

Trinity 6 19th July 2020

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| 19 th July Trinity 6 | 9.30 Holy Communion | Isaiah 44 vv 6-8 p729 Romans 8 vv 12-25 p1134 Matthew 13 vv 24-43 p979 | SoF Hymns for Home Use 425 How Great Thou Art 1 x 2 (with SA) Abba Father 39 Beneath the Cross of 148 Guide Me O Thou 139 God of Grace & God of |
| 19 th July Trinity 6 | 11.00 Holy Communion | Isaiah 44 vv 6-8 p729 Romans 8 vv 12-25 p1134 Matthew 13 vv 24-43 p979 | So F Hymns for Home Use 445 O Praise Ye the Lord 488 Rock of Ages Psalm 86 510 Spirit of the Living God 147 Great is Thy Faithfulness 135 God is Working His |

O GOD, who hast prepared for them that love thee such good things as pass man's understanding; Pour into our hearts such love toward thee, that we, loving thee above all things, may obtain thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Thus saith the LORD, the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.

What wonderful words! *I am the first and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.* We do not appreciate just Who God is. We cannot appreciate Who God is, but we can comprehend a little of Who God must be, of what God must be. *I am the first and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.* How wonderful it is to think that God loves and cares for each one of us and that we can bring everything that is in our hearts to Him in prayer.

We are the children of God. We are the children of the Kingdom of God. Jesus sows the seed in the world. He sows the seed in us and, by His grace, and by His grace alone, the seed grows and bears fruit. The Kingdom grows as naturally as seed sown in the soil. It is like a tiny mustard seed which grows into an enormous plant. The growth of the Kingdom of God is as natural as the process by which the yeast mingled with the flour makes the bread rise. It is, after all, the same God Who makes all things grow.

Perhaps the most amazing thing God reveals to us is that He reveals Himself to us in Jesus Christ – *the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.* He is all that God is. He says what God says, *I am the first and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.* He is also a human being like you and me, save without sin.

Through the shedding of Christ's Blood on the Cross and through the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, we too are made the children of God. As His children, our calling is to live as members of His family, to live as Jesus lives. It may well be that we have to suffer with Him. Jesus says that, as well as the children of the Kingdom, the seed He has sown, the devil also has sown seed in the world, the children of the wicked one. It is not for us to judge one another and we are not always capable of judging. The final judgment must wait till the end of the world when God will judge us all. On that day, we shall depend not on our own merit but on the merit of Jesus. When we see Him as He is, we shall be made like Him.

We shall know Him as He knows us. Till that time, there is evil present in the world and it affects us all.

Nevertheless, Jesus is with us on our journey through life. As we may share His sufferings, so He shares ours. He understands what we are going through. He knows what it is like to be human when we pray to Him.

S Paul says, *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*, and Paul suffered a great deal, as you will know if you read the account of his life in Acts and in his own epistles. *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

We cannot imagine what that glory might be, but we do know that it includes the whole of creation, that it is the end, the purpose, for which everything was made, the end point towards which all things proceed under the Providence of God. We do know that what we know now of goodness and truth and beauty and wisdom and love, what we now know of God through the Holy Spirit Who dwells in us, is but a foretaste of that glory which shall be revealed in us on the last day.

Today's collect prays a virtuous circle. Our love for God is God's gift to us. God is love. The more we love, the more we grow in love. The more we grow in love, the closer to God we are. In the final consummation, we shall be made like Him, perfect love. As S John says, *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*

Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas Grace that taught my heart to fear,
And Grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that Grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come.

'Tis Grace hath brought me safe thus far
And Grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me.
His Word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.