

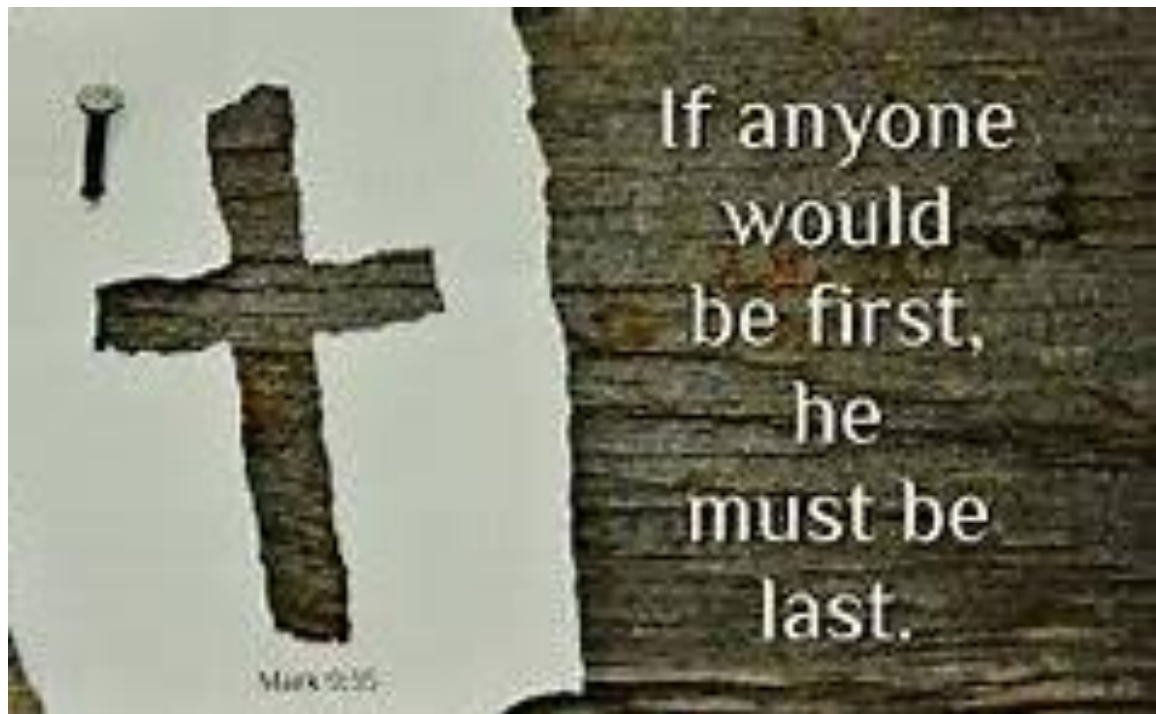
Order of Service

19th of September 2021

10.00 am



Worship led by Rev Dr André Groenewald
Music from Harry Thomson and the Choir



Welcome & Announcements

Welcome to our service of worship.

Next week we will have our last ONLY ONLINE service for the time being when we resume Sunday Worship in the church from the 3rd of October. It will be the Harvest thanksgiving service. If you would like to wear something bright and yellow it will be greatly appreciated. There will also be an opportunity to bring any dry food for the foodbank.

On the 10th of October there will be two services at 9 am a Family and children breakfast and then at 10:30 Festival Praise service. Please remember at 10:30! All the services are advertised on our website.

You are invited to a cup of coffee or tea in the Ogston Hall.

Worshipping God Together

Minister: Have mercy on us, O God,
according to your unfailing love,

**Beloved, I greet you in the Name of God the Father the Son
and the Holy Spirit.**

Amen

Let us sing JP 70 Happiness is to know the Saviour

Happiness is to know the Saviour,

Living a life within His favour,
Having a change in my behaviour,
Happiness is the Lord.

Happiness is a new creation,
Jesus and me in close relation,
Having a part in His salvation,
Happiness is the Lord.

Real joy is mine,
No matter if the teardrops start,
I've found a secret,
It's Jesus in my heart.

Happiness is to be forgiven,
Living a life that's worth the livin',
Taking a trip that leads to Heaven,
Happiness is the Lord,
Happiness is the Lord,
Happiness is the Lord.

