

Alton Baptist Church e-Service 11th April 2021

God is...

Welcome to this service whether you are following on your computer at home or able to be at the church. May you be blessed as we praise and give thanks to a faithful and loving God. The theme continues to look at **GOD IS**.

Lamentations 3: 22 – 23

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Song: Great is Thy faithfulness

In these uncertain times it is wonderful to know we have a compassionate and faithful God in whom we can trust.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4ox4es1jo8>

Prayer:

Loving heavenly Father we rejoice that you are the King of kings and Lord of all. We give you our praise and adoration for you are worthy to receive our awe and adoration. Yet we confess that we allow the world to squeeze us into its mould and we fail to give you the true worship that is due to your Name. We ask that you will forgive us and cleans us from all unrighteousness. Thank you for your faithfulness that is shown to us in so many ways especially in sending your Son, Jesus, to be our Saviour. Through Him we have forgiveness of our sin, the assurance of eternal life and life in all its fullness. We ask that we will worship you in Spirit and Truth as we participate in this service and that you will be glorified, in Jesus Name. Amen.

Song: Because He lives

Last Sunday was Easter Day when we remembered that Jesus rose from the tomb and this song reminds that He is alive and with us in all our circumstances.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPW9xYEyijQ>

Intercessory Prayer:

When we pray we can make our requests with confidence for scripture says. **Luke 11: 9-10** “So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will open to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.”

Let us ask our heavenly Father:

For comfort for the Queen and Royal Family following the death of The Duke of Edinburgh

For help for those suffering from the impact of the lockdown upon their lives: bringing mental and emotional problems, financial and work concerns, tensions in families and loneliness.

For protection from the virus as the lockdown begins to be eased. That doors will open for those who have lost employment.

For people to come to faith in the Lord Jesus: as they seek to find peace and purpose in their lives in these difficult and uncertain times.

For our church family at Alton and those situations known personally to us.

Song: Thy Word is lamp unto my feet
The Word is a light unto our path

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sKlQpjl_oqY

Prayer

Father we pray that the Holy Spirit will open our hearts and minds to Your Word so that we can have a deeper relationship with you that will guard and guide our lives and enable us to be Your ambassadors to proclaim Jesus to those we meet.

GOD IS

Last month we began looking at **God Is** and outlined the following Biblical truths about God. Briefly to remind us we saw from the scripture that: -

God is the creator of heaven and earth Gen. 1: 1-2

God is a loving God and sent his Son to be our Saviour John 3: 16

God is a testing God, to find out whether we love Him with all our heart and soul Deut. 13: 3

God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble Ps. 46: 1

God is full of compassion Ps. 116: 5

God is my rock 2 Sam. 22: 2-3

In my daily readings it said, *“The Bible describes us as created for relationships; an eternal friendship with God. In joining God’s church, we step into a further set of relationships for life.”* The more we know about Him the deeper will be the relationship we have with Him. That is why it is so valuable to see what the Bible says when we follow the references made about who GOD IS. We have become increasingly aware during the past year how important relationships are and they are built upon having contact with each other. When we do not have that face to face contact with our loved ones we become stressed for we are social beings. As Christians we have the privilege to access God through Scripture and prayer. In a recent telephone conversation with a friend she said that during lockdown she has spent more time reading the Bible and this has been a wonderful antidote to all the bad news coming through the media.

So let us look at more of the GOD IS references and through that become more aware of how wonderful God is and how privileged we are to be able to have a personal relationship with Him.

The Bible also gives warnings because God wants to preserve the relationship He has with us.

We need to take into account the warning that Joshua gave to the children of Israel in **Joshua 24: 19 -20** **“You are not able to serve the Lord. He is a holy God; he is a jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and your sins. If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, he will turn and bring disaster on you and make an end of you, after he has been good to you.”**

We must never forget that God is holy and because **He is holy** he cannot tolerate any sin. Remember that when he created heaven and earth it was good, very good without any contamination. Man rebelled and sin entered the world and ever since we have a battle within us to follow His will or seek our independence from Him. We also see that **He**

is a jealous God. This is affirmed in Exodus 20: 3-4 “You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.”

