

23rd August 2020, 10:30am

Isaiah 51.1-6 and & Matthew 16.13-20

*As part of your worship you might like to try our new dial-in service to listen to the sermon and a hymn – **01604 266000**. It's free and people can dial in at the same time.*

Opening Prayer

Faithful and loving God, we are glad to be here. We meet in your name. Help us to ask bold questions as we share your Word. Amen.

Hymn: Majesty, worship his majesty (StF 333)

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim or listen to it here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OaRwD2Y7C0s>

Majesty, worship his majesty;
unto Jesus be glory, honour and praise.

Majesty, kingdom authority,
flows from his throne unto his own,
his anthem raise.

So exalt, lift up on high the name of Jesus,
magnify, come glorify Christ Jesus, the King.

Majesty, worship his majesty,
Jesus, who died, now glorified,
King of all kings.

Prayer of Praise and Confession

We give thanks to you O God with our whole heart. And with all others, we want to sing your praise. We come to this place of worship to offer thanks for your steadfast love and faithfulness to us. We exalt your name and honour your word. For when we call, you answer us and strengthen our soul. Your glory shines forth from the highest heaven, and yet you have compassion on the lowly. Great is your glory and your steadfast love endures forever. Together with all people, we praise your holy name. We give thanks to you with our whole heart.

Keep a moment of silence, reflect on God's love and faithfulness to you and then say these words:

As we come to experience your love...we come with the regret of knowing that we distance ourselves from our neighbours. We come with the regret of knowing that our lives are not filled with as much love towards our neighbours as they should be. As we come to receive your

forgiveness... we come acknowledging that we hold grudges against others. In your love, forgive us and draw us closer to you once again. We thank you for your forgiveness. Amen.

Listen to: **Santo, Santo, Santo (StF 779)**

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

Holy, holy, holy.

My heart, my heart adores you!

My heart is glad to say the words:

You are holy, Lord!

Original Spanish:

Santo, santo, santo.

¡Mi corazón te adora!

¡Mi corazón te sabe decir:

¡santo erès Señor!

From your Bible read Matthew 16.13-20

Dear friends, what do we mean when we, like Peter here, speak of Jesus as Messiah or Saviour? I think that one of the ways we reduce the power of this title is when we make it all about escaping from this world and spending eternity somewhere else. Jesus does offer us forgiveness, freedom from the power of sin, and eternal life. But, Jesus also offers us a new way of living here and now.

Firstly, friends, as Messiah, Jesus is the one who establishes God's Reign among us, and who empowers us to live as citizens of God's Reign who participate in making God's dream for the cosmos a reality. Jesus breaks the power of evil, death, violence, retaliation, and hatred by absorbing the worst that humanity can do and refusing to retaliate. And then he shows us a different way to live.

Secondly, friends, the implication of this is that Jesus saves us from our worst selves, here and now, and leads us to live from our best. So, we can begin to experience God's life, grace, love, liberty and justice now - God's Reign coming to us here on earth, as Jesus taught us to pray. And, as we grow in our understanding and experience of God's Reign, so we begin to share the life and love we have received with those around us.

Thirdly, Jesus adopted a title for himself – Son of Man – that was used in two ways in the Old Testament. God calls the prophet Ezekiel “Son of man” to remind him of his humanity and his mortality. But, in the book of Daniel, “one like a son of man” is given authority, power, and glory over all nations.

Dear friends, it seems to me that Jesus applied both of these meanings to himself. The point is this - He was human and divine, mortal and immortal, humble and glorified. And when he asked the disciples who they thought he was, he was investigating whether they had begun to recognise his paradoxical nature. Peter’s declaration showed that he had begun to grasp a glimpse of it.

I find that Jesus’ response to Peter’s words is enigmatic and exciting. I am of the opinion that Jesus stated that the church would be built on this recognition that Jesus was both human and divine, and he declared that evil would not overcome God’s new community. Then he spoke about the “keys of the kingdom” – God has given us the task of “loosing” people from bondage and to bind the systems and people that bring suffering on others.

And this is the concluding point for me - the challenge is for us to recognise that we can impact the world for justice and love in Jesus’ name, and to use this God-given power for the sake of those around us. The best way for us to proclaim our faith in Jesus, and participate in God’s saving work, is to seek justice, peace, love, and equality for those around us. We do this in small acts of compassion, generosity, love, and solidarity. When we stand alongside the vulnerable and use our resources and our voice to uplift them, we are proclaiming Jesus’ Messiahship and the presence of God’s Reign.

A prayer for others

Please use this traditional response after each segment of prayer: Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for the Church, the body of Christ, that the many denominations might be as one, that we might respect and learn from one another;

We pray for those who have served the Church faithfully through the centuries, and those who serve the Church faithfully today;

<https://methodist-churches-northampton.org.uk/worship-at-home/>

We pray for those who witness to their faith in places where it is difficult to be a Christian, in places where they are persecuted for their faith;

We pray for those whose faith stirs them to action, to make the world a better place, and those who have the courage to speak out for others;

We pray for the needs of Northampton Methodist Circuit, and for those who especially need or have asked for our prayers at this time.

Our Father... (please pray in your mother tongue).

My Jesus, my Saviour (StF 363)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jABSW-UuT1oI>

My Jesus, my Saviour,
Lord there is none like you.
All of my days I want to praise
the wonders of your mighty love.
My comfort, my shelter,
tower of refuge and strength,
let every breath, all that I am,
never cease to worship you.

*Shout to the Lord all the earth, let us sing,
power and majesty, praise to the King.*

Mountains bow down

and the seas will roar

at the sound of your name.

I sing for joy at the work of your hands.

Forever I'll love you, forever I'll stand.

Nothing compares to the

promise I have in you.

A Prayer of Blessing

God be with us, wherever we go and whatever we do. God be with us, whoever we meet and whatever we say. God bless us and keep us safe, today and always. And now may the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.

The message & order of service leaflet by Rev'd Romeo Pedro