

RYDE BAPTIST CHURCH SUNDAY SERVICE

26 July 2020

can assure you it is much, much more important than that.” An example of idolatry perhaps! Becky Pippert, a well-known Christian author and teacher, summarises it well : “That is why god-substitutes are seen as sin in the Bible, because we are demanding that they give us what only God can give: identity, purpose, being totally understood and perfectly loved. The Bible even has a word for God-substitutes—idolatry.” The Bible says that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. That means we have all at some time been guilty of idolatry. We have worshipped God-substitutes. We have all turned away from God and tried to run our own lives. When I became a Christian, I realised that I had been trying to live my life without any reference to God. I was worshipping my own ability to run my life as I saw fit. Becky Pippert continues: “We’ve been created for a relationship with God; to live with him at the centre of our lives. That is why the Christian message is called “good news,” because God loves us and has been seeking us for far longer than we realize. But we also need to own the bad news—that we have chosen something else in his place. Through our relationship with God we find our true identity and receive what we most need: forgiveness, reconciliation with him, identity, purpose, and the love that will never leave us.” When people realise that we are in the same situation as them and are not

looking down on them in superiority or in judgment, they are more likely to “hear” us and we can then point them to what they long for most which is what Christ offers.

Application. How do we apply this today in our lives? We need to ask whether we have been worshipping something other than God, perhaps family, a job, a hobby, or something else. Each of us needs to put God at the centre of all we are and do. May the Holy Spirit enable us to be honest and obedient as we ask this question. Amen

SUGGESTED SONG

In Christ Alone
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kPv4vnW6X-Q>

BLESSING

May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

<https://rydebaptist.xyz>

Dear Friends,

Over the course of the last couple of weeks we have been reading some of Jesus’ parables, and that continues this morning. What a range of subject matter we have been considering, all representative of the sorts of daily experiences of life in and around first century Galilee and beyond. Even today when we visit the region we get to see something of the fishing industry on the lake and the agricultural and other activities of the surrounding plains and hills. At the time Jesus was teaching, the region was a thriving commercial area with the main trading routes from the North and the Coast passing nearby the towns and villages familiar to us from the stories. The five parables this morning take simple things, and help us to engage our hearts and minds in new, creative and inspiring ways—if we let them.

Each story begins with ‘the kingdom of heaven is like...’ and so we need to think seriously about how the kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, some yeast, treasure hidden in a field, a merchant looking for fine pearls, and a fishing net that is let down into the lake and catches all kinds of fish. These are small, otherwise inconsequential, things in

themselves, but each illustrates an aspect of the kingdom that we need to understand. Small things can have a massive impact—such as the little mustard seed compared to the enormous tree, or the yeast that enables the flour to expand the dough to make numerous loaves. We must be encouraged, because our small offerings of sacrifice and witness can provoke similar results.

When we realise what being a part of God’s family means to us, how precious it is, we will do everything to possess and retain it—just like the man who sells everything to get the treasure or the merchant who sells everything to obtain the valuable pearl. Jesus invites his followers to become fishers of people, and the fishnet that catches us and brings us into the family will have caught all kinds of other people too. It is not for us to judge or to separate but to live as righteous disciples of Jesus.

Our Zoom Sunday Morning Fellowship Meeting is at 10.30am and our Monday Prayer Meeting at 7.00pm. If you are able to join us, you will be welcome. If you are reading this sheet on your computer or device you can also click on the readings and songs. There are other helpful links at <https://rydebaptist.xyz>

PRAY FOR RYDE 2020

Launched on 1 July 2020, the themes for prayer are being published daily. Go to prayforryde.org for more information, videos and the link to the daily 7pm Zoom prayer meeting. For those who cannot access the website, here are last week's themes: 19 July, Aspire; 20 July, The Foyer; 21 July, Elected Representatives; 22 July, Council Officers & Staff; 23 July, Community Arts Projects; 24 July, Musicians; 25 July, People Living Alone. We will update the list here each week until 23 September.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of his wonderful acts. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always. Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced, you his servants, the descendants of Abraham, his chosen ones, the children of Jacob. (Ps 105:1-6)

BIBLE READINGS

[Psalm 105:1-11](#)

[Matthew 13:31-34,44-51](#)

[Romans 6:1-23](#)

SUGGESTED SONGS

10,000 Reasons (Bless The Lord)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXDGEIRI0E>

Above All Powers
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0UgkUC2g3g>

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, we come in your name today to bring our worship and praise to Almighty God, our heavenly Father. We thank you that the more we get to know you, the more we experience of you day by day, the more our love deepens and grows for you and for the world in which you have called us to live and to which you have called us to serve. We thank you for the Bible which speaks clearly of your love and your plan for the world's redemption and salvation. We thank you for your Holy Spirit who brings your life to us, cleansing, empowering and guiding us on the Way. As we are still unable to meet in the ways that we were once familiar with, help us to find new ways in which to express the fellowship and bonds of love that you have made between us, your church. Help us to use all the opportunities and gifts that you have given us to share friendship and to encourage each other, whether on the phone or in person, whether giving or receiving hospitality, or a listening ear, or in prayer. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

TO PONDER

Five months today is Boxing Day! We are over half way through the year. Why do we only contact certain people at Christmas? Now might be a good time to look at our Christmas lists and get in touch with someone we haven't spoken to for a while. They might just appreciate a word of encouragement today.

SUGGESTED SONGS

I Love You Lord (And I Lift My Voice)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKF7sBxv1-o>

Beautiful One
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v9bC9CRv9oU>

A big thank you to Ian Pratt who brings us our mini-sermon outline today:

MINI-SERMON OUTLINE

Introduction. How do you explain sin to a culture that does not believe in it? If you ask people in the street what sin is they will probably give a list of behaviour which they regard as sinful e.g. drug taking, adultery, lying, pop music (!), stealing, etc. Some of you may have heard of a US President called Calvin Coolidge. He was the first President to be born on 4th July (1872), but he was more famous for being a man of few words. He was so famous for saying so little that a White House dinner guest made a bet that she could get the presi-

dent to say more than two words. She told the president of her wager. His reply: "You lose." The President attended church one Sunday, while Mrs. Coolidge remained at the White House. On his return, anxious that she might have missed something significant, the First Lady asked her husband about the preacher's sermon topic. "He spoke about sin," the President replied. "What did he say?" Mrs. Coolidge enquired. "He was against it!" Most people, if they think sin is a certain kind of bad behaviour, are against it. However, sin is not misdeeds. Bad behaviour is merely the fruit of sin. This, therefore, begs the question as to what sin is and what is its root cause.

Exposition. The Bible describes sin as both rebellious unbelief and idolatry. I think idolatry is often an easier concept for people to grasp. What is idolatry in essence? Well, we have been created to love and worship God. We have worshipping natures. The trouble comes when we try to worship something other than God—when we put something else in the place of God. It can be something good e.g. family, work, a hobby, or it can be something bad e.g. violence, sexual promiscuity, fraudulent behaviour etc. (These are just random examples of each.) Bill Shankly, a former manager of Liverpool F.C., is famously quoted as saying: "Some people believe football is a matter of life and death, I am very disappointed with that attitude. I