

# Alton Baptist Church e-Service 18<sup>th</sup> October 2020

## Christ's sacrifice on the cross for our sins

We welcome you to today's service in the name of the Lord.

Let us pray.

Lord we delight to be in your presence and seek your face. Bless the worship, prayers and thoughts we offer and draw us nearer to the Saviour. We pray for those who would have liked to be with us and ask that they too may know your love and presence this day.

Let us listen to our opening hymn.

Praise, my soul the King of heaven

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GyRIVbdsi4c>

It is good to praise the Lord and think on all He has done.

Notices and Intercessory prayers

Our second hymn

I will sing the wondrous story

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

Our first reading is John 3:1-16

JN 3:1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. <sup>2</sup> He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him."

JN 3:3 In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."

JN 3:4 "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!"

JN 3:5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. <sup>7</sup> You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' <sup>8</sup> The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

JN 3:9 "How can this be?" Nicodemus asked.

JN 3:10 "You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things? <sup>11</sup> I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. <sup>12</sup> I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? <sup>13</sup> No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven--the Son of Man. <sup>14</sup> Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

JN 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

This reading tells of Jesus meeting a prominent Jewish teacher. The first thing He speaks of is new birth. It is not difficult to imagine Nicodemus reaction. He was an old man and Jesus had to explain he meant spiritual birth.

This reminds me of the creation of Adam. God breathed into him and he became a living being. This was spiritual life and when Adam and Eve sinned, that life and link with God was broken. Jesus is telling Nicodemus something of how God was going to restore that life and link with himself. Jesus explains that this earthly life is not able to enter the kingdom of God without this wonderful transformation of new birth.

There remains, however, the problem of human sin. What is to be done about it?

We now have a reference to an Old Testament story. The Israelites on their way from Egypt to the Promised Land fell into serious sin and God sent serpents which attacked them and those bitten by the serpents were dying. Moses was told to make bronze snake and put it on a pole. Anyone looking upon it was cured. It was a miracle and like most Bible miracles it was to teach an important lesson. Jesus said to Nicodemus that He would be like the serpent. He would be lifted up. This could mean crucifixion and in this case that was exactly what Jesus meant. It may be that Nicodemus did not truly understand until after the crucifixion. This is recorded for us so that we could know that acceptance with God needs a trust in Jesus and His death.

We might ask, 'Why did Jesus do this?' Verse 16 tells us that it was because God loves us. Jesus is doing an amazing and terrifying thing because He loves us.

Let us have another hymn and then look at our second reading.

You laid aside Your majesty

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HxXrV-0Jqol>

Romans 3:21 - 26

RO 3:21 But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. <sup>22</sup> This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. <sup>25</sup> God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished-- <sup>26</sup> he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

In this reading Paul sets out a brief statement about the one great barrier which comes between us and God. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. The problem is what can be done about it? Ancient people were

familiar with the concept of sacrifice. We may find it harder but I sometimes like to think that God made everything through Jesus and so Jesus has chosen to make himself responsible for the things we have done. The price of our sin can be paid for if we will allow Jesus to do so.

So we find that in Jesus we can receive both forgiveness and a new relationship with God.

Our next hymn focuses on what it cost Jesus as he suffered and died for us. I think it is a good introduction to our communion time. We can think of this and the wonder of the resurrection.

I cast my mind to Calvary

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

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

<sup>23</sup> For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, <sup>24</sup> and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' <sup>25</sup> In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' <sup>26</sup> For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Let us keep these words in our minds as Stuart leads our communion.

**Optional Communion** (for those unable to meet in church)

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](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=na33U_QaEGQ)

Close with – May the lord watch over and keep us all in these strange times and may He lead us day by day and grant us His presence.

Amen