

Our song to sing or to read: Sent Forth by God's Blessing

Sent forth by God's blessing, our true faith confessing
The people of God from his dwelling take leave
The supper is ended, may now be extended
The fruits of his service in all who believe.
The seed of his teaching, receptive souls reaching
Shall blossom in action for God and for All.
His grace did invite us, His love shall unite us
To work for God's kingdom and answer his call.

With praise and thanksgiving to God ever living
The tasks of our ev'ryday life we will face
Our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring
Embracing his children of each tribe and race.
With your feast you feed us, with your light now lead us
Unite us as one in this life that we share
Then may all the living with praise and thanksgiving
Give honour to Christ and his name that we bear.

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A Blessing

To say 'yes' to Christ and mean it
now, that's true sophistication
To mean 'yes' and then perform it
that's the flow of salvation
We are never on our own
Our help is in the God who made heaven and earth
The love of God is with us, the love of Christ is for us
the fellowship of the Spirit is around us, today and always.
Amen!

(Bruce Prewer)

With thanks to Kay Owens for preparing today's reflection



Call to worship

As we come to a place of serenity
with the constant
rumble of God's water.
May we put aside the
pressures of this world
the pain
the uncertainty
and the failure.
May we focus on our
God, creator and
saviour.



May we praise our God
for his creation and our
nation of people:
individual and together as a collection.
Sharing, caring and praising as one.

Preparation

Our God, we remember how you brought your people back to you
in times of disarray and hardship:
times in which people lived under extreme government demands,
as recorded in the Bible period.
We praise you for your love and preparedness to forgive
We praise you for your advice and for your support
We thank you for your sacrifice of sending your Son
your word to earth
to show ultimate love
to show us the way, the truth and the life
Thanks be to you, O God.



Reading Matthew 21:23-32

Reflection

Teenagers. The response of the vineyard keeper's two sons is just what we would expect teenagers to do. One goes off in a huff after being asked to do something. "Aren't I old enough now to decide what I am going to do with my day without you telling me?" he thinks. The other is sneaky and seems like he always does what his parents ask him to do, when in fact he doesn't.

Jesus draws his listeners in through a familiar example. He speaks to us too in ways that we understand through our experiences and the words of those around us. He speaks to us as we meditate on his word. God speaks to all cultures and nations in ways that they

understand. Recently some of the youth joined in with *Reach Out* and learnt about reaching out to others whose backgrounds are different to their own. High on the list is **to love first**. To put someone else first often involves personal sacrifice. I watch some of our helping hands in the church who do this regularly. They put themselves out to help others even if it is a bit hard to do. And a big thank you to those who have helped me on many occasions and recently.



Then we need **to pray** when reaching out to others to share our good news. Our prayers must be humble, honest, and outward looking. They should not be like the religious rulers of Jesus' day who thought they knew it all, who thought they were already doing God's word. We need to be open to learn to love others as God would have us do. Before we open our mouths or do something, are we sure that this is what God



wants us to say or do? Are we growing closer to God through reading his word each day and meditating, praying and listening to God's message to us?

Then we need **to speak**. This could be a risky business. It was for John who sacrificed his time living at home with his family. He had to share God's word of preparation. God amazingly brought people to hear John. And they did. They repented of their wrong doings - and don't we all have those - and they followed God's message, especially that preached by John, as he pointed towards Jesus. So, they then followed Jesus. God speaks to all of us but we do need to listen.



God wants us to share his message of love and care for his people and for his creation to those who have not yet had the opportunity to hear his word.

Perhaps this is on account of their cultural background or their circumstances, considering what their family thinks; what they do on Sunday; what has to be done to be culturally correct; and what they want to do. (We might fit in here too).

Feel confident after you have loved and prayed that you can and should speak out, so that others may come to know God's word. We can share Jesus' story.

When Paul wrote to the **Philippians in 2:1-13**, these people now had encouragement, comfort, fellowship, tenderness and compassion for one another. They were urged to sacrifice like God had done, even though they knew it would not be easy under Roman rule and under threat of persecutions. Are we, like Jesus, human? Not expecting equality with God? Content in serving others, humbly and exalting God? God transforms us. We need to trust in God that we may continue to live in a way that reflects the life of Jesus.

A Prayer

O God, take away my false pride, that I may hear your word love, pray and act for you. Amen.