

7TH MARCH 2021

FERINTOSH PARISH CHURCH

WORSHIP AT HOME



www.ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk

"He who runs from God in the morning will scarcely find Him the rest of the day." (John Bunyan)

HYMN

Lest like to them I do become
that go down to the dust.
At morn let me thy kindness hear;
for in thee do I trust.

Teach me the way that I should walk:
I lift my soul to thee.
Lord, free me from my foes; I flee
to thee to cover me.

Because thou art my God, to do
thy will do me instruct:
Thy Sp'rit is good, me to the land
of uprightness conduct.

Revive and quicken me, O Lord,
ev'n for thine own name's sake;
And do thou, for thy righteousness,
my soul from trouble take.

PRAYER

Lord God, as we turn now to the Scriptures, we bless you for the fact that holy men wrote as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. We thank you for a word that is infallible and inerrant, but we bless you most of all for in it we find the beauty of the Lord Jesus. So, minister to us, we pray. Help us not only to be hearers but doers also. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

LUKE 5: 1 - 11 (NKJV)

1 On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on Jesus to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret,
2 and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets.
3 Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat.
4 And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."
5 And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets."


6 And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking.
7 They signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.
8 But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."
9 For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken,
10 and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men."
11 And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

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
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

Jesus asks Peter to put out the boat a little. He needs Peter's boat to preach from as this will allow everyone in the crowd gathered around Him to hear and see Jesus. So, Jesus steps into the boat, goes out a little. If you like this creates the perfect amphitheatre. The physics makes sense. Jesus sits in the boat like rabbis would sit down when they taught, and when He speaks, there would be a natural reflection of the sound waves and folk on a slight incline coming down to the shore of the Sea of Gennesaret or the Sea of Galilee or sometimes called the Sea of Tiberius, and the ones in the back of the crowd could not only hear but they could also see Jesus, and from Peter's boat He preaches the word of God.



We're not told what Jesus was preaching, perhaps some of the things that end up in the Sermon on the Mount, we know that Jesus preached some of those thoughts and ideas more than once, and He's preaching the good news of the kingdom of God. And you have to imagine this audience, some are standing, perhaps some are now sitting, and they're listening to Jesus of Nazareth. And then when Jesus finished preaching, Jesus tells Peter, "Now put out into the deep and let your nets down for a catch." And what is it that Peter says? "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets."

Now in verse 8 notice that Peter uses the word "Lord," which is a divine title, but here in v5 the word he uses is, "Master," it's like he's saying, ok, You're the boss. It would have that kind of connotation about it. Peter is frustrated. He's tired. He's caught nothing and by the tone of his voice he's saying to Jesus, "You know, Master, why don't you focus on preaching and I'll stick to fishing. I've been fishing all my life. I know this sea like the back of my hand. I know every nook and cranny and there are days like this when we just catch nothing. Trust me, there's no point in putting these nets down now. We need to go home. I need to get rest. I need some food. Let me worry about the fishing and you keep preaching."

It seems clear that at this point in Peter's life that his faith in Jesus is weak faith. There's doubt mixed in with his faith. Peter doesn't fully trust what Jesus is actually telling him to do. It's a mixture of faith and doubt. It's weak faith. It's frail faith. It's slender faith. **But I want you to see that nevertheless it is still faith in Jesus.** It may be as thin as a thread, but it's attached to Jesus. The Master is drawing out Peter's faith which is a wonderful truth for us to see today. Jesus is growing Peter's faith through this encounter. Maybe that's where some of us are this morning, we're in a moment of weak faith.

Maybe because the trials and difficulties of life have stretched you thin, maybe this past year has stretched you thin. You're fed up with it. You want it to go away. Your nerves are on edge. Your faith is weak and full of doubt like Peter's was but this can still be a moment of opportunity because Jesus is there in the midst of us.

Well, a miracle takes place here on the sea, and we don't know precisely how to explain this miracle. Was it that Jesus had foresight and that he could see into the waters by a prophetic ability to discern that there would be fish in that very spot? Or is it an exercise of His sovereign power that He commands the fish to gather? We don't know, all we know is that it was a miracle. They put down the nets and all of a sudden the nets are full, and as they pull up the nets, there's more fish than can accommodate one boat, in fact they fill the two boats to the point of sinking.

Dr Luke has done his research. The fish caught would probably have been the Galilean tilapia which were fairly big fish and because of this the boats were sinking. And this is a lovely factual detail for us to see, because it shows us that this account is being told by somebody who was there, probably Peter himself and when he tells Luke the story, he describes how the boats almost sank.

