed at the price of his blood. You can no longer be content to live at a distance from God. In his great grace he has kindled a desire in your heart to be more closely united to him. He is leading you to himself on a loving leash of longing for a more perfect life. I pray for you, and beseech you to pay very close attention to the special call which you are hearing. Thank God from your heart, so that*

*through grace you may stand firm in the special manner of life that you are deliberately undertaking, in spite of the subtle attacks of your worldly and spiritual enemies who would dissuade you from seeking the crown of life that will last forever.*

Hear the call to love the Lord and love your neighbour.

**Finally – end of the service.**

I am going to be off now for a couple of months.

<sup>3</sup>In MY prayers for you I thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>4</sup>for ... your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints.

And I will be “asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God’s[d] will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup>so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. <sup>11</sup>May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully <sup>12</sup>giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled[e] you[f] to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light.”