

3RD MAY 2020

# FERINTOSH PARISH CHURCH

WORSHIP AT HOME



[www.ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk](http://www.ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk)

We gather to read God's Word and to be still in the Lord's presence on this Lord's Day. With the light of the Spirit of God we seek out the treasure of the Word of God. Much of Scripture can only be learned by careful study. We noticed a few weeks ago how Christ made a diligent study of the Scriptures to reach 2 disciples on the road to Emmaus and transformed their lives forever. Happy is the person, searching their bible, discovers their Saviour. C.H Spurgeon wrote, "Christ bequeaths to us his manger from which to learn how God came down to man; and His cross to teach us how we may go up to God." May we all discover Christ in the Scriptures today and know His transforming power.

## PSALM 72: 17 - 19

His name for ever shall endure;  
last like the sun it shall:  
Men shall be blessed in him, and blessed  
all nations shall him call.

Now blessed be the Lord our God,  
the God of Israel,  
For he alone doth wondrous works,  
in glory that excel.

And blessed be his glorious name  
to all eternity:  
The whole earth let his glory fill.  
Amen, so let it be.

## PRAYER

God is our refuge and strength,  
a very present help in trouble.  
As society is re-shaped by Covid 19,  
let us pray with people left poorly,  
families bereaved;  
people delivering professional health care,  
looking after loved ones at home and others  
working to create treatments and cures;  
people engaged in the response of nations and  
neighbourhoods,  
of commerce and industry,  
of service and voluntary organisations,  
people who are anxious or afraid, alone or  
isolated.

*Almighty God,  
we praise You,  
and through times of difficulty we trust You,  
for in Jesus Christ  
You have walked paths as difficult as ours,  
revealing there a love that nothing defeats,  
a love that carries us through.  
We pray, that in these uncertain times  
we might know and trust that You are with us,  
our refuge and strength,  
and that our faith, hope and love might be  
renewed,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.*

## SCRIPTURE READING EPHESIANS 2: 1 - 10

1 As for you, you were dead in your  
transgressions and sins,  
2 in which you used to live when you followed  
the ways of this world and of the ruler of the  
kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work  
in those who are disobedient.  
3 All of us also lived among them at one time,  
gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following  
its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were  
by nature deserving of wrath.  
4 But because of his great love for us, God, who  
is rich in mercy,  
5 made us alive with Christ even when we were  
dead in transgressions—it is by grace  
you have been saved.  
6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated  
us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ  
Jesus,  
7 in order that in the coming ages he might show  
the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed  
in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.  
8 For it is by grace you have been saved,  
through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it  
is the gift of God—  
9 not by works, so that no one can boast.  
10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ  
Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in  
advance for us to do.

## LORD'S PRAYER

*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 this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts,  
as we forgive our debtors  
who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.*

# SERMON

When we speak of salvation by grace, we mean that we receive eternal life as a free gift from God. We know this from Jesus words, "I give them eternal life" (John 10:28). This means that prior to being saved we do not have eternal life. This is why we are not able to believe until we are first born again (John 3:3). Being a gift, salvation is free. A gift is not something we claim as a right; but out of God's grace he gives eternal life. If salvation could be earned, it would be wages with us patting ourselves on the back saying that we deserve it; if salvation was merited, it would be a reward by us claiming how good we were. But eternal life is neither of these. It is a gift, which means that it originates solely in God's good will toward His people. The Apostle Paul writes, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).

Salvation by grace is the greatest news anyone could ever hear. As we've noted, we cannot earn salvation, since no good works can erase the guilt of our sins. We cannot buy salvation since we have nothing to offer to God. We do not have a right to eternal life because the whole race fell by the sin of Adam. Yet this is the good news, we can still have eternal life by receiving it from Jesus as a free and unmerited gift of God's grace.

