

Readings for June 2019

Sunday 2nd June

Acts 16:16-34

One day on our way to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl. She had a spirit in her that gave her the power to tell the future. By doing this she made a lot of money for her owners. The girl followed Paul and the rest of us and kept yelling, "These men are servants of the Most High God! They are telling you how to be saved."

This went on for several days. Finally, Paul got so upset that he turned and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ, I order you to leave this girl alone!" At once the evil spirit left her.

When the girl's owners realized that they had lost all chances for making more money, they grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them into court. They told the officials, "These Jews are upsetting our city! They are telling us to do things we Romans are not allowed to do."

The crowd joined in the attack on Paul and Silas. Then the officials tore the clothes off the two men and ordered them to be beaten with a whip. After they had been badly beaten, they were put in jail, and the jailer was told to guard them carefully. The jailer did as he was told. He put them deep inside the jail and chained their feet to heavy blocks of wood.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing praises to God, while the other prisoners listened. Suddenly a strong earthquake shook the jail to its foundations. The doors opened, and the chains fell from all the prisoners.

When the jailer woke up and saw that the doors were open, he thought that the prisoners had escaped. He pulled out his sword and was about to kill himself. But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! No one has escaped."

The jailer asked for a torch and went into the jail. He was shaking all over as he knelt down in front of Paul and Silas. After he had led them out of the jail, he asked, "What must I do to be saved?"

They replied, "Have faith in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved! This is also true for everyone who lives in your home."

Then Paul and Silas told him and everyone else in his house about the Lord. While it was still night, the jailer took them to a place where he could wash their cuts and bruises. Then he and everyone in his home were baptized. They were very glad that they had put their faith in God. After this, the jailer took Paul and Silas to his home and gave them something to eat.

Revelation 22:12-14 ,16-19,20-21

Then I was told:

I am coming soon! And when I come, I will reward everyone for what they have done. I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

God will bless all who have washed their robes. They will each have the right to eat fruit from the tree that gives life, and they can enter the gates of the city.

I am Jesus! And I am the one who sent my angel to tell all of you these things for the churches. I am David's Great Descendant, and I am also the bright morning star.

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!"

Everyone who hears this should say, "Come!"

If you are thirsty, come! If you want life-giving water, come and take it. It's free!

The one who has spoken these things says, "I am coming soon!"

So, Lord Jesus, please come soon!

I pray that the Lord Jesus will be kind to all of you.

John 17:20-26

I am not praying just for these followers. I am also praying for everyone else who will have faith because of what my followers will say about me. I want all of them to be one with each other, just as I am one with you and you are one with me. I also want them to be one with us. Then the people of this world will believe that you sent me.

I have honoured my followers in the same way that you honoured me, in order that they may be one with each other, just as we are one. I am one with them, and you are one with me, so that they may become completely one. Then this world's people will know that you sent me. They will know that you love my followers as much as you love me.

Father, I want everyone you have given me to be with me, wherever I am. Then they will see the glory that you have given me, because you loved me before the world was created. Good Father, the people of this world don't know you. But I know you, and my followers know that you sent me. I told them what you are like, and I will tell them even more. Then the love that you have for me will become part of them, and I will be one with them.

Sunday 9th June Pentecost Sunday

Acts 2:1-21

On the day of Pentecost all the Lord's followers were together in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from heaven like the sound of a mighty wind! It filled the house where they were meeting. Then they saw what looked like fiery tongues moving in all directions, and a tongue came and settled on each person there. The Holy Spirit took control of everyone, and they began speaking whatever languages the Spirit let them speak.

Many religious Jews from every country in the world were living in Jerusalem. And when they heard this noise, a crowd gathered. But they were surprised, because they were hearing everything in their own languages. They were excited and amazed, and said:

Don't all these who are speaking come from Galilee? Then why do we hear them speaking our very own languages? Some of us are from Parthia, Media, and Elam. Others are from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, parts of Libya near Cyrene, Rome, Crete, and Arabia. Some of us were born Jews, and others of us have chosen to be Jews. Yet we all hear them using our own languages to tell the wonderful things God has done.

Everyone was excited and confused. Some of them even kept asking each other, "What does all this mean?"

Others made fun of the Lord's followers and said, "They are drunk."

