

RYDE BAPTIST CHURCH SUNDAY SERVICE

8 November 2020—Remembrance

Coming Ready Or Not. Jesus expects us to count the cost and not to get involved in his Way if we are not prepared (Luke 14:25-33). The reality is that many of our life events happen whether we are ready or not, and this is especially true when it comes to serious illness, or death. It is better to be prepared for it than not to be prepared. It is better to be in a right relationship with God and with our neighbour now, than to leave it until it is too late. 'For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.' There is little detail written in Scripture about the reality of death, so Paul's concern here is to encourage the church in Thessalonica, and us in our faith too, that we should be prepared: 'Therefore encourage one another with these words.' This is not to scare us but to increase our confidence in Christ.

Wise And Foolish Virgins. Those of us familiar with Middle Eastern culture will know what a valuable commodity olive oil is, used in varying qualities and grades for anointing at its most virgin, through healthcare, cooking, making soap and for lighting lamps, etc. Spiritually, this oil represents life, and faith, the source of health and healing, and the anointing of God's Holy Spirit. This isn't just about having a battery ready for our torch; it is about whether or not we are living in a state of spiritual battle readiness in service of the King of Kings.

Virgin Soldiers. None of us have been this way before, so we are all virgins—innocence restored—in the service of our Lord Jesus. We must keep our training up to date, in our heads, hands and hearts. But this is not an image of war, but a wedding banquet. This parable foresees the coming of the Bridegroom to celebrate with all who are expecting him and are well prepared. The Bridegroom is the Prince of Peace, in whose wake all weapons of war, swords and spears, are turned into tools of peace, sickles and ploughshares. This banquet gives us, as Communion, a foretaste of the abundant heavenly feast where mourning and grieving, pain and tears, are a thing of the past, where songs of ecstatic joy and celebration fill the air.

SUGGESTED SONG

Blessed Assurance Jesus Is Mine
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GEeBo1fwzKU>

BLESSING

We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done. (Psalm 78:4)

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, now and always. Amen.

<https://rydebaptist.xyz>

Dear Friends,

Of all the changes, differences and disappointments that we have had to endure this year, the many restrictions that are in place for Remembrance Sunday and around 11 November have got to be among some of the more difficult for a greater number of people. Not only is this the first time since the end of the First World War that so many local acts of remembrance have been cancelled, or limited to a few invited guests, but so many former service men and women are this year prevented from meeting up with their comrades and parading with solemnity and pride, remembering those who made ultimate sacrifices or were wounded in body or mind for the sake of security and peace.

Some of us may have spent time in one of the services, or have family who have served or continue to serve. When we remember the history of armed conflict, war time, even peace time security operations, most of us will discover that we have one connection or another. My personal thoughts and reflections focus on a great grandfather who as a young father was wounded in battle and later buried in Cairo in 1917, and a grandfather whose injuries during the Second



World War probably contributed to his early death when I was a child. All of us have cause to be grateful for the lives and labours of others for 'Queen and country', whatever that means, despite our own thoughts or feelings about military life, the taking up of arms or methods chosen by nations to protect or maintain peace. We rightly stress Jesus' words, 'Blessed are the peacemakers', and we do not condemn those who choose responsible pacifism. Yet there is the call of Jesus to take up our cross, and his affirmation that there is no greater love than to lay down one's life for a friend. Jesus our Friend and Saviour took that very path, ending in death on the Cross, a sinless man dying between two sinners, for the peace of the world. The path of peace is not easy, but Jesus shows us the only true way.

Zoom is the safest way for most people to meet during this time, and will continue to be the main way we'll meet for some time. Our Zoom Sunday Service is at 10.30am today; our Zoom Prayer Meeting is at 7.00pm tomorrow, Monday, beginning as usual with a joint Ryde Churches time of prayer. If you are able to join us, you will be very welcome. The Zoom links will be sent to those who have signed up to receive them. If you are reading this sheet on your computer or device you can also click on the readings and songs. There is lots more information on our website which you can find at <https://rydebaptist.xyz>

CALL TO WORSHIP

My people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things, things from of old—things we have heard and known, things our ancestors have told us. (Psalm 78:1-3)

BIBLE READINGS

[Psalm 78:1-8](#)

[Matthew 25:1-13](#)

[1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#)

SUGGESTED SONGS

How Great Is Our God
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEm9bDwPQPs>

Across The Lands
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5L6QIAH3L4>

AN ACT OF REMEMBRANCE

Friends, let us remember before God, all those who have died in war.

'They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old. Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them.'

THE TWO MINUTES SILENCE (11am)

Almighty God our Heavenly Father, you call all your children to live as brothers and sisters in love and harmony, and have given your Son to be our Saviour, the Prince of Peace; may we who are called by his name, give our lives to your service, working for reconciliation, understanding, and peace in all our relationships; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

We pray this day for all who continue to suffer because of war: for widows, orphans, and all who are bereaved; those wounded or disabled, in body or mind; for refugees, homeless, displaced; for those affected by conflicts long since past whose traumas live in the present; for those living in places of conflict today, who do not know whether there will be a future nor what it might hold. Give to them your healing and strength, your help and consolation, and wherever possible may we be channels of your peace, sowers of seeds of love among the poppies of remembrance; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SUGGESTED SONG

Abide With Me
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84YASWe3_2Q

COMMUNION

If you truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and at peace with your neighbours, and are resolved to live a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking henceforth in his holy ways: draw near with faith, and take this sacred meal to your comfort and growth in grace.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Your death, O Lord, we commemorate. Your resurrection we confess. Your final coming we await. Glory be to you, O Christ:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us with the body and blood of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we offer you ourselves to be a living sacrifice. Send us out in the power of the Holy Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.

MINI-SERMON OUTLINE

Introduction. We are going to remember 5 November 2020 for many years to come as the start of Lockdown 2 here in England. Yet we should have been prepared this time, the signs were all there, and most of us didn't need to rush out for panic supplies of loo roll or flour. We continue to pray for and seek to practically support those who are struggling or in need, but by and large we are prepared. I even have just over half a litre of olive oil in the cupboard, which in an emergency should see me through the darkest hours of the night. Today's Gospel reading challenges us to be prepared for whatever the eventuality, especially the arrival of the Bridegroom. (Advent isn't far off, when we focus on the promised return of Jesus.)

Fail To Prepare, Prepare To Fail. Unlike most previous conflicts in modern British history, where wars were largely fought by professionals (even if conscripted), the First World War saw countless innocent young men, albeit rapidly trained, barely prepared for the horrors and reality of the torture and bloodshed they faced. There was hard fought victory in the end, but the amount of blood spilt and lives lost cannot be seen as anything other than a human failure, on every level. Combatants in subsequent conflicts have been better prepared; but the sheer human cost challenges any superficial response.