

St Columba and the Northern Saints, Corby  
Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2021

PRE SERVICE WORSHIP                      1525    Take us to the river

Take us to the river,  
Take us there in unity to sing  
A song of Your salvation  
To win this generation for our King.  
A song of Your forgiveness,  
For it is with grace that river flows;  
Take us to the river  
In the city of our God.

Take us to Your throne room,  
Give us ears to hear the cry of heaven;  
For that cry is mercy,  
Mercy to the fallen sons of man:  
For mercy it has triumphed,  
Triumphed over judgement by Your blood;  
Take us to the throne room  
In the city of our God.

*For the Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon us:  
This is the year of the Lord.  
The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon us,  
This is the year of the Lord.*

Take us to the mountain,  
Lift us in the shadow of Your hands;  
Is this Your mighty angel,  
Who stands astride the ocean and the land?  
For in his hand Your mercy  
Showers on a dry and barren place;  
Take us to the mountain  
In the city of our God.  
(chorus)

873    Jesus, lover of my soul

Jesus, lover of my soul,  
All consuming fire is in Your gaze.  
Jesus, I want You to know  
I will follow You all my days.  
For no one else in history is like You,  
And history itself belongs to You.  
Alpha and Omega, You have loved me,  
And I will share eternity with You.

It's all about You, Jesus,  
And all this is for You,  
For Your glory and Your fame.  
It's not about me,  
As if You should do things my way;  
You alone are God,  
And I surrender to Your ways.

1757 Everyone needs compassion

Everyone needs compassion  
Love that's never failing  
Let mercy fall on me  
Everyone needs forgiveness  
The kindness of a Saviour  
The hope of nations

*Saviour, He can move the mountains  
My God is mighty to save,  
He is mighty to save.  
Forever, author of salvation  
He rose and conquered the grave  
Jesus conquered the grave*

So take me as you find me  
All my fears and failures  
Fill my life again.  
I give my life to follow  
Everything I believe in  
Now I surrender

*Saviour, He can move the mountains*

Shine your light, and  
Let the whole world see,  
We're singing  
For the glory of the risen King  
Jesus.  
Shine your light, and  
Let the whole world see,  
We're singing  
For the glory of the risen King.

*Saviour, He can move the mountains*

Shine your light...

## WELCOME AND NOTICES

OPENING HYMN                      664    Beauty for brokenness

Beauty for brokenness,  
Hope for despair,  
Lord, in Your suffering world  
This is our prayer:  
Bread for the children,  
Justice, joy, peace;  
Sunrise to sunset,  
Your kingdom increase!

Shelter for fragile lives,  
Cures for their ills,  
Work for the craftsman,  
Trade for their skills;

Land for the dispossessed,  
Rights for the weak,  
Voices to plead the cause  
Of those who can't speak.

*God of the poor,  
Friend of the weak,  
Give us compassion we pray:  
Melt our cold hearts,  
Let tears fall like rain;  
Come, change our love  
From a spark to a flame.*

Refuge from cruel wars,  
Havens from fear,  
Cities for sanctuary,  
Freedoms to share;  
Peace to the killing-fields,  
Scorched earth to green,  
Christ for the bitterness,  
His cross for the pain.

Rest for the ravaged earth,  
Oceans and streams  
Plundered and poisoned—  
Our future, our dreams.  
Lord, end our madness,  
Carelessness, greed;  
Make us content with  
The things that we need.

**(chorus)**

Lighten our darkness,  
Breathe on this flame  
Until Your justice  
Burns brightly again;  
Until the nations  
Learn of Your ways,  
Seek Your salvation  
And bring You their praise.

**(chorus)**

#### PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Leader: We come from scattered lives to meet with God.  
Let us recognize his presence with us.

Silence is kept.

All: **As God's people we have gathered:  
Let us worship him together.**

**Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:**

**Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

COLLECT for 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity

All: **God, the giver of life,  
whose Holy Spirit wells up within your Church:  
by the Spirit's gifts equip us to live the gospel of Christ  
and make us with the whole creation the joys of eternal life;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
Amen.**

CONFESSION

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ  
to save us from our sins,  
to be our advocate in heaven,  
and to bring us to eternal life.  
Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith,  
firmly resolved to keep God's commandments  
and to live in love and peace with everyone.

**Most merciful God,  
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
We confess that we have sinned  
in thought, word and deed.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart.  
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.  
In your mercy forgive what we have been.  
Help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be;  
that we may do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God.  
Amen.**

Almighty God,  
Who forgives all who truly repent,  
have mercy upon us,  
pardon and deliver us from all our sins,  
confirm and strengthen us in all goodness, and keep us in eternal life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

HYMN

475 Purify my heart

Purify my heart,  
Let me be as gold  
And precious silver.  
Purify my heart,  
Let me be as gold,  
Pure gold.

