

8th Sept., 2024

The paper-version Service



To Begin: Find a Bible and a comfortable place. If safe, light a candle and read prayerfully through the service. If you have access to worship music, choose a song and listen to it as you begin or read, or even sing, the song from this Sunday's

Service.

Opening Prayer: 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.**

Song:

He leadeth me: O blessed thought!
O words with heavenly comfort
fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be,
still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.
He leadeth me, he leadeth me;
by his own hand he leadeth me:
his faithful follower I would be,
for by his hand he leadeth me.

Sometimes mid scenes of deepest
gloom,
sometimes where Eden's flowers
bloom,
by waters calm, o'er troubled sea,
still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.
He leadeth me, he leadeth me;
by his own hand he leadeth me:
his faithful follower I would be,
for by his hand he leadeth me.

Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine,
nor ever murmur nor repine;
content, whatever lot I see,
since 'tis my God that leadeth me.
He leadeth me, he leadeth me;
by his own hand he leadeth me:
his faithful follower I would be,
for by his hand he leadeth me.

And when my task on earth is done,
when, by thy grace, the victory's won,
e'en death's cold wave I will not flee,
since God through Jordan leadeth me.
He leadeth me, he leadeth me;
by his own hand he leadeth me:
his faithful follower I would be,
for by his hand he leadeth me.

The Sermon by Timothy James

Read Hebrews 4:16-16 and Mark 1:16-39

Being Clear

We are continuing the journey through Mark's gospel which we began last week. Mark's gospel was the first one to be written, so he was writing a book like nobody had made before (that's why the others are called "gospels", because of what Mark titled his). There were no rules - so how does he set about it?

He tells a story of what Jesus did and said, so that we can understand what that means. The first section, up to Chapter 8, is what we will cover between now and the beginning of Advent. His message was summarised in verses 14 and 15 of this chapter: "The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news." Apart from that, there is surprisingly little about what he taught, just a few parables.

Instead, what Mark gives us is what Jesus did, and the pattern is set out clearly in this passage. Mark carefully selects what he tells us, and these verses set out five things which Jesus did.

1. He called people to follow him (vv.16-20). His mission, the bringing in of the Kingdom, needed action by more than himself. There is a role for his disciples, and that includes us. He calls us to work with him.
2. He conquered malevolent spiritual powers (vv.21-28). His Kingdom cannot be established without defeating the powers currently in control of the world. In due course, this would involve his breaking their power for ever, by his death on the cross, but the liberation of the man in the synagogue is a first step where Jesus walks in to the enemy's territory and exercises his authority. We can be certain

that the power to help us is greater than any other power which might harm us.

3. He healed diseases (vv.29-34). His Kingdom involved putting things back to the way they were when God created the world, and “it was very good” (Genesis 1). Again, this is not yet completely fulfilled, but it has begun, and Jesus’ healing of many people, beginning with Simon’s mother-in-law, is a sign of this. We can ask him to help us in all our infirmities, and to correct all the wrongs we meet, because he has come to set things right.
4. He prayed to his Father (vv.35-37). He was not doing everything by himself, nor was he trying to do something his Father could not or would not do. There is no division between the Creator and the Saviour. God is the saviour of the world he made, and he and his Son work together to put everything right. We have all the power of the maker of the world at our side when we go out to do our part in the bringing in of the Kingdom.
5. He went about proclaiming the coming Kingdom, because that was why he had come (v.38). The message has to be proclaimed. This is the most important part of the mission in which he has called us to share. We need to be constantly spreading the good news, and calling people to repentance and belief.

There is much more in Mark’s account of Jesus, as we shall see, but even in this first chapter we are beginning to see the pattern, and learning not only what Jesus did, but important clues as to the most important thing of all, who he is.

15th Sunday after Trinity: God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon your Church in the burning fire of your love: grant that your people may be fervent in the fellowship of the gospel that, always abiding in you, they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service; 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.**

The 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 forever. Amen.*

Blessing to be declared over yourselves, St Andrews and The Good Shepherd, the communities around us and our whole nation. 'The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.' (Numbers 6:24-26 NIV).

At the Church of the Good Shepherd

- Tea and Chat: September 18th at 2pm in the Church Hall.
- Tea and Bowls: September 18th at 2pm in the Church.
- Coffee and Questions: September 25th at 10.30am in the Church Hall.
- Tea and Praise: 3pm Sunday, TBA
- The Community Cupboard, 2:45pm every Thursday in Church.

For Further information:

This paper and all parish details are on the website at <https://www.parishofmedsteadandfourmarks.co.uk>