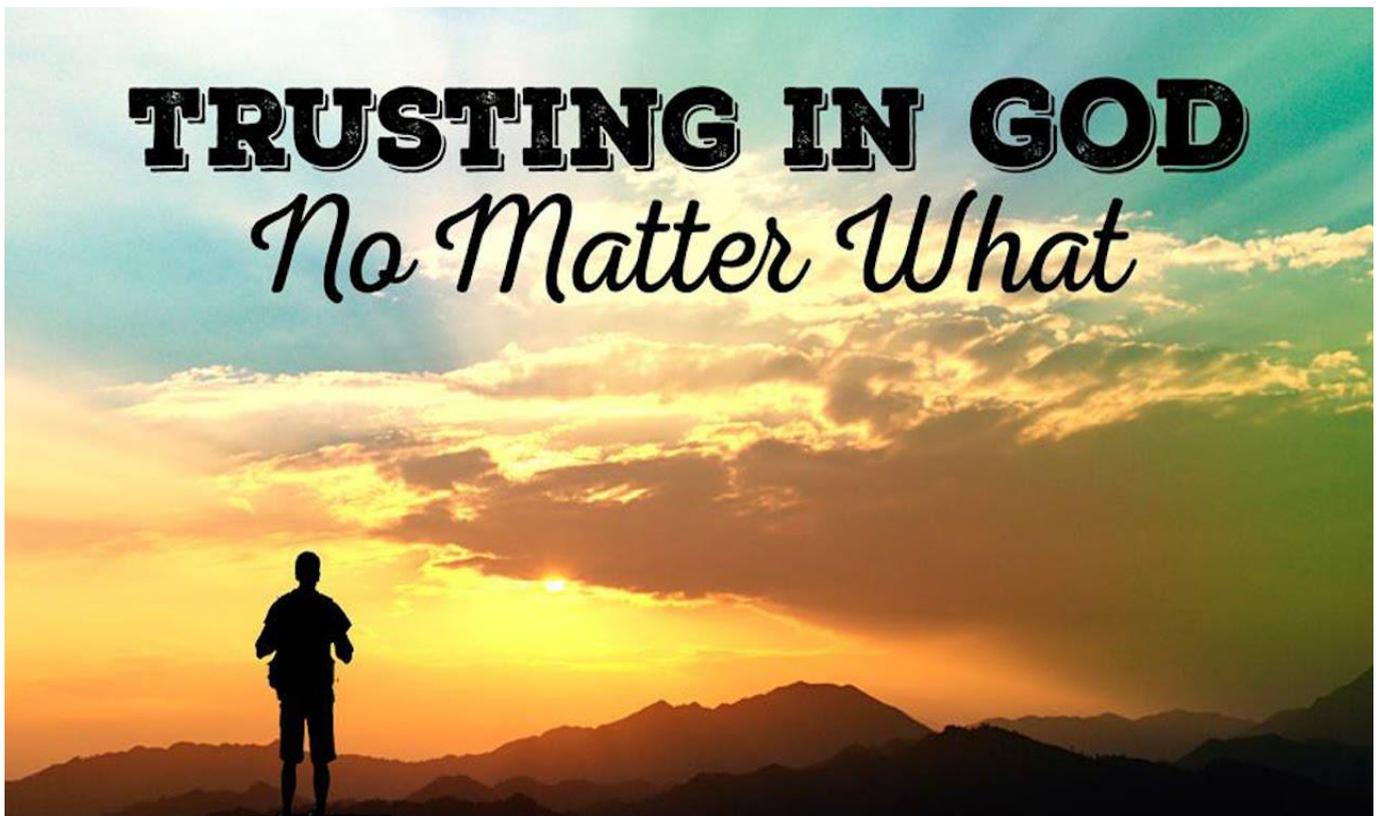


PARISH STUDY RESOURCE

October 2018

Study resources can be download at www.stpetersbribie.org.au



*This resource has been created for use in the Anglican Church
Bribie Island for the use of individuals and parish groups.*

Anglican
Church
St Peter's Bribie Island

Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America

STUDY – 7 OCTOBER 2018



Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America



27th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Job 1.1, 2-10

Psalms 26

Hebrews 1.1-4; 2.5-12

Mark 10.2-16



Open with a time of prayer, which could include the following ...

