

Weekly Devotions
South Holburn Church
16th November 2021

READINGS

"Don't let this throw you. You trust God, don't you? Trust me. There is plenty of room for you in my Father's home. If that weren't so, would I have told you that I'm on my way to get a room ready for you? And if I'm on my way to get your room ready, I'll come back and get you so you can live where I live. And you already know the road I'm taking."

Thomas said, "Master, we have no idea where you're going. How do you expect us to know the road?"

Jesus said, "I am the Road, also the Truth, also the Life. No one gets to the Father apart from me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him. You've even seen him!"

John 14:1-7 (The Message Translation)

When the son came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' So he got up and went to his father.

But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So, they began to celebrate.

Luke 15:17-24 (New International Version)

REFLECTION

When you go on holiday – what is the one essential thing you make sure you take with you? You might think that it's a suitcase, or your favourite book, or a certain item of clothing, or a diary to record your adventures. Each of us might have something different we would see as essential. But the one essential item we all have in common is a map of where we are going. It might be packed in your suitcase, it might be in your guidebook, it might be on your phone, but you cannot do without a map!

And, in our first reading today that is what Thomas was asking Jesus for: “Lord we have no idea where you are going, show us the way” - show us the map.

But Jesus response is not to give directions, not to show them any map, Jesus instead to points to the destination – God - and he gives them the means to get there – he says “I am the way the truth and the life”. Jesus gives them a compass! For you can read a map wrong, you can hold it the wrong way round, you misunderstand where you are. But a compass will point towards north. It doesn't matter if you are at the bottom of the hill or the top of a hill, it doesn't matter if you are at the seaside or inland, the compass will always point to north.

No one can give you a map for your life. No one can show you what will happen to you later tonight, or tomorrow or the day after that. No one can tell you the effect your decisions will have on your life in later years.

But what Jesus offers to us is the promise that we are God's people, that, come what may, we will be with God. Jesus assures us that God will welcome us, as the prodigal was welcomed by his father. Jesus tells us we are God's people.

So, rather than directions to get through life, rather than rules and regulations on how to live life, Jesus gives us a relationship, a relationship with himself as the way that leads to God. No matter what, Jesus always points us to God, just as the compass always points to north.

The author Douglas Adams once said

“I seldom end up where I wanted to go, but almost always end up where I need to be”

Jesus said the same thing when he said I am the way the truth and the life. We can have all sorts of ideas about what we want from life, but when we focus on Jesus, when he is the way we follow, the compass point by which we align ourselves, then, no matter what we go through, no matter where we find ourselves in life, he is leading us toward an ever-deepening relationship with God.

So is Jesus setting your course? Are you facing decisions in your life, if so have you asked how you can line yourself up with Jesus? Do you feel unsettled and uncomfortable with your life, ask yourself if you have wandered off the way, lost sight of the compass?

PRAYER

God of the day and of the night:

In me there is darkness, but with you there is light;

I am lonely, but you do not leave me;
I am feeble in heart, but with you there is help;
I am restless, but with you there is peace.
In me there is bitterness, but with you there is patience;
I do not understand your ways,
But you know the way for me;

You are the way - let me journey with you
You are the truth - grant me an awareness of your love in all circumstances
You are the Life - lead me to your joy in all things

May I trust in you, my God; may I trust in you, my God; may I trust in you my God.

In Jesus name we offer our prayers,
Amen.

