

## 21<sup>st</sup> March 2021 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent

Yesterday was officially the start of spring, but we have seen signs of spring for some weeks with the snowdrops and now the daffodils in their abundance, although we could wish for warmer spring weather; but we have so much to give thanks for.

We are entering the last week of Lent. Today is the start of Passiontide which leads to Palm Sunday and Holy week, which will lead us to the cross and beyond into the resurrection and salvation.

Our gospel reading today from John 12 verses 20-33 (see below) is quite a complex one. There is much to think about and Bruce Milne, in his book *The Message of John: Here Is Your King*, says it is "one of the profoundest and most demanding sections of the entire Gospel. There are depths here which defy all sounding." I couldn't agree more!

For me, verses 25 and 26 are the most challenging:

*25 Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.*

Jesus is wanting us to follow Him, to start our journey of discipleship. He wants us to fully devote our entire lives here on earth to following in His footsteps. But what does that really mean? Have you really thought about it?

Following Jesus costs a lot! And for some that cost is very great. We are so privileged in this country that we are not persecuted for our faith; we can worship freely and without fear. So many Christians around the world do suffer persecution and even death for their faith.

Being a Christian is not just about going to church on Sunday and on the festival days like Holy Week and Easter; it is **so** much more. What Jesus is asking is not just for the time spent in church, but He is asking for our whole lives 24/7 and 365 days a year!

Jesus is asking if we dare take up our own cross and follow Him? When He calls us, He asks us to come and die; to die to our own lives, to our sinful nature, our self-centredness, our selfish ways, to die to any other barriers that stop us from following him. This can be hard.

Jesus died on the cross so that each one of us can be saved. God showed His amazing love for us and His wish for us to be in fellowship with Him by sending His Son to die for us; all He asks from us is that we learn to walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

As we go into the final week of Lent. It is a good time for us to reflect on what this part of John's gospel is saying to us and how we are going to respond to it.

**Amen**

### **A Prayer for today**

Father God, help us to be more Christ-like; help us to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Make us willing followers with a new and living hope in a future with You for eternity. Amen

## **John 12:20-33**

### **Some Greeks Wish to See Jesus**

<sup>20</sup> Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. <sup>21</sup> They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus.' <sup>22</sup> Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. <sup>23</sup> Jesus answered them, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. <sup>24</sup> Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. <sup>25</sup> Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. <sup>26</sup> Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.

### **Jesus Speaks about His Death**

<sup>27</sup> 'Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say— "Father, save me from this hour"? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. <sup>28</sup> Father, glorify your name.' Then a voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.' <sup>29</sup> The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, 'An angel has spoken to him.' <sup>30</sup> Jesus answered, 'This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. <sup>31</sup> Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. <sup>32</sup> And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.' <sup>33</sup> He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

Please do join us for our Communion Service This Sunday at 10am. – hopefully our technical issues have now all been resolved!

**Leam Valley Churches is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.**

**Topic: Holy Communion**

**Time: Mar 21, 2021 10:00 AM London**

**Join Zoom Meeting**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84468876821?pwd=TXJJcml4bEEvWmUzaC95R3NCeEp3dz09>**

**Meeting ID: 844 6887 6821**

**Passcode: 596125**