*O God, creator and sustainer of all life,
draw us together in this place today,
in the name of your Son,
and by the power of your Spirit.
Teach us more about you.
Help us to celebrate your majesty,
and to experience your blessing in our lives. Amen.*

Reflection – Job 1.1, 2-10

The book of Job is an old book potentially written as early as tenth century BC. Now in the book we hear about The Satan, it is important to comprehend this is not the Satan you may picture as a devil with horns on his head. This Satan works for God and works for the heavenly council as some sort of accuser. So, when you hear the name Satan in the book of Job it is not some diabolical opponent of God. The central character in this book is a man named Job, who was a blameless and upright person, who feared God. The book is not so much about Job, rather it is more about faith. It is through the life, suffering and restitution of Job that this book strives to teach us about faith and fear of God. It is often said in the bible that we must fear God, we often view fear as bad thing, but it is about having respect. Proverbs 9:10 says that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, so to fear God means showing him the respect and reverence

God deserves. When we accept that God is our creator, we also must accept that he has power over us. I remember seeing a mum in the shops one day, threatening her son saying “I brought you into this world and I can take you out of it”. What we hear in the book of Job, is that God has the power to give, he also has the power to take away. John Calvin distinguished between two types of fear - servile and proper. Servile fear, is fear for oneself and proper fear, is about respect and reverence. To have proper fear means avoid doing things that offend God, some people see fear of God as living a life that avoids God’s punishment. What should come first is living a life that pleases God. This is the real challenge of the story of Job - do we live our life for ourselves or do we live our life to please God. God did not make the world for us, rather God made us to live in the world. The great challenge for modern humanity is that we see ourselves as being at the centre of everything, but were not. Job understood this - in spite of everything he lost, the suffering he endured, we are told in verse 3 that he persisted in this integrity. Job 2:10 we hear Job say ‘Shall we receive the good at the hand of God, and not receive the bad?’ Job serves God without expecting reward, he also serves God without complaining about his misfortune. Job lives in the fear of Lord. He respects that this is God’s world, not his.

Question

1. When bad things happen in your life do you feel like God is punishing you?
2. To live a life that pleases God, do we need to do more than just not break the commandments?

Reflection – Mark 10.2-16

The Gospel passage from Mark contains a confronting dialogue on divorce. In the passage it is asked “is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” It is posed from the side of men because women had no rights to divorce their husbands, in fact women basically had no rights at all. The Jewish law allowed a man to divorce his wife without even giving a reason. In Jesus day women and children were regarded more as

possessions than people, so to relate this teaching to divorce in our modern-day society is problematic. Jesus condemns the act of divorcing a woman, for when a man divorced his wife, the woman was left with nothing, no possessions, no status and no rights. Women who were divorced would most likely end up on the streets as beggars or prostitutes. Jesus is teaching that both men and women have rights, rights to be loved, to be respected and to be safe. Too often this passage is used to try and keep people in abusive relationships, abuse in relationships is wrong, no matter whether that is physical, verbal, emotional or spiritual. The key for me in this passage is found in Jesus words about adultery. When Jesus says “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.” These words are significant because it raises women to have equal standing to men. While we cannot relate the issues of marriage and divorce in the first century to those in the twenty-first century, what we can do is hear what Jesus has to say to us about equality between a husband and wife. Jesus words about children does a similar thing when he says that the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I believe Jesus calls us to treat all people with love and equality.

Questions

3. What does it mean to treat people equally?

Close with a time of prayer - *consider praying for a group of people who are wrongly judged in our society.*

Closing Prayer

*As we go from this place, Lord,
give us hearts of compassion.*

*May our conversations be gracious,
and our words chosen with care.*

*Open our eyes to see where we may be needed,
and may we show your love to everyone we meet.*

In Jesus' name. Amen.

STUDY – 14 OCTOBER 2018

28th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Job 23.1-9, 16-17

Psalm 22.1-15

Hebrews 4.12-16

Mark 10.17-31



Open with a time of prayer, which could include the following ...

Lord, gather us in your great compassion,

bringing us together under the banner of your love.

Teach us your ways, as we reflect on your word today.

Lord, gather us. Amen.

Reflection – Job 23.1-9, 16-17

So much has happened between last week's text and the passage given for this Sunday. Job has lost everything. He has suffered greatly. His family, material possessions, status, and his health are in ruins. After sitting in silence for an extended period, his friends take turns trying to convince Job why he is suffering. They each hold onto the idea that Job has suffered because he has done something wrong. Job maintains his innocence. The passage for this week concludes with Job still sitting on the ash heap. The Book of Job does not answer the question of suffering. What Job reveals is how we should respond to suffering, we are taught how to lament. We have learned from him how to bring our anger, pain, grief and despair directly to God, even when we feel only God's absence.

