

Daily Prayer

John and Charles Wesley

Wednesday, March 3, 2021

We enter into a time of quiet. We offer to God our selves and in the silence know that God embraces us as God's very own. We offer our hopes and our concerns through our prayers and in the silence listen for God. Today we hold in our prayers the ordinary moments in life—the trials and the joys and we remember John and Charles Wesley, priests and evangelists, 1791, 1788.

We begin by saying

We are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

2 Corinthians 5. 20

The First Reading

'Come, let us return to the LORD;
for it is he who has torn, and he will heal us;
he has struck down, and he will bind us up.
After two days he will revive us;
on the third day he will raise us up,
that we may live before him.
Let us know, let us press on to know the LORD;
his appearing is as sure as the dawn;
he will come to us like the showers,
like the spring rains that water the earth.'

What shall I do with you, O Ephraim?
What shall I do with you, O Judah?
Your love is like a morning cloud,
like the dew that goes away early.

Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets,
I have killed them by the words of my mouth,
and my judgement goes forth as the light.

For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice,
the knowledge of God rather than burnt-offerings.

Hosea 6.1-6

The Psalm

Bless the Lord, O my soul, ♦
and all that is within me bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, ♦
and forget not all his benefits;

Who forgives all your sins ♦
and heals all your infirmities;

Who redeems your life from the Pit ♦
and crowns you with faithful love and compassion;

Who satisfies you with good things, ♦
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

Psalm 103.1-5

The Gospel Reading

While Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside by themselves, and said to them on the way, 'See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death; then they will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified; and on the third day he will be raised.'

Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to him with her sons, and kneeling before him, she asked a favour of him. And he said to her, 'What do you want?' She said to him, 'Declare that these two

sons of mine will sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom.' But Jesus answered, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?' They said to him, 'We are able.' He said to them, 'You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left, this is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.'

When the ten heard it, they were angry with the two brothers. But Jesus called them to him and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.'

Matthew 20.17-28

We continue with the reflection that follows. In silence, we ask what the reading has to say to us today. Is there something in the reflection that draws us more deeply into the reading? What does God have to say to us? What do we have to ask God?

The Reflection

Jim Boyles

We read the familiar account of the disciples James and John, sons of Zebedee, and their mother approaching Jesus and seeking privilege, seeking a place of honour, seeking power. In Matthew's telling, the mother speaks. In the gospel of Mark the disciples speak up, and the mother is not mentioned. Jesus responds by rejecting their request, leaving it open as to what God has in mind for the kingdom.

Then he gathers the disciples together. They had overheard the conversation and were angry with James and John. He points to the state of Gentile life where tyrants "...lord it over..." the people. Then he speaks directly to this situation in very clear and

authoritative language: "It will not be so among you". He holds out a contrasting vision: "...whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant...".

Today we commemorate John and Charles Wesley, both Anglican priests in 18th century England, who felt the passion of faith and led a revival of faith in the land. Their followers grew, and eventually left the Church of England to form communities that became the foundation of the Methodist Church. These brothers were both charismatic preachers, and although the Methodists broke away from the mother church, they remained priests within the church, believing that Methodism had a place within the Anglican tradition. It's said that John, at the end of his life, was the best-loved man in England.

Charles, the younger brother was a great hymn-writer, said to have composed 6,500 hymns. Did he have time for anything else? He lived to be 80. Together these brothers changed the direction of the church, at a time when change was accepted and required.

Today, we are called in the gospel to be servants of all, and at the same time, through the witness of the Wesley brothers, we see the need for passion and excitement and new vitality in moving forward in the faith. This past Sunday the Church of the Redeemer held its annual Vestry meeting, and as we look forward to major concerns around our building – pews or chairs, stain glass windows, major expenses – can we heed the gospel and the Wesley brothers in living as a community of servants, not lords, and can we live with passion for the faith as we attempt to share our life of servanthood with all who pass by?

And that matter of seeking privilege, well, "It will not be so among you".

When the time is right, we conclude our time of silence with the canticle

The Canticle ~ Song of Peace

In the days to come *
the mountain of the house of the Lord
shall tower as the highest of mountains *
and be raised above the hills.

There shall all the nations flow; *
many peoples shall come and say,
“Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, *
to the house of the God of Jacob,
that he may teach us his ways *
that we may walk in his paths.”

For the law shall go out from Zion, *
from Jerusalem the word of the Lord.

He shall judge between the nations *
and decide for many peoples.

They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, *
their spears into pruning-knives;
nation shall not lift sword against nation; *
they shall never train for war again.

O people of Jacob, come, *
let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Isaiah 2.2-5

*We continue in prayer for those people and situations that we hold up before God (The Intercessions)
and continue with the concluding collect, the Lord's prayer and the closing sentences.*

The Intercessions

With confidence and trust let us pray to our God.

For the one holy catholic and apostolic Church ...

let us pray to our God.

Lord of compassion,

in your mercy hear us.

For the mission of the Church,

that in faithful witness it may preach the gospel

to the ends of the earth,

let us pray to our God.

Lord of compassion,

in your mercy hear us.

For peace in the world ...

that a spirit of respect and reconciliation may grow

among nations and peoples,

let us pray to our God.

Lord of compassion,

in your mercy hear us.

For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, and all who suffer ...

for refugees, prisoners, and all in danger;

that they may be relieved and protected,

let us pray to our God.

Lord of compassion,

in your mercy hear us.

For those whom we have injured or offended,

let us pray to our God.

Lord of compassion,

in your mercy hear us.

For grace to amend our lives and to further the reign of God,
let us pray to our God.
Lord of compassion,
in your mercy hear us.

In communion with all those who have walked in the way of
holiness ...
let us pray to our God.
Lord of compassion,
in your mercy hear us.

God our Father,
in your love and goodness
you have taught us to come close to you in penitence
with prayer, fasting and generosity;
accept our Lenten discipline,
and when we fall by our weakness,
raise us up by your unfailing mercy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Our prayers conclude

Lord God,
you inspired John and Charles Wesley
to thirst after true righteousness,
and endowed them with eloquence in speech and song
that the hearts and voices of many
might testify to the work of Christ.
Grant us, we pray,
the power of your Spirit,
to kindle anew in hearts grown cold
the ardent love of Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit
one God, now and for ever.

[let us pray as our Saviour taught us,]

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen

We conclude

May God the Father,
who does not despise the broken spirit,
give to you a contrite heart.

Amen.

May Christ,
who bore our sins in his body on the tree,
heal you by his wounds.

Amen.

May the Holy Spirit,
who leads us into all truth,
speak to you words of pardon and peace.

Amen.

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