This is a serious warning and Joshua states it will bring disaster on us if we fail to acknowledge these aspects of who **God is**. Every one of us can reflect upon our sinful nature how the desires of the flesh, the pursuit of pleasure and the wilful way we seek to do our own thing breaks the relationship with God. In so doing we can no longer faithfully serve Him. The other aspect that damages the relationship with God is through allowing idols into our lives. Many things of themselves can be useful especially developments in technology but sadly they can take a hold of us and distract us from spending quality time with the Lord.

Remember we are told in **1 Corinthians 11: 28** “A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.” Maybe over the coming days we need to spend some time examining how we spend our time. Is it in allowing the desires of the sinful nature to hold sway or allowing idols to deflect our attention from a closer walk with the Lord? Whilst this is not easy it is essential in deepening our relationship with the Lord and be fit for His service.

The next text that encourages us in our relationship with the Lord is **Psalm 68: 20** “Our **God is a God who saves**; from the Sovereign Lord comes escape from death.”

Once again this is a distinctive of our faith in Christ that we have the assurance that we are saved from the consequences of our sin and that we have the promise of eternal life. This was affirmed in by the death and resurrection of Jesus. So we have the warning that comes from Joshua but we also know that God wants to save us from the wages of sin that is death. This again is wonderfully expressed in **Isaiah 12: 2** “Surely **God is my salvation**; I will trust and not be afraid. The Lord, the Lord is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation.”

The spring and summer is a time when our spirit is lifted because of the long light days. **1 John 1: 5-7** “This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: **God is light**; in Him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with Him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, we have fellowship with one another.” What a blessing it is to know that because God is light He shines a way through the dark times of our lives and He sheds light on the path we should take.

We refer to the Bible as being the Word of God and it is from the scriptures that we learn about Him as He speaks to us through it. What an encouragement to read then in **Proverbs 30: 5** “**Every word of God is flawless.**” In these days when we have fake news and media spin it is great to know that there is a book that we can read and know that it is truth and flawless. Yet it is so sad that fewer and fewer people are reading it on a regular basis. It is said that only 36% of people who attend churches actually read the Bible regularly.

May each of us be encouraged to spend more time in God’s Word and in our conversations one with another share scripture in a way that will build us up with a greater love and knowledge of the Lord.

We need to be aware of how many people come to faith as it states in **Romans 10: 17** “**faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.**” If we have knowledge of what the Bible says then we are in a position to share it with others and it can be used to help to bring them to the Lord. May we be bold in sharing the good news of the gospel!

Through these difficult days of lockdown people have experienced deep levels of loneliness. During these times we can be comforted in the knowledge from what is stated in **Zephaniah 3: 17** “**The Lord your God is with you, He is mighty to save.**” To experience His closeness we need to spend time with Him. Time being still to let Him speak as the hymn says. “*Speak, Lord, in the stillness, while I wait on Thee; hushed my heart to listen in expectancy.*” Rejoice that He is with you, you are not alone.

The one issue all of us have to face is the judgement of God as it states in **Hebrews 9: 27** “**Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgement.**” This may be an uncomfortable topic for some of us but we are reassured when we read **Psalms 7: 11** “**God is a righteous judge, a God who expresses His wrath every day.**” God is righteous and He will not tolerate sin and His wrath will be poured out against it but in His judgement of us He will be fair and we can be comforted by this.

Also for those who have accepted Jesus as their personal Saviour we know that the price has been paid for our sin and we have the promise of eternal life.

So as we have looked at what the Bible says and we see that **GOD IS:**

He is a holy God; he is a jealous God
God is a God who saves
God is my salvation
God is light
God is flawless
God is with you
God is a righteous judge

The question is do you have a relationship with God, **Is God** part of your life and if He is then do you seek to have a closer walk with Him?

Prayer:

Father we thank you for the wonderful encouragement your Word gives us to reassure us that there is a God with whom we can have a relationship everyday of our lives on earth and that the relationship can deepen as we walk with Him on life's journey.

Song: Just a closer walk with Thee
Daily walking close to Thee

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6Ks49apflE>

A Blessing in song

God be with you till we meet again

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

Acts 20: 32 "Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified."