**Worship Sheet for Sunday 13th September 2020 prepared by Sue Kinder**

**Forgiveness**

*For those who prefer to listen to the service, it is available on 01480 597118 from Sunday to the following Saturday*



Psalm 103v1-13 is a wonderful Psalm describing a host of benefits that come to those who are the Lord’s - enduring love, forgiveness, healing, provision, justice and guidance. No wonder we are exhorted to praise Him.

**A poetry form for opening prayer**

Eternal God we offer up to you our day

And hold its tasks before you, awesome Lord

Let our deeds be subject to your gracious interplay

As we worship God above, who is adored.

We hold our prayers and fears before your throne

And trust them to your care and to your grace,

That we might never face this world alone,

But by your Spirit run this earthly race.

We pray to God, beginning and the end

Through Christ the intercessor by the throne

Empowered by the Spirit whom you send

To minister and make the Godhead known.

Forever we praise our God, the three in one

The Father, Spirit, and glorious Son. Amen

**Our Confession**

God of compassion, with whom is great power to redeem, we acknowledge with penitence what poor disciples of Jesus we are, and how slow to follow in his way. Jesus forgave his enemies, but we are vindictive and seek revenge. Jesus never used force to fulfil his purposes, but we want our own way, whatever the cost. Jesus was silent before his accusers, but we bluster and argue and squabble and fight. Jesus prayed fervently for strength to resist evil but we expect painless results from feeble efforts.

Forgiving and merciful God, in your abundant mercy, wash away our sins.

This is a reading of the confessional psalm 51 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fy948AThidU&list=PLs0kYUO87ryQ58A2PZGnrHd4Ie1zFPzbn&index=21&t=0s> (stop at end of Psalm 51!)

And the Lord’s Prayer

A choice of Music –“I get so excited Lord” for those who like an upbeat song

SoF 209 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m2qpxJn_j1Y>

Or the slightly more gentle approach of “I’m accepted, I’m forgiven”

SoF 229/ StF427 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmJSEhn7DtU>

Scripture readings Gen 50v15-21 and Matt 18v21-35

**Short story by Dave Hopwood of Engage Worship**

Once there was a cook called Cheerful Charlie, who worked for a rich man called Barry the Boss. One day Charlie decided to lay on a party for all his friends. So he went out to the supermarket and bought all the best food, caviar, haggis, champagne and lots of sticky toffee pudding. He bought twice as much as he needed, and he had a lot of friends so the bill was quite big. Too big for his own credit card. So when he came to pay he told the supermarket to put it on Barry the Boss's bill. As he pushed the trolley out to his car he bumped into one of his friends, Kev the Chef. "Lend me a couple of eggs," pleaded Kev, "you've got loads there and I want to make an omelette for my tea." Charlie took a couple of eggs out of his basket and gave them to Kev the Chef. A week later Charlie had his party and all his friends were there, eating and drinking and having a good time. Suddenly the doors burst open and everywhere fell silent as Barry the Boss stormed in. "What's all this?" he yelled, holding up a very long bill from the supermarket. "Have you seen how big this bill is?” Charlie didn't look cheerful at that moment. He looked very scared. "I spent too much on the party and I can't pay you back." he whimpered. Barry the Boss took a slow, careful look round the room. Then he sighed, shook his head... and smiled. "That's okay," he said. "Have the party on me." So they did. Ten minutes later Charlie spotted Kev the Chef jigging away on the dance floor. "Hey!" yelled Charlie, "you owe me two eggs!" "Oh dear," said Kev, "I haven't got any eggs on me right now." "In that case," said Charlie, "I'm gonna triple it to six. You owe me six eggs now, and you can be sure I’ll make you pay!” Just then Charlie felt a hand grab him by his shoulder. "Uggghhh!" said Charlie. It was Barry the Boss. "Oh oh," said Kev, "I think you're in big trouble." "He certainly is," said Barry the Boss, "I let him off a very big bill, and he couldn't let you have two eggs for an omelette. You're in very big trouble now Cheerful Charlie!"

**Reflection**

When people have experienced dreadful incidents we may hear them say “I’ll never forgive you”. But forgiveness, like the list of what constitutes love from 1 Cor13v4-8a is not how we feel, but the result of a decision to act. We must not mistakenly think that forgiveness is a “letting off”, it’s a “letting go” to allow God to bring good out of a bad situation, just as He did for Joseph.

The narratives of Jesus show that He didn’t wait to consult the people who had been the injured party; He forgave the perpetrator, as though *He* had been the one who had been offended against. This only makes sense if Jesus is God and it’s *His* laws that are being broken and it’s *His* love that is wounded at every sin.

In today’s original scripture version of the parable, the talent was the largest unit of their currency, a weight of 30kg of silver. Ten thousand was the highest Greek number value used. So we have the greatest number, of the biggest amount of money being owed. It is a ridiculously huge sum; we might say zillions of pounds today. This debtor had no option, but to beg for mercy - which he gets. Jesus was showing us that God is rich in mercy. He is so merciful He is even prepared to forgive a debt of incalculable proportions.

This parable puts into perspective that what “they” have done to us, is nothing compared to what ‘we’ have done to God. It is inconceivable that we should demand others pay when God has let us off the hook. And we repeat the forgiving, not just a generous 7 times that was more than twice the Pharisees ‘good deeds’ target of 3. The response from Jesus was another high multiple so that we would lose count of the times that same offence was committed against us.

Jesus’ last words from the cross were ‘*tetelestai’*,- it is finished, it is paid in full. He had fulfilled the OT laws of sacrifice for known and unknown sin, for guilt and for cleansing. Now the everlasting presence of the blood of Jesus before the throne of God, pleads for mercy and forgiveness continually.

Joseph’s forgiveness of his brothers is like God’s forgiveness of us. He won’t keep a tally, He won’t tell, He’ll release us from fear and guilt, and He’ll bless us instead -for our sins have been removed from us as far as the east is from the west. Amen and Praise God.

Music – SoF488/StF434 Rock of Ages <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gM7gt_cSxjw>

**Intercessions** in poetry. *Add the names and situations of people you know as you make this prayer*

With heartfelt plea we intercede

And raise to God this world’s great need

We implore your Kingdom come

That here on earth your will be done . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

These are our needs which we declare. In your mercy hear our prayer.

Unite your church with love and grace

To serve people in every place

We pray that we are true and bold

To bring lost sheep back to your fold . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

These are our needs which we declare. In your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray you heal our suffering earth

Which suffers from our sinful curse

Amend our ways and help us live

In harmony with all you give . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

These are our needs which we declare. In your mercy, hear our prayer.

Lord stand beside the poor and needy

Who suffer because we are greedy

Break the chains of the oppressed

Release those under false arrest . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

These are our needs which we declare. In your mercy, hear our prayer.

Bring peace to those in all distress

In sickness, mourning and unrest

Let them know your gentle touch

We pray their pain is not too much . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

These are our needs which we declare. In your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray all this through Christ our Lord

To Father God in heaven adored

Let your Spirit lead our prayers

As we present you our affairs.

These are our needs which we declare. And in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Sending out prayer

We tell the tale of the divine

God’s great story, yours and mine

Shout aloud the praise of Christ

The willing Pascal sacrifice

Who died and rose and ever lives

And by His grace our sins forgives.

We go in name of Father and the Son

We go in name of Spirit, th’eternal three in one

To tell the tale and live in love. Hallelujah. Amen

Prepared by Sue Kinder of St Ives Methodist Church