

Christ Church New Southgate & Friern Barnet

14 August 2022

Song: From life's beginning
to all eternity,
there is a song to be sung;
in deepest oceans,
across the galaxies,
in every nation and tongue.

Let praise resound,
let praise resound, all around.
Creation, sing with one voice
to the glory of the Maker of all things:
let praise resound.

Come, every creature
alive at his command,
join the eternal refrain.
Sing, joyful mountains,
you rivers, clap your hands;
all nature, breathe out his name.

Sing together:
holy, holy, holy is the Lord.
Glory to the one who lives
and reigns for evermore:
(repeat)
let praise resound.

So join the anthem,
let every voice be heard,
come lift your praises up high
as songs of worship
ring out across the earth,
as heaven sings in reply.

Prayer

Song: He's got the whole world in his hands

Story jumble: Luke 15.11-24

¹¹ Jesus went on to say, "There was once a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger one said to him, 'Father, give me my share of the property now.' So the man divided his property between his two sons. ¹³ After a few days the younger son sold his part of the property and left home with the money. He went to a country far away, where he wasted his money in reckless living. ¹⁴ He spent everything he had. Then a severe famine spread over that country, and he was left without a thing. ¹⁵ So he went to work for one of the citizens of that country, who sent him out to his farm to take care of the pigs. ¹⁶ He wished he could fill himself with the bean pods the pigs ate, but no one gave him anything to eat. ¹⁷ At last he came to his senses and said, 'All my father's hired workers have more than they can eat, and here I am about to starve! ¹⁸ I will get up and go to my father and say, "Father, I have sinned against God and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer fit to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired workers.'" ²⁰ So he got up and started back to his father.

"He was still a long way from home when his father saw him; his heart was filled with pity, and he ran, threw his arms around his son, and kissed him. ²¹ 'Father,' the son said, 'I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son.' ²² But the father called to his servants. 'Hurry!' he said. 'Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet. ²³ Then go and get the prize calf and kill it, and let us celebrate with a feast! ²⁴ For this son of mine was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found.' And so the feasting began.

All age: Activities

1/ Hungry

He wished he could fill himself with the pods the pigs ate, but no one gave him anything to eat. At last he came to his senses! Luke 15.16-17

If you have had a moment of revelation from God where he has spoken to you at a point in need. Write it down and thank God for his word.

2/Sit or kneel near a bowl on the floor.

Think about how hunger changed the lost son, and how it would feel to eat this cereal as an animal would.

Pray for those whose hunger is real and present, for those who depend on handouts and foodbanks. Pray too for those whose need to recognise their hunger for God.

3/Ticket home

‘I will get up and go to my father and say, ‘Father I have sinned against God and against you.’
Luke 15.18

Take a moment to say sorry to God.

Use this time to think about confessing actions that have led you away from God.

Write them down if you wish. Know that God welcomes us home.

Reading: Luke 15.25-32

²⁵ “In the meantime the older son was out in the field. On his way back, when he came close to the house, he heard the music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked him, ‘What’s going on?’ ²⁷ ‘Your brother has come back home,’ the servant answered, ‘and your father has killed the prize calf, because he got him back safe and sound.’ ²⁸ The older brother was so angry that he would not go into the house; so his father came out and begged him to come in. ²⁹ But he spoke back to his father, ‘Look,

all these years I have worked for you like a slave, and I have never disobeyed your orders. What have you given me? Not even a goat for me to have a feast with my friends! ³⁰ But this son of yours wasted all your money, and when he comes back home, you kill the prize calf for him!’ ³¹ ‘My son,’ the father answered, ‘you are always here with me, and everything I have is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and be happy, because your brother was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found.’”

