

**Weekly Devotions
South Holburn Church
3rd November 2020**

READINGS

What can we bring to the LORD?
Should we bring him burnt offerings?
Should we bow before God Most High
with offerings of yearling calves?
Should we offer him thousands of rams
and ten thousand rivers of olive oil?
Should we sacrifice our firstborn children to pay for our sins?
No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good,
and this is what he requires of you:
to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:6-8 (New Living Bible Translation)

One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"
Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.

Matthew 22:36-40

"The most eloquent prayer is the prayer through hands that heal and bless.
God has given us two hands - one to receive with and the other to give with.
We are not cisterns made for hoarding; we are channels made for sharing"

Billy Graham



REFLECTION

What is overthinking? Here is the definition “to think about something too much or for too long. While it's human nature to think things through when making a decision or evaluating a situation, it becomes overthinking when you can't get out of your own head.” So, do you over think things? I do. I always imagine the worst, always try to prepare for a whole range of ‘What ifs?’ when sometimes the simplest answer, the obvious action is the best and most sensible course to take. I know that I am not alone with such reactions. I vividly remember a pastoral visit to a lady many years ago who was really worried because she had nothing to worry about – everything was going so well.

Overthinking may be a modern malady, a sign of our times. But I think we are equally guilty of overthinking our faith. We make faith about understanding all these concepts, about agreeing with all these creeds, about following all these regulations. And we beat ourselves up when we feel we fall short. When, really, faith is very easy. I like Billy Graham's words used as part of our readings today – “The most eloquent prayer is the prayer through hands that heal and bless.” Isn't that exactly how Jesus summed faith up when he said, “Love God”, and, “Love your neighbour as much as you love yourself”?

Living our faith is simply making sure we talk to God, and then allowing God's love to impact upon the way we treat other people. And that is not beyond anyone. It doesn't depend on our ability to understand or articulate our faith, our ability to overthink faith. It depends instead on our willingness to worship God, and on our care for others.

So today, allow a space in your life for God. A time to pray, a time to be with God, whatever form that takes. And then look around you and ask: “How can I help?”, “What can I do?”, “Where is the need around you, what can you do to fill it?”

PRAYER

God,
Who is love,
We turn to you,
In the face of difficult questions
And difficult times.
You answer with simple words
like love and forgiveness and welcome and care,
You offer yourself to us,
Giving everything on the cross,
Giving birth to eternal hope with the resurrection
All that we might know peace and newness of life.

And you call us forth
Inviting us to work alongside your Holy Spirit in the world
Sharing your kind of love in action and care toward others.
Loving God,
May we respond by spending our all making known your grace
And sharing you care in the most practical ways.
In Jesus name, Amen