Opening prayer and Lord's prayer

Let us pray:

Lord, let your kingdom come near.

Let us see your world through your eyes,

that we may perceive its goodness and promise,
its failure and frustration, its needs and its gifts.

Lord, let your kingdom be upon us,
to rebuild your world, and to rebuild our lives,
that your good news may be proclaimed
and your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven

Compassionate God,

we pray for all who need your touch and love in their
lives.

Give them strength and courage;

we ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who chose to reach out and heal and who taught us to
pray

Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your 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 YOU are the kingdom, the power and the glory for ever.

Amen

Reflecting on God's Word

Reading: Mark 9:30-37 read by Peter MacLean

Jesus predicts his death a second time

³⁰ They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, ³¹ because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, 'The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.' ³² But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it. ³³ They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, 'What were you arguing about on the road?' ³⁴ But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest. ³⁵ Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, 'Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.' ³⁶ He took a little child whom he placed among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷ 'Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.'

CH4 374 From heaven you came, helpless babe

From heaven you came, helpless babe,

Entered our world, your glory veiled;

Not to be served but to serve,

And give your life that we might live.

Refrain:

This is our God, the Servant King,

He calls us now to follow him,

To bring our lives as a daily offering

Of worship to the Servant King.

There in the garden of tears,

My heavy load he chose to bear;

His heart with sorrow was torn,

'Yet not my will but yours,' he said. ***[Refrain]***

Come, see his hands and his feet,

The scars that speak of sacrifice,

Hands that flung stars into space

To cruel nails surrendered. ***[Refrain]***

So let us learn how to serve,

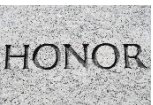
And in our lives enthrone him;

Each other's needs to prefer,

For it is Christ we're serving. ***[Refrain]***

Sermon

Our society have changed considerably after Covid-19 and a lot more will change in the way we ask questions, approach life, eat our food, shop, go on holidays, attend worship services, parenting our children, looking after our elderly etc. One thing that has not changed though is the inequality that exists around us between the “have’s and the have nots”, and between those in power and those without any power which almost divides our world into two groups.

This was also the same in the society of the New Testament, albeit differently. Although our society  is driven by  money, wealth and status, the society that Jesus lived in was driven by

what they called “honour and shame” . It was the reason behind the argument between the disciples. Being the greatest was a synonym for “having the most honour”.

You could lose your honor but never your shame! You could acquire honor by being born into noble families, [slide 34] by your profession and the way you conducted yourself at the Marketplace and on the streets. If you did not conduct yourself in an appropriate manner you could bring shame over your whole family. Certain professions [slide 35] were considered as being shameful such as those who worked with the skins of dead animals, prostitutes and tax collectors.

So the disciples were most probably referring to these categories and how important it was to be in the right company and not to compromise your “honorable” position in any way.

Amazingly although they did not tell  Jesus about their conversation, He already knew the content of their discussion. And He puts their argument in the right spiritual context. Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, “If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all.”  By sitting down Jesus is implying that He is the rabbi and He is going to teach them something very important which He does.

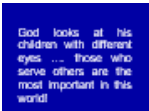


And then to be more specific Jesus take a young child into his arms and explains what He meant with his words. Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.'

Now why would Jesus do that? In our society this would be frowned upon. A stranger just randomly taking a child in his arms? Really – but this emphasizes a very important fact – their society and our society are different hence why we need to look at this passage in its context.

In Jesus' day the children had no rights (unlike today), no power and no status. They were the totally dependent on their parents. It was only after a son have matured into an adult that he "meant something". By taking a child Jesus is emphasizing the fact that although a child is powerless in their society, in God's eyes the opposite is true. And the Jesus goes on saying that those who are like children will be representing Him and God the Father in this world. In Jewish custom, a person's agent, similar to a modern business representative, could act on behalf of the person who sent him. He had the support and the full authority of the sender. This principle was also

applied in the Old Testament to God's messengers like his prophets.



So what was Jesus saying? God looks at his children with different eyes and the most important in this world is those who serve others!



