

Bride Valley Telephone Service: 17th July 2022

The service is prepared by Revd Ryder Rogers and is available on 01308 293062

Welcome

God promises: *Where 2 or 3 gather together in my name there am I in the midst*

Song: *As we are gathered*

As we are gathered, Jesus is here;
one with each other, Jesus is here,
Joined by the Spirit, washed in the blood;
Part of the body, the Church of God.
As we are gathered Jesus is here,
one with each other, Jesus is here

John Daniels CCLI Licence 2370586

Prayer

Heavenly Father, in our worship help us to sing your praise, confess our sins, hear your Word, and bring our prayers to you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Do you have a brother or a sister? If so, are you like one another or different? Even identical twins differ

Our 1st reading is about two sisters Martha & Mary

1st Reading: *Luke 10:38-end*

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

How would we describe Martha? Active How would we describe Mary? Attentive
Both were friends of Jesus (Jn11 shows us that) - but showed their love for Jesus in different ways

Martha was a good hostess - she *prepared* food - she was a hard worker

Mary was a good hearer - she *sat at Jesus' feet* - she was an example of worship

However, the story begins in v 38 with JESUS. *Jesus and his disciples were on their way*

Three times in the this brief account Jesus is called LORD – and that's where it all starts

2nd Reading: *from Colossians 1:15-23*

Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fulness dwell in him and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation — if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant

St. Paul says: History is HIS STORY. Jesus is Lord He is supreme. He is First - *in all things He (ie Jesus) has supremacy; 'all things hold together in him'*. says v17 & 18

1. He is 1st in creation

v16 says: *By him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.* He is 1st in Creation - He is the creator of all; he is our creator.

2. He is 1st in the Church v18 *and he is the head of the body, the church.* he became head by being lifted up on the Cross. v20 says: *through him God has reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, making peace through his blood, shed on the cross* Central to Christianity is the truth that Jesus died and rose again for us to make us his own - to make us his church When we trust him then we're part of his Church

3. Paul states: *He (Jesus) is supreme (1st) in my life* Is that true for us?

This Lordship of Christ has a flip side. If Jesus is Lord (No 1) we are to be *servants* (No2) . Paul gladly says: *I have become a servant* - HIS servant. 'Little' David lived near us in Luton. When I asked him: What do you want to be? he answered: A Boss! We can be a boss but only under Jesus. I like the clergyman who said to his church at his installation. I will be your servant, but you won't be my master! Jesus spoke about this: *The Gentile rulers lord it over others. But not you. Whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant.* First and foremost our Christian calling, is to be servants like Jesus We follow a Saviour who said Matt10:28 *The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.*

Jesus told his followers & Apostles - Mk9:35 *"If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.* Discipleship and leadership are not about power or position but about service

Song *Ye servants of God*

1. Ye servants of God,
your Master proclaim,
and publish abroad
his wonderful name;
the name all victorious
of Jesus extol:
His Kingdom is glorious
and rules over all

2 Salvation to God
who sits on the throne!
Let all cry aloud
and honour the Son

The praises of Jesus
the angels proclaim,
fall down on their faces,
and worship the Lamb

3 Then let us adore
and give him his right;
all glory and power
all wisdom and might,
and honour and blessing,
with angels above,
and thanks never ceasing,
and infinite love

But, what does this servanthood look like?

Let's look at Mary & Martha again - both were servants in different ways

1st Big sister Martha was **Active** - everything had to be perfect (and plentiful) like Abraham in Gen18

I always smile when I read this account of a menu for a meal for some angelic visitors

Abraham said to them: *I will bring a morsel of bread* but then he hurried into the tent and said to Sara: "Quick, make ready *three measures of fine meal; and make some bread.*"

An average loaf used about 3 cups of flour; but 3 *measures* was about 32 cups, enough to make over 11 loaves (for his guests!!) But that wasn't all v7 adds: *Abraham ran to the herd, took a calf, and hastened to prepare it. He took butter and milk and the calf which he had prepared & set it before them*

What a meal!! '?' Is that a morsel of Bread?

It reminds me of Albania; and a lady we met regularly in our 'hour long' telephone queue who said: *Next time, come home and have some bread* When we got there it was a feast....just like Abraham & Martha prepared! Martha was so Active - she was a **Worker**

2nd On the other hand Mary was Attentive. She was a **worshipper** v39 says *Mary sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said*

In all the Activities of Life 'Servanthood' begins with Attention - *sitting at Jesus' feet* in prayer and stillness. Lk10:40 warns activists, like Martha, how all her work **distracted her** - literally it caused her to *run round in circles.*

My Computer Desktop is full of programs - all ready to go. So in the centre I've added these words: **1st Pray.** Jesus said: v41 *"Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things; only ONE thing is needed"* 'Bread' doesn't have to be a banquet. Busy-ness shouldn't become a burden. "Martha, come and sit and listen to me like Mary"

Yes, Jesus wants us to serve.... but also to sit at his feet. He calls us to halt and hear his word Sarah had this balance of Action and Attention. After labouring in the kitchen the Bible says *Sarah listened in the tent door behind him...* & there she heard a special promise from the Lord - a baby. Yes, we need to 'get up' and 'get going' but 1st we need to wait 'Devotion' leads to 'Doings', or else 'doings' will divert us. King David wrote in Ps 123:2 *Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters so our eyes look to the LORD our God.*

My first question is this: Is Jesus our Lord and master, is he No1? If so then we who trust in Jesus are called to be his servants. My second question is: How are we serving? with busy-ness or balance? As servants we are called to watch, wait, and be ready to do his will - ready to serve him and serve others. It's hard but, at every crossroad, situation, opportunity, let's give Jesus his right place, let's make him first in our hearts, in our homes, in our churches, in our work, & in our service- serving Him!

Col 1:18 says *in all things he (Jesus) might have the pre-eminence (First Place)*

Confession

Let's **Confess** our shortcomings

For failing to love you with all our heart, soul, mind and strength

Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy**

For failing to love our neighbour as ourselves. Christ have mercy **Christ have mercy**

In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be. Lord have mercy **Lord have mercy**

May God the Father forgive you by the death of the Lord Jesus, and strengthen you to live his risen life in the power of his Spirit all your days **Amen**

Intercessions

We pray for our world
We pray for the church
We pray for our communities
We pray for the needy
We pray for ourselves

Lord's prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name
Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil
For thine is the kingdom, the power and glory, for ever and ever **Amen**

Song : Will you come and follow me

1. Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know, and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?
2. Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind, and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare,
Will you let me answer prayer in you, and you in me?
3. Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you, and never be the same.
In your company I'll go, where your love and footsteps show,
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you, and you in me.

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Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord turn his face toward you and give you his peace. And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with you and those for whom you pray, now and always **Amen**

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