*Refiner's fire,  
My heart's one desire  
Is to be holy,  
Set apart for You, Lord.  
I choose to be holy,  
Set apart for You, my Master,  
Ready to do Your will.*

Purify my heart,  
Cleanse me from within  
And make me holy.  
Purify my heart,  
Cleanse me from my sin,  
Deep within.

**(chorus)**

READING

James 4

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:

'God opposes the proud  
but shows favour to the humble.'

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you – who are you to judge your neighbour?

Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.' Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that.' As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.

This is the word of the Lord,

**Thanks be to God.**

SERMON by Revd Kevin Montgomery

Has anyone never had an argument? Now, if you tell me yes, I'll argue the point with you.

I think all of us would admit to having had an argument at some point in our lives, perhaps some of us might admit to having more than one, perhaps even quite a few.

Someone once told me that the moment you start an argument you've already lost. Simply because

there are no winners in arguments, everybody loses. You don't have to attend every argument you are invited to.

Sometimes arguments come over small things.

Should we have mashed potato or chips with dinner?

Perhaps something slightly more annoying...

Who put that red sock in my white washing?

Sometimes perhaps over bigger things, an argument about whether to get vaccinated against Coronavirus, an argument about how to spend that money, what thing we should be buying, where we should be living.

Sometimes there are genuine differences of opinion and people think differently about how to do the best thing. How we handle these things is a key part of what James is talking about here. Arguments that come out of pride can cause us real problems.

"You desire but you do not have, so you kill." There's no beating around the bush here, James doesn't hold back, now for many of us, the thought of killing for desire is repugnant, but it does happen. We see it in our news stories, people who have killed for money, for power. But to a lesser degree more people kill relationships, kill friendships because of desires. "You covet but you cannot get what you want so you quarrel and fight". How many times have we damaged a relationship with someone over something that we've wanted?

You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

This is the strange paradox of sin, it seeks but never finds, desires but is never satisfied.

At the root of all of this is pride, pride pulls us away from a relationship with God, pride is the thing that stops us treating others better than ourselves, pride is the thing that stops us apologising, pride kills relationships, friendships, and hope.

God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble. Pride is a poison well that ends up doing us damage and that damage overflows to those around us.

Instead, God asks us to consider humility and submission. These are not words you often hear in our world today. At least not in the way they are suggested here.

In fact, our English language doesn't always do us many favours here when discussing these things. Pride is a word widely used today and often in a way that means value yourself, value your achievement, or even value other people or their achievements. It doesn't always hold quite the same meaning as it does here.

What James is talking about here is an overvaluing of those things, to the detriment of others. If we value ourselves and our achievements far more than others, then that is pride and something that God clearly speaks against. If we have pride in who we are more than who we are in God, then we are in trouble.

Many of the great Christian writers have spoken about pride. C.S. Lewis in his book "Mere Christianity" says, "According to Christian teachers, the essential vice, the utmost evil, is Pride. Unchastity, anger, greed, drunkenness, and all that, are mere flea bites in comparison. It was through Pride that the devil became the devil" Pride leads to every other vice: It is the complete anti-God state of mind... it is Pride which has been the chief cause of misery in every nation and every family since the world began.

That is strong stuff, but I don't think he's exaggerating.

James, therefore, talks to us about humility. "Submit yourselves, then to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you."

Humility is key to the life of the Christian, Jesus talks about it in the gospels, "Whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Peter teaches, "be clothed with humility." and here James tells us, "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up."

Our identity as Christians is in God, it is not in who we are, what we do for work, who we happen to love, what possessions we have, what achievements we have made. Everything flows out of who we are in God first.

That's a good place to be, the first chapter of the book of Ephesians tells us that as Christians we are blessed with every spiritual blessing, are chosen, adopted, redeemed, forgiven, enjoy his freely given grace.

James continues to warn us against prideful behaviour, do not slander one another, do not sit in judgement of one another for only God is judge, again this is a word in the English language which doesn't do us any favours. Clearly there are times and places when we have to make a judgement on something. Jesus even tells us, "Stop judging by mere appearance, but instead judge correctly."

Even our laws our based-on judging whether something is right or wrong. If someone steals something we make a judgement on that saying, "It is wrong." James isn't saying here that you can't ever say something is wrong, but instead is talking about where that judgement comes from. If it comes from a place of pride then it is sinful, even if it is judging sinful behaviour.

After judging he talks of boasting, and again, this comes from a root of Pride, of thinking better of ourselves than others, of being arrogant. Once more James doesn't pull any punches when talking here, "All such boasting is evil."

In all this then we are called to humility and not pride. To see our worth in God, but also to recognise that other people have that same worth.

Confidence in who we are in God is very different from pride because it has humility and compassion within it and knowing that it is by the grace of God rather than of our own ability.

As we come to an end at our look at this passage today, I will leave you with this final quote, in the words of Martin Luther King Jr:

"With patient and firm determination, we will press on until every valley of despair is exalted to new peaks of hope, until every mountain of pride and irrationality is made low by the levelling process of humility and compassion; until the rough places of injustice are transformed into a smooth plane of equality of opportunity; and until the crooked places of prejudice are transformed by the straightening process of bright-eyed wisdom."