In our reading it is clear that the disciples at first did not understand what Jesus was saying about his imminent death and victory....but then when Jesus sat down and gave them a practical example of what He meant, maybe they did then

understand something, although it must have been a shock to their systems.

Why? Well Jesus portrayed a picture of God's Kingdom that was alien to them. In Jesus portrayal of the Kingdom, it was clear as daylight that there would be a role diversion, those who are important will no longer have the same importance and those who had no importance at all, will be important and valuable in God's Sight.

Jesus wanted the disciples to understand that all lives matter in the eyes of God. God looks differently with great love at each of his creatures.

In a BIG way Jesus brought the two opposing cultural classes of shame and honour together and by illustrating that children do it naturally, He said to all his followers to become like children. If they do become like children, they will not argue about who is important and who is not important, who has honour and who is shameful. And most importantly they will understand the nature of the Kingdom of God better....

So, what can we do about our society and the continuous pressure that we face on a daily level to compete and earn more money, climbing the

ladder to success, and chasing false gods that cannot make anyone happy

Covid 19 has brought the mission field of God closer to home ... we can no longer escape the dire Spiritual need of our society around us. A society that needs to listen to the words of Jesus of what is really important in life. Human Beings that need to hear that they are accepted and important in the eyes of God. Everyone that is vulnerable, alone and struggling to cope with the demands of life need to feel welcome in the presence of God. And we need to be the vehicles of God Almighty ACTION because if we do, we are doing God's will

by representing HIM on this earth. We need to become servants of His Holy Name.

The mission field has indeed been shifted – it is no longer far away in other countries. It is here, all around us, and sadly the harvest is standing on our fields rotting away because the workers are so few.

We do not need anyone to tell us what is wrong. We all know what is wrong. We have become a society that is scared of our own children and youth, to scared even to whisper the name of Jesus. We have become people that is so polite that we totally ignore our faith when we hang out

with friends, just so that we do not offend anyone whilst offending the Almighty God.

The Mission field is now in our homes and families **(slide 41)**.... We need to start modelling what Jesus taught us, to love unconditionally, to forgive and to pray with our loved ones. To start every meal with a prayer, even when we eat out, even when we have friends for dinner.

The Mission field is our friends **(slide 42)**... and those we are not friendly with. We need to share with them the importance of God's intervention in our lives in and through the redemption of Jesus Christ and the miracles that happens daily. We need to be there when they struggle to cope with

life. We need to live the joy of being redeemed by God. They need to see that we live for God!

The Mission field is our society (**slide 43**). Our society needs to become like children again, being emancipated from money, wealth and success. A society with proper values such as respect for God, for oneself and others!

If we take responsibility again of all our Christian actions, responsibilities, and duties, we will inherit the kingdom of God. If we start by doing what children does best namely to trust and love unquestionably – we will become vehicles of God's grace and love to all people and make such a big difference. Amen

Prayer of thanksgiving Margaret Black

CH4 552:1,2,5,6 Oh, for a closer walk with God (Tune: Martyrdom (Fenwick))

1. Oh, for a closer walk with God,
a calm and heav'nly frame,
a light to shine upon the road
that leads me to the Lamb!

2. Where is the blessedness I knew
when first I sought the Lord?
Where is the soul refreshing view
of Jesus and His Word?

5. The dearest idol I have known,
whate'er that idol be,
help me to tear it from Thy throne
and worship only Thee.

6. So shall my walk be close with God,
calm and serene my frame;
so purer light shall mark the road
that leads me to the Lamb.

**Blessing Receive the blessing of God and go in peace:
Go forth into the world in peace;
be of good courage;**

hold fast that which is good;
render to no one evil for evil;
strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak;
help the afflicted; honour everyone;
love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the
Holy Spirit.

The blessing of God almighty,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Be with you all

Now and for evermore

Sung Amen

You are invited to a cup of coffee or tea in the Ogston Hall.

Prayer

Creative God,
you called us into your kingdom,
and adopted us as your children.
Redeeming Saviour,
you showed us how to be servants,

denying ourselves to serve others.
Sustaining Spirit, you give us strength to take up our cross
in the service of the kingdom of God.
Teach us to serve others,
and in doing so, to serve you.
Amen.

Jesus' disciples argued about who was 'number one'.