Song: I stand amazed in the presence
Of Jesus the Nazarene
And wonder how He could love me
A sinner condemned, unclean

*How marvelous, how wonderful
And my song will ever be
How marvelous, how wonderful
Is my Saviour's love for me*

He took my sins and my sorrows
He made them his very own
He bore the burden to Calvary
He suffered and died for me

Forever I will sing Your praise
Jesus, Risen King
Oh my God I stand amazed that You loved me

When with ransomed in glory
His face I at last shall see
It will be my joy through the ages
To sing of His love for me

Sermon: I agree with the older son. It is stupid that the father is excited to see the younger son. It is ridiculous that the father gave him a ring, robe and emptied Sainsburys to throw a party
It must have truly stung to find music and dancing instead of his Dad’s depression at the

end of a hard day in the fields. I understand that he simply does not want to go in and that he is fighting back bitter tears. How dare the father expect him to work and work and work, like a dog? Surely he knows the labour involved, surely he knows how much he's had to put up with?

And yet I realise this son, is all of us who think we work for God. All of us who think God is impressed by 1000s of hours of toil in his house, for every bible study, service, prayer meeting, justice programme, neighbourly act of kindness. We even call it 'the Lord's work'. Don't you know how many hours I've slaved? This older son thinks he's a slave. He thinks he is bound to service of God, like a slave to a master. He views life as hard work for the Lord, and only this kind of life is a worthy one.

I've preached many times on this part of the bible, I've preached many times on how the father looks out for the son – the waiting father. I've preached on how the father runs to the son, and hugs the son – the running father. But I have not noticed till this week, that just like for the younger son, Father comes out looking for the older son too. The father comes out looking for the older son too. He reminds the older son that he is delighted with him, that he has been present in every act of service and dedication to him. But he begs him to come into the party. Why? Because he does not see the world in the same way. The younger son thinks that his behaviour means he should become a slave, but the father says no you are my son. The older son thinks his behaviour means he is a slave, but the father says no you are my son. The father does not want any slaves! He doesn't want the younger son asking to become one, and he doesn't want the older son thinking he is just like one. The father does not want slaves. What the father wants is to celebrate with joy and music and dancing that the lost son is found.

So what does Jesus mean by telling this parable? Parables are not instructions, parables are stories to make us think. Let's think about a few questions ...

Do I get grumpy when God is kind to someone else?

Do I think God is ignoring my work?

Do I think I am a slave and not a child of God?

Will I believe that I am a child of God?

Will I believe that God loves me very much?

Will I go into his party? For what was lost is found, none of us are slaves but children of God, the God who comes to us.

Song: Turn your eyes

Turn your eyes upon Jesus
Look full in His wonderful face
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace

VERSE 2

Turn your eyes to the hillside
Where justice and mercy embraced
There the Son of God gave His life for us
And our measureless debt was erased

CHORUS

Jesus, to You we lift our eyes
Jesus, our glory and our prize
We adore You, behold You, our Savior ever true
Oh Jesus, we turn our eyes to You

VERSE 3

Turn your eyes to the morning
And see Christ the Lion awake
What a glorious dawn, fear of death is gone
For we carry His life in our veins

VERSE 4

Turn your eyes to the heavens
Our King will return for His own

Every knee will bow, every tongue will
shout,
'All glory to Jesus alone!'

Prayers for the world

Blessing

WHEN I WAS LOST, You came and
rescued me;
Reached down into the pit and lifted me.
O Lord, such love,
I was as far from You as I could be.
You know all the things I've ever done,
But Jesus' blood has cancelled every one.
O Lord, such grace
To qualify me as Your own.

*There is a new song in my mouth,
There is a deep cry in my heart,
A hymn of praise to Almighty God - hallelujah!
And now I stand firm on this Rock,
My life is hidden now with Christ in God.
The old has gone and the new has come - hallelujah!
Your love has lifted me.*

Now I have come into Your family,
For the Son of God has died for me.
O Lord, such peace,
I am as loved by You as I could be.
In the full assurance of Your love,
Now with every confidence we come.
O Lord, such joy
To know that You delight in us.

Many are the wonders You have done,
And many are the things that You have
planned.
How beautiful the grace that gives to us
All that we don't deserve,
All that we cannot earn,
But is a gift of love.