Question

1. Despite all that Job had experienced, he still had hope. Why is hope so important?

Reflection – Psalm 22.1-15

Suffering can draw us into an awareness of and connection with the suffering of others. The heart of the mother who grieves over the death of her child is bound to the hearts of all the mothers who have ever buried a daughter or a son. The victim of a violent crime reads the newspaper with a keener eye to the plight of the other innocents whose lives are changed in an instant, forever. The employee whose job is “downsized” has a new sensitivity to those who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own. Shared suffering connects us to a larger world at the very time we are most at risk to feel isolated and alone. We are able to tap into the hope for healing and resurrection that resides in the life of that community.

Question

2. The words of the Psalm express desire at being abandoned by God, if you have ever felt this way, what gave you the strength to keep moving forward?

Reflection – Hebrews 4.12-16

The Bible is the word of God—not because it is correct in every historical or scientific detail, but rather because it witnesses to what God has done and continues to do in Christ. In John Calvin’s famous analogy, the Scriptures are like spectacles for weak, failing eyes. Without Scripture, we see only a world in chaos, driven by human ambition and failure. God’s plans and purposes are blurry and hardly detectable. But if we put on the Scriptures and really look through them, allowing them to refocus our vision, God’s saving work in Christ becomes crystal clear. We no longer see a world abandoned to its own devices, but see, rather, God’s transforming love, which brings good out of evil and hope out of despair.

Questions

3. How old were you when you received your first Bible? Do you still have it?
4. How does the words of the Bible strength you?

Reflection – Mark 10.17-31

What then are the relationships between faith and reward, or virtue and wealth? Why must this man give up his riches in order to follow Jesus? What will he get in return? A standard answer is that there is nothing wrong with wealth itself. The problem is not wealth per se but our attitude toward it. As we accumulate riches, we are tempted to trust in our possessions and our powers of acquiring them, rather than in God, for our ultimate security and comfort. Even honestly acquired and generously shared wealth can thus lead to pride. This is why it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God. It is hard to let go of the immediate basis of our security and comfort—and the more we have, the harder it gets.

Questions

5. Why does Jesus scold the man for calling him good?
6. What has God called you to give up in your life so that you may be a stronger follower of Jesus?

Close with a time of prayer - *consider praying for each member of the group.*

Closing Prayer

God, sustain and empower us in the coming days.

Let us live in ways that reflect our holy calling as your children.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

STUDY – 21 OCTOBER 2018



Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America

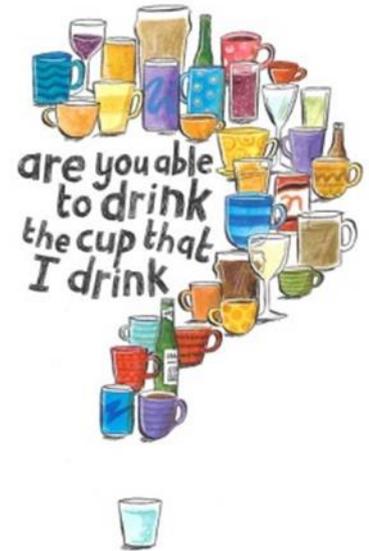
29th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Job 38.1-7

Psalms 104

Hebrews 5.1-10

Mark 10.35-45



Open with a time of prayer, which could include the following ...

We come together as God's people in this place, wanting to know God better, wanting to learn how to serve our Lord. May we seek God together today. Amen.

Reflection – Job 38.1-7

Job has spent much of the thirty-seven previous chapters asking why, in one form or another, and his friends have expended many words trying to say why. Now God takes an enormous risk that Job will never want anything to do with God again, by responding, not about Job's "why" but about the grandeur, beauty, and order of the creation. In a very literal sense, the book of Job raises more questions than it answers. At the very least, however, we are assured that God is God, and we are not.

Question

1. Do you believe that God is both all powerful and all good?

Reflection – Psalm 104

Psalm 104 gives us some visual imagery for God that is even more arresting than Michelangelo's and our attempts to visualize God using human characteristics and experiences. God's clothes: light, majesty, honour. God's world: stretched out as easily as we do a tent. God's

transportation: chariot, with the “wings of the wind” as charioteers. God’s creation: an earth that shall never be moved. The psalm’s image of God is an impressive image, it is as though the psalmist were saying: “Imagine something more unimaginable than you have ever imagined. You cannot? Good, you are starting to get it.”

