

Psalm 31:-15,15-16

This morning's psalm, is one that I could see being written today in the height of Corvid 19, it's a prayer of deliverance to the Lord, one that asks for salvation for the trials of the day. As you read this psalm I want you to write down the different images that the writer uses to describe the many ways in which the Lord is bring about their salvation. What words would you change or add to this prayer to make it more of your own?

What comes to your mind when you hear the words that the Lord is our rock and our salvation, this is often the prayer that is said before a minister preaches, why do you think that this is the prayer that is used before preaching? What makes the phrase our rock and our salvation so strong?

What does it mean to you to be put to shame? And where in your life have you seen God, preventing shame from coming into your life?

How do you feel when you think about how God is guiding us, what differences do you see in your life when you ask God to take the wheel? How would you describe the differences that it makes during this time, and during what was once seen as regular time?

What does it mean for you to commit you spirt to the Lord? We often think about this phrase during our lead up to Easter, as were told that Jesus committed his spirit to God at the moment of his death. But what does it mean for us who are still living today, to commit our spirit to the Lord?

How are ways in which we are able to show people and our selves that we are committed to the Lord, how would this change the way you live your life?

What comes to mind when you hear the good news that the Lord's face shine on your life? What are some time when you know this is true? And where in your life do you think that you could shine this light of the Lord, in your life? In your community? In the world?

How would you write this psalm in your own words today? As you ask God to look after you, during these challenging times?

Acts 7:55-60

This morning scripture reading is the tells us the story of Stephen the very first early follower of Christ who lost his life for the sake of the good news of the empty tomb. And were encouraged to remember his story for two main reasons, one to remind us that there are times when we as followers of Jesus might need to go as far as our own cross, for the sake of his good news. Although in this day and age many of us do not need to face this trial of fire, as we live in a part of the world where we do not need to fear practicing our faith. But we need to remember that not all of our brothers and sister in faith have the same luxury, but were given this story to give us strength to remind us that not even death itself can stop the Easter news.

The second reason why we read this story is because it is our first introduction to a man named Saul, we in the church know him better as Paul, and he is mentioned in this story as the person who turned the crowd against Stephen, which in turn led to his death. This is part of Saul/Paul's story that we don't always want to focus on, but it is an important part of his story, for it shows us how God is able to change people's hearts and whole lives once they get to know Jesus Christ.

As you read this morning scripture I want you to think about a few different things, one We know that Stephen was willing to risk his life to share the good news of the Jesus, where in the world do you see people doing the same things today. Where in the community do you see people doing the same thing, such as going into dangerous situations, because God wants his people to look after those who are in danger. Have you ever looked at the risks you make in your life for the sake of sharing the good news with the world around you?

Such as going out to work at a local mission, to willing to go with less so that someone else is able to have what they need? To go to work during this pandemic, looking after people who might be infected, because they still need someone to care for them? As yourself why do you do this, or why do people do it, can what they are doing be seen as following in the steps of Stephen, by bearing witness to the Lord, even if it puts yourself at risk?

How can we as a church family support our modern-day Stephen in this day?

When you hear about what Saul did what was your first reaction? What would you do if you were part of that crowd so long ago? What would you do if you meet Saul before he was transformed into Paul? Would you be willing to give him a second chance?

Who are the modern day Saul in our world today? In your life today? What do we need to do in our own hearts to allow for God's transformation to happen to these people in our life? How would we need to change the way we treat these people after they have met Jesus? Would you be able to forgive someone who hurt you, once they found the love of God? This is one of the hardest things that God might ask us to do, and yet we see with Saul/Paul what good things can happen when we're willing to follow Jesus and seek to forgive as we have been forgiven?

What prayer would you offer up to the Lord to help you be prepared to be open to those whom God will call into his holy kingdom.

1 Peter 2:2-10

As we draw closer to the end of our Easter season, this morning reading reminds us that even though the world might move on from the promise of the empty tomb, we as followers of Jesus don't. because we have been transformed by the cross and the empty grave, and this wonderful event has left a lasting mark upon our very lives. As now we are no longer fed only by the fruit of the earth, now we are being nourished by the bread of heaven, we're given a diet of spiritual milk as Peter says. Something that feeds our souls, and not just our bodies. And as you read this passage this morning I want you to think about the many ways in which God feeds your soul? What in your life brings you closer to God? What new

things have you started doing now that were not able to come together to worship during this season? What something new you might try to see if it brings you closer to the Lord?

Peter again reminds us that Jesus was the stone that the world rejected, but the one that God chose to use to bring about salvation to the world, what does it mean to you that God chose someone who understands what it is like to be overlooked? How does this help you relate to Jesus when in your life you feel overlooked or even rejected? Are you able to relate more to Jesus because you know that he knows how you are feeling at your lowest? And what does this say about our God that he was willing to take upon himself both the good and bad parts of human life, for our sake?

Have you ever thought of your life as something that is holy? Peter tells us that we should allow our lives to be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood? What comes to mind when you hear this part of scripture? Do you ever feel like you are part of a holy priesthood? If so what does that mean to you, and if not why? What do you think holds you back from claiming this title for your self?

How do you think your day might change if as soon as you wake up and look at yourself in the mirror you proclaimed out loud that you are a chosen member of God's beloved family, a member of his royal priesthood?

Why do you think Peter thought that it was important for followers of Jesus to know this truth? To know that that no matter what they had a place where they belong, all because Jesus loves them?

How has your life changed because you have received the mercy of our Lord? How are we to go out into the world and share this mercy with those who we meet in the name of Jesus?

John 14:1-14

This morning we are given one of the most famous passages of scripture, the reading for John's gospel is often one that is preached at celebration of life. As we draw comfort from the promise of a place for us in our heavenly father's home. So I want to invite you today to think about what this promise means to you as this is a personal promise, in God's kingdom there is a place made just for you, not for the person beside you, not one size fits all one just for you because God loves you.

What comes to your mind when you hear this promise of Jesus? What do you think would make your room special? What good things do you think that God would put into your room?

In Jesus time, when a couple got married, they did not move into a new house unless they were very wealthy, instead the family would come together to build a new room on the family house, the family would come together to make space for people, to welcome them into their hearts and their homes. How does this change the way you read this scripture readings?

How does it change when you know that it is Jesus himself who goes and prepares a place for his beloved people? How does this make you feel? What words would you use to describe that this feeling?

What comes to your mind when you think of Jesus as the way, the truth and the life? How has this confession changed the way you see our world?

Did you know that the early followers of Jesus called themselves followers of the Way? Why do you think the title changed?

What can we say we know about our Heavenly Father, because we know Jesus? Take a moment to list all that you know about Jesus and how that gives us a better understanding about the Father who sent him to live among us?

Why do you think it is important for us to come and know our Great Creator? How much a deeper relationship are we able to have with someone once we get to know them better?

What prayer would you offer up to the Lord today, for allow us to come to know him through the acts of his only Son?