Resist pride, embrace humility and flourish in who you are in God. Amen.

CREED - What we believe

**Though he was divine, he did not cling to equality with God,  
but made himself nothing.**

**Taking the form of a slave, he was born in human likeness.**

**He humbled himself and was obedient to death, even the death of the cross.**

**Therefore God has raised him on high, and given him the name above every name:**

**that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
and every voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.**

*Comes from Philippians 2:6-11*

HYMN

Build my life

Worthy of every song we could ever sing  
Worthy of all the praise we could ever bring  
Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe  
We live for you, we live for you.

*Jesus, the name above every other name  
Jesus, the only one who could save  
Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe  
We live for you, we live for you.*

*Holy, there is no one like you  
There is none besides you  
Open up my eyes in wonder  
And show me who you are and fill me  
With your heart and lead me  
In your love to those around me*

*Jesus, the name above every other name...*

*Holy, there is no one like you...*

And I will build my life upon your love, it is a firm foundation  
And I will put my trust in you alone  
And I will not be shaken  
And I will build my life upon your love, it is a firm foundation  
And I will put my trust in you alone  
And I will not be shaken

*Holy, there is no one like you...*

And I will build my life upon your love, it is a firm foundation  
And I will put my trust in you alone  
And I will not be shaken.

PRAYERS by Sheila Pender

Companions in Christ, let us pray for the Church and for the churches, and rejoice with our neighbours around the world, held with us in the embrace of God's love. Lord, hear us as we pray for the churches of other denominations in our neighbourhood. May they prosper in every way; may people come to faith there, and may their witness in the community be attractive. We pray for our relationships with them as part of the one great Church for which Jesus prayed. Bring to our hearts a real desire to think and plan as churches together, particularly over homelessness, knife crime and poverty. Lord hear us...**Lord graciously hear us.**

Lord hear us as we pray for a bigger vision in our church life. Take us out of our small world of local Christian activities. Place us on the map of your worldwide Church, where white Christians are far outnumbered by those of other colours, and the churches of Africa and the Pacific rim are growing momentously. Father we pray for these new churches, for maturity and resources to cope

with their numbers. May we be willing and eager to receive the gifts they can offer us. Particularly we pray for the Seoul diocese. Lord hear us...**Lord graciously hear us.**

Lord hear us as we pray for the parts of your church which are suffering today. We hear of kidnappings, beatings, false imprisonment, villages burned, killing many. When faith and evil clash, the stakes are high. Lord, make our spirits restless for justice and our prayers serious for freedom; let us never forget our brothers and sisters in pain...(pause)  
Lord hear us...**Lord graciously hear us.**

Lord hear us as we pray for the future role of the global Church. May we recognize the need for one united witness to a world which plays daily with the vicious toys of death, and is deeply corrupted by its desire for power and wealth. May the church be a joyful alternative to these values; may we speak fearlessly but tenderly to the world for which Christ died. We pray now that the Church may be one, alive in Christ and committed to the world's needs.  
Lord hear us.... **Lord graciously hear us.**

Lord of the Church, hear us as we look to you for vision and energy in these testing times. Renew your Church throughout the world, starting with us. **Amen.**

#### LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in Heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil  
For the kingdom, the power  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.  
Amen.**

FINAL HYMN                      418    O Jesus I have promised

O Jesus, I have promised  
To serve Thee to the end;  
Be Thou forever near me,  
My Master and my Friend;  
I shall not fear the battle  
If Thou art by my side,  
Nor wander from the pathway  
If Thou wilt be my Guide.

O let me feel Thee near me;  
The world is ever near;  
I see the sights that dazzle,  
The tempting sounds I hear;  
My foes are ever near me,  
Around me and within;  
But Jesus, draw Thou nearer,  
And shield my soul from sin.

O let me hear Thee speaking  
In accents clear and still,  
Above the storms of passion,  
The murmurs of self-will;  
O speak to reassure me,  
To hasten, or control;  
O speak, and make me listen,  
Thou Guardian of my soul.

O Jesus, Thou hast promised  
To all who follow Thee  
That where Thou art in glory  
There shall Thy servants be;  
And, Jesus, I have promised  
To serve Thee to the end;  
O give me grace to follow  
My Master and my Friend.

O let me see Thy footmarks,  
And in them plant mine own;  
My hope to follow duly  
Is in Thy strength alone.  
O guide me, call me, draw me,  
Uphold me to the end;  
And then in heaven receive me,  
My Saviour and my Friend.

#### FINAL PRAYER

May God who clothes the lilies and feeds the birds of the sky,  
who leads the lambs to pasture and the deer to water,  
who multiplied loaves and fishes and changed water into wine,  
lead us, feed us, multiply us, and change us to reflect the glory of our Creator  
now and through all eternity; **Amen.**

#### THE GRACE

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
be with us all, now and forever. Amen.**

*Closing words and The Grace*