

Alton Baptist Church e-Service 21st June 2020

Greetings

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank You that whether we are in the church building together or thinking about You alone, You are with us and hear our prayers. Help us to spend time each day singing your praises, reading and contemplating Your Word, praying for one another and those issues You bring to our attention. Amen

When we worship Jesus, we worship a living God. This is fundamental to our Christian belief. Jesus lives.

Jesus was born of a virgin, died upon a cross, rose again, ascended into heaven and currently sits at God's right hand, He is coming again.

God's plan for the world is unfolding and we are somewhere in the middle of it, (possibly towards the end).

As Christians we are called upon to serve a risen Saviour. I hope you enjoy this gentle rendition of "I serve a risen Saviour".

Song I serve a risen Saviour -

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KFz_jHPJh-g

Reading: Matthew 28:1-10 *Jesus Has Risen*

28 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

2 There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. **3** His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. **4** The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

5 The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. **6** He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. **7** Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

8 So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. **9** Suddenly Jesus met them. "**Greetings**," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. **10** Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

Some Thoughts

Our topic today is the word "Greetings". Sometimes a simple word can convey a great deal.

"Greetings" seems to be an informal, friendly form of address. One you would use with people you know and like; friends perhaps.

I don't want to over-analyse the word, because it is only present in one of the four gospel accounts of Jesus appearing to the women.

Yet, it conveys something of the attitude of Jesus and His relationship to the women.

Jesus could have appeared to anybody first; He was fully in control. Yet, He chose to appear to a select group of women.

This group of women had known Him for a long time, they had cared for Him on his travels, they had witnessed His miracles, they had witnessed His death and burial. Now they had got up early to care for His body.

They loved Him.

But I think it is also evident that He loved them. They were His friends and companions.

The remarkable thing is that we can also be His friends as we serve our Risen Saviour. What a tremendous privilege.

Of course, for Him to be our Saviour we have to confess our sins, repent, and ask Jesus to forgive us and become the Lord of our lives.

Song What a friend we have in Jesus -

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8SCorW9r_Is

Prayers of Praise, Thanks and Intercession

Pray as you feel led.

The reading below from the book of Revelation is a reminder that our "friend" Jesus is the sacrificial lamb of God. As mentioned earlier, Jesus the Lamb of God, currently sits at God's right hand in the heavenly "throne room".

Reading: Revelation 5:12-13

12 In a loud voice they were saying:

"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength
and honour and glory and praise!"

13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying:

"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be praise and honour and glory and power,
for ever and ever!"

Song All hail the lamb -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yyNvTmjiv0w>

The next reading is a warning for those who do not know Jesus as their friend.

Reading: Revelation 6:15-17

15 Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and everyone else, both slave and free, hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. **16** They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! **17** For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can withstand it?"

Some more Thoughts

The above passage provides a counterpoint to the gentle greeting that Jesus gave to His female friends

We know He is coming again; we just don't know when.

What we do know is that His second coming will be very different to His first coming.

When He comes it will be a great day of God's wrath.

Why did Jesus come to die such a terrible death on a cross?

So we can be counted as His friends and be on His side when the great day of wrath comes.

There is nothing we have done to merit this or deserve his mercy, other than having accepted that He has paid the price and to have humbly asked for His mercy.

Because of His amazing grace, when we ask, He gives so much more. He sets us free from the bonds of sin; gives us His love, and promises us eternal life with Him.

Song Amazing Grace (My chains are gone) -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jbe7OruLk8I>

Optional Communion

If we were meeting in church we would be having a communion service this morning in memory of His Amazing Grace and sacrifice upon the cross.

If you wish to include communion as part of your worship, find yourself some bread and wine (or juice)

and click on this link - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=na33U_QaEGQ

(If you don't do the communion, you may still enjoy the beautiful song starting at 8 minutes into the video)

Grace

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the Love of God,

and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us now and always.

AMEN

Robin