

## **Devotion for the week leading to the 11th of October 2020**

*This service is written for Stretton Park and McDonald Wing in Maffra, Laurina Lodge in Heyfield and Royal Freemason's in Sale, but with the intention of being available for any who are interested for their private use.*

INTRODUCTION - from the first few verses of Psalm 106

Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, His love endures for ever. Who can tell about everything that God has done for us, who can fully declare His praise ? Remember us, O God when you show favour, come to our help when we need it. May we share the joy that you bring, and join in praising you.

HYMN No.1 - All people that on earth do dwell

*You can read the words to yourself, or out loud. If you remember the tune well enough you can sing it yourself. You can, of course sing just the first, or the first and last verses.*

PRAYER

We know, O Lord that we can never repay you for all the good you have done for us throughout our lives. All we can do is thank you for this beautiful world and for all the sights and wonders that please us. We thank you for our families, those who have cared for us and those we have cared for. Thank you Lord for the love we have been able to give and for the love we have received. Thank you too, for the friends we have met along the way and for those who have taught us and guided us. Help us, O Lord to always remember to thank you for your many blessings. Amen

HYMN No.22 - All things bright and beautiful

NEW TESTAMENT READING - Philippians 4 : 4 - 9

REFLECTION

Sometimes we think of the Bible as a book of rules, a book that tells you all those things you must not do, a book with no fun and no joy. St. Paul's letter to the Philippians is quite different to that. Certainly, he tells some of the people to try to get along with each other a bit better, but today's section of this letter is about concentrating on the good things and controlling the bad things.

St. Paul writes, don't be anxious about things. What is it that you get anxious about? In some ways, worry is good because it helps us to focus on things that aren't right. It helps us to focus on things that need fixing, so that we fix them. But what if we can't fix that thing that worries us? Then it is time to talk to someone who can fix it, or someone who can organise to get it fixed. Then our problem has become someone else's problem and we don't have to worry about it any more. Sometimes, just talking to someone else about a problem can reassure us that the problem is not as big a worry as we had thought it was.

St. Paul, in his writing, has presumed that we would have already done those things. He is writing about more than the little practical worries of life that a handyman or a tube of glue can fix. He had been worried about relationships in a Church that he cannot visit. He is concerned about the message of the Gospel and the welfare of the new Churches in southern Europe. Those are the things that make him anxious. He writes that if there is something that makes us anxious we should take it to God in prayer, knowing that God will do what is best. When we know that God has the problem under control, we can leave the worrying to Him, and the peace of God can guard our minds.

St. Paul did not want us to waste our time worrying and being anxious, he wanted us to spend our time thinking about uplifting things. Think on these things, he wrote: Think on things that are true, the great truths, like God's love for us. Think on things that are noble, that is things that are superior or of high quality. Think on people who are truly noble, not the noble aristocracy, but people who have lived a life that has improved the quality of our society. Think on things that are pure, that is things that are untarnished, our ideals and goals, those things that we see as the ultimate best. Think on things that are lovely, not just beautiful, but things that are worthy of being loved.

St. Paul writes that we should spend our time thinking on these good things and being uplifted, rather than worrying all the time about things that we are able to leave in God's care.

And so, let us pray:

Thank you Lord for your love and care for us. Thank you that you do not want us to be anxious about things that we don't need to worry about. Help us Lord to pass on our worries about things to those who can fix them. Help us to understand that there are things we don't need to worry about. May we bring before you those things that we should and leave them with you. We bring before you our cares about our families..... We bring before you our cares about our friends..... We bring before you our cares about the wider world..... We bring to you all these cares, worries and anxieties, knowing that they are now in your hands, and we ask for your peace.

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, For ever and ever, AMEN

HYMN No 20 - What a friend we have in Jesus

The BLESSING from Philippians 4:7&9

May the peace of God which passes all understanding,

guard your hearts and minds in Jesus Christ

and the God of peace will be with you,

Amen