When it comes to the doctrines of grace it would be hard to find a more focused teaching than John 10:27-28. In these verses the doctrines of grace are wonderfully revealed through Christ's words. Jesus said, "My sheep," (*which refers to divine election*), then he goes on to say, "My Father has given them to me" (Jn. 10:29). Next, they "hear my voice" (*this is effectual calling to saving faith*). It is by Christ's power in the gospel that we hear and believe. "I know them," (this is justification through faith in Christ) where we are forgiven and adopted into the family of God. "They follow me" (*this is sanctification*) as Christ leads his sheep in paths of righteousness (Ps. 23:3).

Then Jesus says, "I give them eternal life, and they will never perish," (*this is glorification*) those belonging to Christ will "dwell in the house of the LORD forever" (Ps. 23:6). Here, then, are the doctrines of grace as taught by Jesus: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish" (Jn. 10:27-28).

And those who truly belong to Christ not only possess the free gift of eternal life, but they also have the blessing of knowing they can never lose it. "I give them eternal life," Jesus said, "and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand" (Jn. 10:28). By its very definition, eternal life cannot be lost. As everlasting life, it lasts forever. Those who truly believe, those who have received God's gift cannot lose what is eternal.

Since God cannot change, His gifts cannot be withdrawn. "The gifts and the calling of God," Paul says, "are irrevocable" (Rom. 11:29). Therefore, if you are sure that you have God's gift of eternal life, you can be equally sure that you always will.

Since we are inclined to doubt, Jesus expresses this as a promise that he will fulfil. "They will never perish," He says. A Christian may lose many things in this world: money, position, worldly esteem, comfort and even our health, but we will not lose our eternal life. We remember this, Christ rose from the tomb and has entered His eternal heavenly reign. This means that there will never be a time when Christ will not uphold this promise. "Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:24-25).

*Leon Morris tells the story of a World War II bomber hit by flack fire during a mission. As a result, the pilot had trouble steering, so he asked the rear gunner how bad the damage was. The gunner replied, "There's a three by five hole in the left horizontal stabilizer and elevator. Will we be able to make it home?" "No sweat," the pilot replied. But they barely made it, skewing and skidding as they landed.*



## PRAYER

*When they got out of the plane and the pilot examined the damage, he screamed: "When you said three by five, I thought you meant inches, not feet!" They had not been safe but were actually in mortal danger all along.*

A good deal of our earthly security is like that, it is far from being as secure as we imagine. But the wonderful thing about eternal life is that it is absolutely secure. Jesus holds His people in his own firm grasp, and they can trust His assurance that they will never perish.

In John 10:29, Jesus gives one more reason why His people are eternally secure (and we touched on this last Sunday) that the power of God the Father is able to keep His own safe. It is as if Jesus, knowing our need of encouragement, wraps his own saving hand with the omnipotent hand of God the Father and says: "My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." Friends, this is salvation by grace, the sound of it is so sweet, it saves a wretch like me! I once was lost but now am found, was blind, but now I see.

## HYMN

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch; like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved;  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed!

The Lord hath promised good to me,  
His word my hope secures;  
He will my shield and portion be  
As long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand years,  
Bright shining as the sun,  
We've no less days to sing God's praise  
Than when we first begun.

*Gracious God,  
our hearts praise you for the wonder  
of your love in Jesus.  
He is heaven's darling, but is to us  
the incarnate, despised, rejected,  
crucified sin-bearer;  
O Father, we adore you for your great love  
in the gift of Jesus,  
O Jesus, we bless you for resigning your life for  
ours,  
O Holy Spirit, we thank you for revealing to us  
this mystery.  
May we never give you rest until Christ is  
The pulse of our heart;  
The spokesman of our lips,  
The lamp of our feet.  
Accept Christ's worthiness for our unworthiness,  
His sinlessness for our transgressions,  
His meekness for our pride,  
His fulness for our emptiness,  
His glory for our shame,  
His death for our life,  
In Jesus Name we pray, Amen.*

(Prayer from 'A collection of puritan prayers')

## BENEDICTION

***And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all this day and forevermore, Amen.***