Miracles are signs and in the wake of the sign of this miracle, the sign here is clear, **THIS IS THE MESSIAH**, this is God's Son, this is the incarnate One, this is the promised One, and He comes performing miracles and healing, and proclaiming the word of God, and there's an instant reaction to this sign of Christ in Simon Peter. Notice what Peter says to Jesus, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." As a result of this miracle something has radically changed in Peter's heart towards Christ. In v5 he called Jesus Master but now he calls Jesus by His divine name and calls Him, Lord! Depart from me.

It's the response that every person has when they encounter the holiness of God, that there's something about the holiness of God that drives us to our knees in humility because of our unworthiness to be in the presence of this Holy One. It's like Abraham in Genesis 18 at the trees of Mamre when he encountered the Lord, he fell down before Him. Or like Job in the closing chapter when he says, "My eyes, now my eye sees you and I repent in dust and ashes."

Or like Isaiah in the sixth chapter when he sees the Lord high and lifted up, and he says, "I am a man of unclean lips." He had the cleanest lips in Israel but in the presence of the holy one, his lips feel so unclean. And we remember the Apostle John in the first chapter of Revelation when he sees the glory of the Lord Jesus, he fell down as though he were dead.



Peter knew he was in the presence of God. And so, he uses the term Lord. It's astonishing, isn't it? He's a Jew and immediately, he recognises in Jesus that there's something about this person, this human being who's sitting in the boat next to him, and he calls him Lord. He understands that Jesus is the Son of God.

I wonder this morning as you think about who Jesus is in all of His splendour, in all of His majesty, in all of His glory, imagine yourself sitting in that boat, that fish filled boat, that same boat that just hours before never saw one fish, and here is Peter and he's saying, "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man." If you're a Christian you understand that. You understand the instinct that's implanted in your heart that you are unworthy of Jesus, that you are unworthy of His grace, that you are unworthy of His love, **and at the same time you are full of wonder that He would love you still.**

It's worth pointing out that the only reason Peter let down that net was because Jesus said so, but I think in his heart he didn't believe he was going to catch anything. Isn't it wonderful that this is the kind of person God uses and grows and transforms. Oh, that we would pray today that we might have that kind of encounter with Jesus in His Word, that He would become our all in all, and that we too would hear Christ's command and follow Him!

HYMN

Will You Come And Follow Me
If I But Call Your Name?
Will You Go Where You Don't Know
And Never Be The Same?
Will You Let My Love Be Shown,
Will You Let My Name Be Known,
Will You Let My Life Be Grown
In You And You In Me?

Lord, Your Summons Echoes True
When You But Call My Name.
Let Me Turn And Follow You
And Never Be The Same.
In Your Company I'll Go
Where Your Love And Footsteps Show.
Thus I'll Move And Live And Grow
In You And You In Me.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we thank you that you use imperfect people, people like Peter. It's a beautiful thing for us to see because we feel like that most times. So, bless us, write this word now upon our hearts today, encourage us in gospel ministry, encourage us in discipleship, grant us a vision of the beauty and splendour and majesty of the Lord Jesus. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

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.

WORSHIP

As we are now in another lockdown it means that we are no longer able to meet in the church building. As well as the video recording and the Worship at Home material which will continue to be made available through the church website and Facebook page, we will start a Zoom-service on Sunday mornings. The Zoom-service will begin at 11am for about 30-40 minutes. If you would like to join the Zoom-service, please contact the Session Clerk SessionClerk@ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk. Please continue to take care and stay safe.

THE LEPROSY MISSION

If you are looking for Easter cards and gifts, the Leprosy Mission has a good selection. Look at tlmtrading.com. The Leprosy Mission Scotland is making available weekly meditations for Lent. TLMScotland is also looking for volunteers to take part in the virtual Kilt Walk in late April. Take a look at leprosymission.scot. If anyone has blue collecting boxes, or any other money for the Leprosy Mission, please let Janet Winchester have it by the end of March. It would be helpful if, for this year, you would open the collecting box yourself and hand in the total in larger denominations."

LADIES BIBLE STUDY

The Ladies Bible Study meet on Wednesdays at 9.45am on Zoom. We are looking at five studies called Living Christianity: following Jesus in every area of life. If you'd like to join us please contact jinty@btinternet.com so an invitation can be sent to you.

GUILD

Very many thanks to all those who donated to Seema's Project, the project we are supporting this year. Donations for the virtual soup lunch together with money saved over the year by Guild members totalled £429.74, which is more than we have raised at actual events for many years.

The next meeting by Zoom will take place on Monday 8th March at 3.30pm, when we will look at the second Bible Study in the World Day of Prayer order of service booklet. Anyone who would like to join in should contact Elizabeth Blackburn for the Zoom link.

FERINTOSH FOCUS

The next edition of the Ferintosh Focus will be published at the end of March. Any items or articles should be with the Editor please by Friday 19th March.