Questions

2. Do you have a favourite image of God as depicted in art?

Reflection – Hebrews 5.1-10

For Hebrews, Christ’s death results not in death but in eternal salvation and victory over death. Those who were unable to approach God on their own now have a high priest who acts on their behalf.

Questions

3. How would you explain the meaning of priesthood to someone?

Reflection – Mark 10.35-45

An athlete that spends too much time focused on the finish line is liable to trip over and not reach the end of the race. What we hear in the Gospel passage for today is that James and John are seeking places of honour in heaven. As followers of Jesus it is easy to look at the benefits of salvation and consider the great blessings that await the children of God in heaven, but the Gospel passage for today focuses us not on heaven but what we need to do to get there. Jesus asks James and John ‘are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?’ This cup is no more about hardship, than it is about blessings. This cup is a way of life. Jesus said to his disciples that ‘whoever wants to become great among you will be your servant and whoever wants to be most important among you will be a slave for everyone.’ Jesus gave comfort to the widow and fatherless, he sheltered the homeless, Jesus welcomed the outcast and estranged, Jesus healed the sick, Jesus fed the hungry, Jesus lifted the broken and hurting, Jesus freed the oppressed, Jesus forgave the prisoner, Jesus reached out to the lost and made them believe, Jesus loved them all. Are we willing to serve,

just like Jesus served? In 1 John 2:6 we are told that 'whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.'

Questions

4. Are you comfortable with the concept of servanthood?
5. What is your definition of a servant-leader?

Close with a time of prayer - *consider praying for the church that we are not distracted by glory, but instead accept our call to serve.*

Closing Prayer

*We go to serve the one who served us
by giving his life, by showing the way;
may Jesus guide us and be near us
as we leave this place today. Amen.*

STUDY – 28 OCTOBER 2018



Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America

30th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Job 42.1-6, 10-17

Psalm 34.1-8, (19-22)

Hebrews 7.21-28

Mark 10.46-52



Open with a time of prayer, which could include the following ...

Let us join together today, as so many have gathered before us, bringing prayers of praise and thanksgiving, listening to the Holy Spirit among us, and learning more of our God and Saviour. We gather in Christ's name, longing to see more clearly what it means to be his disciples. Amen.

Reflection – Job 42.1-6, 10-17

Job meets God in his own life, on his own recognizance, in the thick of the storm that is his life. Instead of being forced into submission, Job speaks of firsthand experience, a personal meeting, a kind of seeing that surpasses known speech about God. From Job's viewpoint, this encounter overwhelms and honours him and transforms his life. The encounter in the storm calls Job to a new kind of theological knowledge; it summons him beyond himself to a heightened sense of divine presence in his life and in the world. While Job was restored to health and fortune, it is important to remember the story of his family that was lost along the way; not everyone gets a happy ending.

Question

1. Are you comfortable with having an argument with God?
2. In one way the story of Job teaches that it is not the ending that is important, rather living faithfully. How do you feel about this?

Reflection – Mark 10.46-52

In the Gospel passage we hear the cries of a blind man to Jesus. The response of those around Jesus was to tell this man in need to be quiet. Surely the response of the followers of Jesus should be to see the needs of this man were met, but that isn't the case. This blind man is not dissuaded by the rebukes of the insider group. He persists until his shouts are recognized. He understands that being restored to honour, productivity, and well-being will require the mercy of the one whom he reveres as the Son of David. Bartimaeus refuses to be defined by his circumstances or by the expectations of those who are able to see. He ensures that his call will be heard by Jesus. The persistence of Bartimaeus sets in motion a wave of mercy, blessing, and change. Bartimaeus calls out to Jesus for mercy.

Questions

3. What are the words we speak and the actions of mercy we perform in response to the cry of the socially and economically disadvantaged persons who live in despair in our world?
4. Bartimaeus refuses to be defined by his circumstances or by the expectations of those who are able to see. What can we learn from his persistence?

Close with a time of prayer - *consider praying for a group of people who are wrongly judged in our society.*

Closing Prayer

*Go before us, sight-giving God,
shining your light on the way ahead.
May our lives burn bright for you,
in all that we do and say. Amen.*