



TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Tenth Sunday After Pentecost

August 9, 2020

Anglican Parish of Raymond Terrace
www.stjohnsraymondterrace.org

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Pray:

May I speak to you in the name of GOD – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen



From the beginning of chapter 37 to the end of chapter 50 of the book of Genesis, we are told the story of Joseph. Joseph was one of Jacob's 12 sons – and was the favourite child. He was hated by his brothers for this and was sold to slave traders only to emerge as ruler of all Egypt – second only to Pharaoh. Through Joseph, we learn how suffering, no matter how unfair, develops strong character and deep wisdom.

In Joseph's day, everyone had a robe or cloak. Robes were used for warmth, to bundle up belongings for a trip, to wrap babies, to sit on, or even to serve as security for a loan. Most robes were knee length, short sleeved and plain. Joseph's robe, however, was probably of the kind worn by royalty – long-sleeved, ankle length and

colourful. This robe became a symbol of Jacob's favouritism toward Joseph, and it aggravated the already strained relations between Joseph and his brothers.

Joseph's 10 older brothers were willing to kill their younger brother over a robe and a few reported dreams. Their deep jealousy had grown into ugly rage – completely blinding them to what was right. Jealousy can be difficult to recognise because our reasons for it seem to make sense. But left unchecked, jealousy grows quickly and leads to serious sins. The longer we cultivate jealous feelings, the harder it is to uproot them. The time to deal with jealousy is when we begin to notice ourselves keeping score of others' recognition, awards, and achievements. Even though the brothers came up with a solution that would leave them innocent of murder, it was definitely NOT the right solution. Although Joseph's brothers did not kill him outright, they didn't expect him to live for long as a slave. They were quite willing to let cruel slave traders do their dirty work for

them. Joseph faced a 30-day journey through the desert, probably chained and on foot. He would be treated like baggage, and once in Egypt, would be sold as a piece of merchandise. His brothers thought they would not see him again. But GOD was in control of Joseph's life and had other plans.

Psalm 105:16-22 tell the story of Joseph's betrayal by his brothers, his journey into Egypt and his rise to fulfil the purposes of GOD for His people – making him lord of his house, and ruler of all his possessions, ²² to instruct his officials at his pleasure, and to teach his elders wisdom.

In our passage from his letter to Romans, Pauls tells us that JESUS is the end of the law in 2 ways –

1. He fulfils the purpose and goal of the law in that He perfectly exemplified GOD's desires on earth.
2. He is also the termination of the law because in comparison to CHRIST, the law is powerless to save.

In order to be saved by the law we would have to live a perfect life – not sinning even once. So, we could ask

the question as to why GOD gave the law when He knew people couldn't keep it. According to Paul, one reason the law was given was to show the people how guilty they are¹. The law was a shadow of CHRIST – that is, the sacrificial system educated the people so that when the true sacrifice came, they would be able to understand His work². The system of ceremonial laws was to last until the coming of CHRIST. The law points to our need for a Saviour.

▲Paul adapts Moses' farewell challenge from Deuteronomy to apply to CHRIST. CHRIST has provided for our salvation through His incarnation – His coming to earth in human flesh – and by His resurrection – His coming back from the dead. GOD's salvation is right in front of us. He will come to us wherever we are. All we need to do is to respond and accept His gift of salvation.

¹ Galatians 3:19

² Hebrews 10:1-4

Have you ever been asked, “How do I become a Christian?” ^This passage gives us a simple and beautiful answer: ⁹because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

In telling others about CHRIST, an effective witness must include more than being a good example. Eventually, we will have to explain the content – the WHAT and the HOW of the Gospel. Modelling the Christian life is important; but we will need to connect the mind of the unbeliever with the message of the Gospel. There should never be a debate between those who favour lifestyle evangelism – one whose living proclaims the gospel – and – confrontational evangelism – declaring the message. The two must go together in order to promote the gospel.

We must take GOD’s great message of salvation to others so that they can respond to the Good News. How will people hear the Good News unless someone shares

it with them? GOD calls us to take a part in making His message available to our communities. The first time we do it is always the hardest step – but once we do, as Peter did when he stepped out of the boat – WE CAN DO IT.

Our Gospel passage teaches us that seeking solitude was an important priority for JESUS. ^Last week, just before he fed the 5,000, and after hearing of the beheading of John the Baptist – ¹³ ... Jesus ... withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. JESUS always made room in His busy schedule to be alone with the Father. Spending time with GOD in prayer nurtures a vital relationship and equips us to meet life's challenges and struggles.

It is during one of these times, when the disciples were on their own, that they experience a terrifying storm. They were being battered by the waves and were far from land. In the Hebrew Scriptures, the sea is “wild and

untameable, a symbol of chaos, darkness and evil that threatened¹". In the miracle that follows, JESUS' interior tranquillity leads on to an external peace. He is able to walk across these threatening waves without being diverted or harmed, and then stills them completely.

Peter was not putting JESUS to the test – something we are told not to do². Instead, he was the only one in the boat to react in faith. His impulsive request led him to experience a rather unusual demonstration of GOD's power. Peter started to sink because he took his eyes off JESUS and focussed on the waves around him. His faith wavered when he realised what he was doing. We may not walk on water – I actually failed Walking On Water 101 at uni – but we do walk through tough situations. If we focus on the waves of difficult circumstances around us without looking to JESUS for help, we too may despair and sink. To maintain our faith

¹ Anna Case-Winters, *Belief – A Theological Commentary on the Bible: Matthew*

² Matthew 4:7

when situations are difficult, we need to keep our eyes on JESUS' power rather than on our own inadequacies. Although we start out with good intentions, sometimes our faith falters. This doesn't necessarily mean we have failed. When Peter's faith faltered, he reached out to JESUS – the only One who could help. He was afraid but he still looked to CHRIST. When we are apprehensive about the troubles around us and doubt CHRIST's presence or ability to help, we must remember that He is the ONLY ONE who can really help.



Through the story of Joseph, we learn how suffering, no matter how unfair, develops strong character and deep wisdom. Also, that if we trust in GOD, His plans for our lives will evolve.

Our passage from the psalms tell the story of Joseph's betrayal by his brothers, his journey into Egypt and his rise to fulfil the purposes of GOD for His people – making him lord of his house, and ruler of all his possessions,

²² to instruct his officials at his pleasure, and to teach his elders wisdom.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul teaches us that CHRIST has provided for our salvation through His incarnation – His coming to earth in human flesh – and by His resurrection – His coming back from the dead. GOD’s salvation is right in front of us, wherever we are. All we need to do is to respond and accept His gift of salvation. And our Gospel passage teaches us to always make room in our schedules to be alone with the GOD the Father and that when we are apprehensive about the troubles around us and doubt CHRIST’s presence or ability to help, we must remember that He is the ONLY ONE who can really help.



May we pray:

Faithful GOD remind us of your great love for us and instil in us an unwavering trust in your plan for our salvation. Restore our courage and deepen our faith that we might

always long for the embrace of your unconditional love.
This we pray in the name of JESUS. Amen

Life Application Study Bible

Daily Prayer 2020

<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2020/7-august/faith/sunday-s-readings/9th-sundzsss>

“””””””” [ay-after-trinity](#) Date accessed:
7/8/2020