**Morning Praise @ Home 4th August 2024**

**Opening prayer**

Blessed are you, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, you have blessed us with every spiritual blessing; enable us by your power to be true to our calling and live holy and blameless lives before you all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. **Amen**

**Confession** Let us admit to God the sin which always confronts us.

**Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and**

**repent.** **Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us**

**from our sin.** **Renew a right spirit within us** **and restore us to the joy of your salvation,** **through**

**Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen** cf Psalm 51

**Absolution** May the Father of all mercies cleanse us from our sins, and restore us in his image

to the praise and glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

**Bible Reading** **John 6:24 – 35**

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### Reflection from John

What’s the point of spending five weeks looking at the same story - Feeding 5000 and what it means. When Jesus had fed a crowd with fish and bread what does he mean when he goes on to say later –

I am the Bread of Life.

Like learning your tables 10 x 7 etc it matters to get it into your head and heart.

So it might help to go back a few Chapters in John and see what’s going on there. In chapter four, Jesus is talking to the woman at the well. Jesus offers her water, she marvels at his lack of a bucket with which to draw water, and he then says (in effect) that he’s not talking about the water in the well. If she drank that water she’d just get thirsty again.

**But, whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.**

Then comes the best part. Probably a little flummoxed, the woman responds: Sir, give me this water……………

It’s clear that the woman thinks that he’s just going to grab a bucket and find this nifty well…so that she “will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.” But, to the reader, we know that the water Jesus is talking about can’t be drawn from any well on earth. It’s a gift from above, a gift from God.

Now, fast forward two chapters. Jesus had just fed a whole lot of people on top of a mountain, with just a few fish and some loaves of bread. Needless to say, these people were impressed. They follow him as he travels around, and he tells them point-blank that the only reason they’re tagging along is because they ate their fill……….

They know where their bread is buttered. (Or something like that.)

He tells them that they shouldn’t worry about that bread—the bread from the mountaintop—because that bread will get mouldy and rot away. But, they are to look for the bread that doesn’t perish. The people get all theological on Jesus and remind him of the manna in the wilderness that Moses gave them—the bread from heaven.

Jesus corrects them. That wasn’t Moses. Moses couldn’t do anything like that on his own. That was God’s bread. Jesus goes on:

My father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. Verse 32

Then comes the best part. Probably a little flummoxed, they respond: Sir, give us this bread always.

It’s clear that the crowd is still thinking about a loaf of bread. But, to us, the readers, who know this passage so well, we know that this is not the case.

Jesus explicitly tells us that HE IS THE BREAD of life. HE IS THE ONE TO BELIEVE IN.

I think there is something to the similarity of these two texts from John. John’s Gospel was written nearly seventy years after the death and resurrection of Jesus—a time when baptism and Communion had been fully established in the spiritual lives of Christians.

These two passages talk of ordinary everyday items like bread and water, and yet they point people to realities that are far beyond the ordinary.

Big things are going on, even if you can’t always see them. God can give water and bread that can be the very seeds of eternal life. God can cause wells to spring up, gushing into eternity.

Simple things like Bread and wine can be signs of things too great to even fully understand.

And, I think these two passages are prompts for prayer.

For the ones awaiting baptism, and who were deep in preparation for what would happen in the sacred waters—they were called by the woman at the well to pray: Sir, Lord, give me this water!

It’s a prayer of yearning and longing. A prayer that knows who can give it, and what the stakes are when it’s given.

And for the community of the baptized—to those who already have the well gushing up within them, those already washed in the waters…well, we are to pray for something else.

Sir – Lord – give us this bread. Always. Because it’s from God. Because it will never perish, even though it may die. **Because, Jesus is this bread. The one and only satisfying Bread of Life.**

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**Affirmation of faith**

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?

**We believe and trust in him. This is the faith of the Church.**

**This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen**

**Prayers of intercession**

Heavenly Father, thank you for sending your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to be the Bread of Life for the world.

We pray for those whose daily need for healthy food, clean water and proper shelter goes un-met, and for those misusing what they have in the vain pursuit of pleasure. Feed them with all the good things of Christ for life now and in eternity.

We pray for all the victims of the horrifying incident in Southport. We pray for the families of those who have been killed - we pray that they will feel God close to them in their grief. We pray for the injured and their families, for all those who witnessed the incident and the aftermath. We pray for those who are caring for the injured and bereaved and all those caught up in the events of the day. God meet our fears and distress with your peace.

We pray for the peacemakers, that their work may be successful and that relief will soon reach those who suffer as a result of war and conflict. We give thanks for the release of the innocent prisoners in the recent swap deal between Russia and the West.

Heavenly Father, open our hearts to the everyday miracles in our lives, especially when it is difficult to believe. Give us strength for what comes, and use us for good, that we too may carry your story forward.

Lord, your love reaches beyond the grave. At the end of our days on earth be with us and with those we love.  We pray now for the family and friends of those who have recently died and those bereaved by their passing.

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

**The Lord’s Prayer** As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

***Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come,******Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen***

**Closing prayer**

God give you grace to become the people He has called you to be, that you may live and work to his praise and glory, and the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us and remain with us always. **Amen**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **In the name of Christ. Amen**