

JULY 8TH 2020 | ISSUE#15

The Rock

ST PETER'S PARISH CHURCH, RUSHDEN

A silhouette of a person sitting and reading a book, set against a warm, golden sunset sky. The person is positioned on the left side of the frame, with their head bowed and hands holding an open book. The background is a soft, hazy gradient of orange and yellow, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

BELONG - BELIEVE - GROW - REACH OUT

Matt 11:16-19 and 25-30

Jesus says 'Come to me all you who are weary and heavy burdened, and I will give you rest' Matt 11:28

Wonderful words that we looked at in our service last Sunday and have been meditating on during the week on Facebook. This verse includes that invitation to bring our burdens to God. Many people have great hardships and difficulties in their lives that we cannot possibly imagine. Even when he feels far and distant, God is still present and still loves us and we can reach out to him. Other burdens we carry may in the form of anxieties and concerns.

Let's have a look at 3 burdens we might want to give to God in order to rest more fully.

- 1. Approval.** It can be a great burden to us if we are forever trying to win the approval of others. John the Baptist was ridiculed for living a very simple life. Jesus was criticised for enjoying good food and the company of others, especially sinners. Both were following God's plan for their lives and living out their ministries authentically. We can't please all the people all the time, but we can live to please God and do what we know in our hearts to be right. Knowing ourselves to be loved by God frees us. Jesus invites us to put down the burden of trying to win the approval of the world and to be the people God has designed us to be.
- 2. The Past.** We can be burdened by concerns about the past. Past mistakes can haunt us and make us doubt our ability to do anything good. Jesus offers rest from the burden of guilt. Through him we are forgiven. The past is a burden we can lay at Jesus's feet, and start afresh, a new in him.
- 3. The Future.** The future can also be a burden we carry. We often have a desire to control things that are not within our power. This is particularly true now in this strange time of easing of lockdown. We cannot control what is open and what is not, what we can do and what is not yet allowed. Much of our lives is still so different to the time before Covid 19. In order to give up our anxious desire for control we need to trust God. Trust he has our back and whatever happens he will give us the strength to face each new day.

How we want to have our lives all sorted out, to know everything, to do everything perfectly! To be efficient adults with everything under control. How frustrated and burdened we often feel when we fall short!

***Jesus says 'I thank you, Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that you have hidden these things from those who pride themselves in being wise and learned and have revealed them instead to little children.'* Matt 11:2**

Now studying the bible and learning about our faith is really good. Jesus is not saying here that we should have an immature faith that has not grown since we were children. We need to question, discuss and explore our understanding. What he is pointing out is the danger of pride in our own understanding.

Head knowledge about God is good, but Jesus wants us to know God deeply in our hearts too. So not just reading about prayer and love but living prayerful and loving lives.

Jesus says we can learn from very little children. It seems an odd thing to say, but the very young tend to be naturally open, honest and loving. If you give them a food they hate they say 'Yuck' and push it away. When they love, they make it very clear, lots of hugging, kissing, smiling and laughing. Little children can be very joyful in their expression of love.

As well as loving openly and honestly, little children also live in this moment, now. Take a two or three-year-old outside and they will find treasure everywhere – a flower, a stick, a snail, a cloud. No concern about what others think of them. No thoughts of yesterday or tomorrow, just the beauty of now.

It is in this moment, now that we can meet with God and receive the rest he offers. Can we offer God all our burdens? Practice letting go and trusting him? Can we come to him as openly, honesty as a little child, not with our thoughts buzzing miles away, but come before God and be fully present?

Come – you are invited, you are welcomed, you are loved

To me – bring your concerns straight to me – let prayer be your first choice not your last resort.

All – everyone – no one is excluded

You – equally this is a personally invitation – God is calling you as an in

Who are weary – at times we all feel exhausted and burned out, and that is ok. When we can admit it to ourselves and to God, then we can be open to receive all He longs to offer us.

And I will give you – notice the word ‘give’ ...God is offering us a gift we do not have to earn or deserve. And what will He give us...?

Rest.

Perfect peace beyond our understanding, refreshment, recreation, ease, blessed quiet for your soul.

Sounds marvellous doesn't it? Will you find time to rest in God today?

- Ruth Compton



St Peter's will continue to open for private prayer

Thursdays 11:30am - 12pm and Sundays 6-7pm.

The church building will be open a come and go basis
- so feel free to come along for all or just part of the
opening times.

Please let Liz Bateman know if you will be attending.

Need a Face Mask?

If you are in need of a face mask, do contact
Rachel as we have a few spare ones.

Joan's Joke!

A bear goes into a cafe...

Bear: "Please may I have an orange juice
and..... a cake?"

Waiter: "Why the big pause?"

Bear: "I don't know, I was born that way!"

Prayer for the Week

Gracious Father, by the obedience of Jesus you brought salvation to our wayward world: draw us into harmony with your will, that we may find all things restored in him, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Memory Verse

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Matthew 11: 28-30

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