Peter stood with the eleven apostles and spoke in a loud and clear voice to the crowd:

Friends and everyone else living in Jerusalem, listen carefully to what I have to say! You are wrong to think that these people are drunk. After all, it is only nine o'clock in the morning. But this is what God had the prophet Joel say,

"When the last days come,
I will give my Spirit
to everyone.
Your sons and daughters

will prophesy.
Your young men
will see visions,
and your old men
will have dreams.
In those days I will give
my Spirit to my servants,
both men and women,
and they will prophesy.
I will work miracles
in the sky above
and wonders
on the earth below.
There will be blood and fire
and clouds of smoke.
The sun will turn dark,
and the moon
will be as red as blood
before the great
and wonderful day
of the Lord appears.
Then the Lord
will save everyone
who asks for his help.”

Romans 8:14-17

Only those people who are led by God’s Spirit are his children. God’s Spirit doesn’t make us slaves who are afraid of him. Instead, we become his children and call him our Father. God’s Spirit makes us sure that we are his children. His Spirit lets us know that together with Christ we will be given what God has promised. We will also share in the glory of Christ, because we have suffered with him.

John 14:8-17

Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father. That is all we need."

Jesus replied:

Philip, I have been with you for a long time. Don't you know who I am? If you have seen me, you have seen the Father. How can you ask me to show you the Father? Don't you believe that I am one with the Father and that the Father is one with me? What I say isn't said on my own. The Father who lives in me does these things.

Have faith in me when I say that the Father is one with me and that I am one with the Father. Or else have faith in me simply because of the things I do. I tell you for certain that if you have faith in me, you will do the same things that I am doing. You will do even greater things, now that I am going back to the Father. Ask me, and I will do whatever you ask. This way the Son will bring honor to the Father. I will do whatever you ask me to do.

Jesus said to his disciples:

If you love me, you will do as I command. Then I will ask the Father to send you the Holy Spirit who will help you and always be with you. The Spirit will show you what is true. The people of this world cannot accept the Spirit, because they don't see or know him. But you know the Spirit, who is with you and will keep on living in you.

Sunday 16th June Trinity Sunday

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

With great understanding,
Wisdom is calling out
as she stands at the crossroads
and on every hill.

She stands by the city gate
where everyone enters the city,
and she shouts:

"I am calling out
to each one of you!

From the beginning,
I was with the LORD.
I was there before he began
to create the earth.

At the very first,
the LORD gave life to me.

When I was born,
there were no oceans
or springs of water.

My birth was before
mountains were formed
or hills were put in place.

It happened long before God
had made the earth
or any of its fields
or even the dust.

I was there when the LORD
put the heavens in place
and stretched the sky
over the surface of the sea.

I was with him when he placed
the clouds in the sky

and created the springs
that fill the ocean.

I was there when he set
boundaries for the sea
to make it obey him,
and when he laid foundations
to support the earth.

I was right beside the LORD,
helping him plan and build.

I made him happy each day,
and I was happy at his side.
I was pleased with his world
and pleased with its people.

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Sunday 23rd June 2019

1 Kings 19:1-4

Ahab told his wife Jezebel what Elijah had done and that he had killed the prophets. She sent a message to Elijah: "You killed my prophets. Now I'm going to kill you! I pray that the gods will punish me even more severely if I don't do it by this time tomorrow."

Elijah was afraid when he got her message, and he ran to the town of Beersheba in Judah. He left his servant there, then walked another whole day into the desert. Finally, he came to a large bush and sat down in its shade. He begged the LORD, "I've had enough. Just let me die! I'm no better off than my ancestors."

Galatians 3:23-29

The Law controlled us and kept us under its power until the time came when we would have faith. In fact, the Law was our teacher. It was supposed to teach us until we had faith and were acceptable to God. But once a person has learned to have faith, there is no more need to have the Law as a teacher.

All of you are God's children because of your faith in Christ Jesus. And when you were baptized, it was as though you had put on Christ in the

same way you put on new clothes. Faith in Christ Jesus is what makes each of you equal with each other, whether you are a Jew or a Greek, a slave or a free person, a man or a woman. So if you belong to Christ, you are now part of Abraham's family, and you will be given what God has promised.

Luke 8:26-39

Jesus and his disciples sailed across Lake Galilee and came to shore near the town of Gerasa. As Jesus was getting out of the boat, he was met by a man from that town. The man had demons in him. He had gone naked for a long time and no longer lived in a house, but in the graveyard.

The man saw Jesus and screamed. He knelt down in front of him and shouted, "Jesus, Son of God in heaven, what do you want with me? I beg you not to torture me!" He said this because Jesus had already told the evil spirit to go out of him.

The man had often been attacked by the demon. And even though he had been bound with chains and leg irons and kept under guard, he smashed whatever bound him. Then the demon would force him out into lonely places.

Jesus asked the man, "What is your name?"

He answered, "My name is Lots." He said this because there were 'lots' of demons in him. They begged Jesus not to send them to the deep pit, where they would be punished.

