

Holy Trinity Redditch



Life

Lent 5 Prayer

Psalm 130

Whilst Psalm 130 seems to come from a desperate place, it speaks in a few short verses of crying, waiting, and worship. It also inspires us to pray in faith, hope and love

The Psalm reminds us that faith is not a feeling. The Psalmist cries out to God from a place of near despair, a place of doubt and darkness. But God is present in our deepest, darkest depths (Psalm 139:11-12). The simple act of crying out is an act of faith, and the belief that God can hear, be attentive and act mercifully is a statement of faith. The Psalmist admits that they sin and cites everyone else's sin in mitigation. The common condition of humanity is to fall short of God's requirements, but the Psalmist trust not in his own sin but in God's ability to forgive.

The Northumbrian community like to use verses five and six in their prayers; we use them sometimes in evening prayer at Webheath. The wait of hope is one of faith and love, trusting in the word more than the things we see around us. One of the challenges of prayer is the gap between the cry and the answer, to maintain hope when our circumstances appear to contradict God and His word. The psalmist responds with an exhortation to hope in God's love and His full redemption, that is to worship.

We are presented with a Psalm that gives us faith, hope and love, the redeeming love that led Jesus to the Cross and brought full redemption for sin, and open access to God in prayer.

To Reflect upon this Week

1. Think back to a time when you cried out to the Lord in a time of darkness. What do you think was positive and faith building about that experience? We can also cry out to God about the darkness in this world, with faith that He is listening.
2. Have there been times when you have waited for a long time for an answer to your prayers? God wants us to be renewed in hope and expectation for the future. You may feel the need to ask Him about this.
3. Do we see the Cross as the supreme example of His love? How might that help us to understand what love is?
4. We might want to reflect on 1 Corinthians 13, where faith, hope and love come together in the ministry of the Holy Spirit
5. The Archbishops have launched the Thy Kingdom Come ten days of prayer from Ascension to Pentecost. The aim is to “light up the world in prayer”, shining light into dark places. Why not have a look at the website and begin to ask the Lord how you might contribute? See <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

Richard Clark, March 2020