A large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside. So the demons begged Jesus to let them go into the pigs, and Jesus let them go. Then the demons left the man and went into the pigs. The whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned.

When the men taking care of the pigs saw this, they ran to spread the news in the town and on the farms. The people went out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they also found the man. The demons had gone out of him, and he was sitting there at the feet of

Jesus. He had clothes on and was in his right mind. But the people were terrified.

Then all who had seen the man healed told about it. Everyone from around Gerasa begged Jesus to leave, because they were so frightened.

When Jesus got into the boat to start back, the man who had been healed begged to go with him. But Jesus sent him off and said, "Go back home and tell everyone how much God has done for you." The man then went all over town, telling everything that Jesus had done for him.

Sunday 30th June 2019

2 Kings 2:1-2,6-14

Not long before the LORD took Elijah up into heaven in a strong wind, Elijah and Elisha were leaving Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, "The LORD wants me to go to Bethel, but you must stay here."

Elisha replied, "I swear by the living LORD and by your own life that I will stay with you no matter what!" And he went with Elijah to Bethel.

Elijah then said to Elisha, "Now the LORD wants me to go to the Jordan River, but you must stay here."

Elisha replied, "I swear by the living LORD and by your own life that I will never leave you!" So the two of them walked on together.

Fifty prophets followed Elijah and Elisha from Jericho, then stood at a distance and watched as the two men walked toward the river. When they got there, Elijah took off his coat, then he rolled it up and struck the water with it. At once a path opened up through the river, and the two of them walked across on dry ground.

After they had reached the other side, Elijah said, "Elisha, the LORD will soon take me away. What can I do for you before that happens?"

Elisha answered, "Please give me twice as much of your power as you give the other prophets, so I can be the one who takes your place as their leader."

"It won't be easy," Elijah answered. "It can happen only if you see me as I am being taken away."

Elijah and Elisha were walking along and talking, when suddenly there appeared between them a flaming chariot pulled by fiery horses. Right away, a strong wind took Elijah up into heaven. Elisha saw this and shouted, "Israel's cavalry and chariots have taken my master away!" After Elijah had gone, Elisha tore his clothes in sorrow.

Elijah's coat had fallen off, so Elisha picked it up and walked back to the Jordan River. He struck the water with the coat and wondered, "Will the LORD perform miracles for me as he did for Elijah?" As soon as Elisha did this, a dry path opened up through the water, and he walked across.

Galatians 5:1, 13-25

Christ has set us free! This means we are really free. Now hold on to your freedom and don't ever become slaves of the Law again.

My friends, you were chosen to be free. So don't use your freedom as an excuse to do anything you want. Use it as an opportunity to serve each other with love. All that the Law says can be summed up in the command to love others as much as you love yourself. But if you keep attacking each other like wild animals, you had better watch out or you will destroy yourselves.

If you are guided by the Spirit, you won't obey your selfish desires. The Spirit and your desires are enemies of each other. They are always fighting each other and keeping you from doing what you feel you should. But if you obey the Spirit, the Law of Moses has no control over you.

People's desires make them give in to immoral ways, filthy thoughts, and shameful deeds. They worship idols, practice witchcraft, hate others, and are hard to get along with. People become jealous, angry, and selfish.

They not only argue and cause trouble, but they are envious. They get drunk, carry on at wild parties, and do other evil things as well. I told you before, and I am telling you again: No one who does these things will share in the blessings of God's kingdom.

God's Spirit makes us loving, happy, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, and self-controlled. There is no law against behaving in any of these ways. And because we belong to Christ Jesus, we have killed our selfish feelings and desires. God's Spirit has given us life, and so we should follow the Spirit.

Luke 9:51-62

Not long before it was time for Jesus to be taken up to heaven, he made up his mind to go to Jerusalem. He sent some messengers on ahead to a Samaritan village to get things ready for him. But he was on his way to Jerusalem, so the people there refused to welcome him. When the disciples James and John saw what was happening, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven to destroy these people?"

But Jesus turned and corrected them for what they had said. Then they all went on to another village.

Along the way someone said to Jesus, "I'll go anywhere with you!"

Jesus said, "Foxes have dens, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man doesn't have a place to call his own."

Jesus told someone else to come with him. But the man said, "Lord, let me wait until I bury my father."

Jesus answered, "Let the dead take care of the dead, while you go and tell about God's kingdom."

Then someone said to Jesus, "I want to go with you, Lord, but first let me go back and take care of things at home."

Jesus answered, "Anyone who starts plowing and keeps looking back isn't worth a thing to God's kingdom!"