

Contemplative Evensong

25 June, 202



Led by
Carol Streatfield

We acknowledge the traditional owners of this land we meet on, the Jagera and Turrbal peoples, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, as together we seek and pray for reconciliation in God's way of peace.

[Reflection music:

Serenade - Pachelbel In The Garden Dan Gibson's Solitudes
<https://youtu.be/q7KEpSyN7HM?list=RDMM>

East of the Full Moon - Deuter (8:34)
<https://youtu.be/QBdkb0suFFI?list=RDEMTv7EUax389RFoo3Hfud9jg>

Loving Touch - Deuter (10:10)
<https://youtu.be/PMa2iDIOkil?list=RDEMTv7EUax389RFoo3Hfud9jg>

Approach:

Our help is in the name of the Eternal God,
who is making the heavens and the Earth.

Eternal Spirit,
flow through our being and open our lips,
that our mouths may proclaim your praise.

Hymn: I Will Follow - Marantha Music
https://youtu.be/YYvs13w4c_8

Let us pray:

O God,
*the light of the minds that know you,
the life of the souls that love you,
the strength of the thoughts that seek you:
help us so to know you that we may truly love you,
and so to love you that we may fully serve you,
whose service is perfect freedom;
through Jesus Christ our lord.*

Amen

APBA p 558.

Reading: Luke 9: 51-62

Reflection: William Barclay, "Study Bible: Luke 9: 57-62". studylight.org.; Marcus J Borg, "Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time: The Historical Jesus and the Heart of Contemporary Faith." NY, HarperCollins, 1995: 135-136.

(Pause 10 min music)

Watching Over You - Scripture Lullabies

<https://youtu.be/Ze8g4NNqyXA>

Let us pray

**Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven.**

**The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world.
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on Earth.**

**With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever.
Amen**



Skinning Your Knees on God

*Little by little
You will turn into stars.
Even then, my dear,
You will only be
A crawling infant,
Still skinning your knees on God.
Little by little,
You will turn into
The whole sweet, amorous Universe
In heat
On a wild spring night,
And become so free
In a wonderful, secret
And pure Love
That flows From a conscious,
One-pointed,
Infinite need for Light.
Even then, my dear,
The Beloved will have fulfilled
Just a fraction,
Just a fraction!
Of a promise
He wrote upon your heart.
When your soul begins
To Ever bloom and laugh
And spin in Eternal Ecstasy -
O little by little,
You will turn into God.*

Hafiz
"I Heard God Laughing"

**Most loving God,
you send us into the world you love,
give us grace to go thankfully and with courage
in the power of your Spirit.
Amen.**

Hymn: **Your Labour Is Not In Vain** - Porter's Gate
<https://youtu.be/bPj3Kf7Dorw>

Please stand:

May the blessing of God, the eternal goodwill of God, the shalom of God, the wildness and the warmth of God, be among us and between us, now and always.

The divine Spirit dwells in us.
Thanks be to God



Adapted from A New Zealand Prayer Book; Christchurch: Genesis Pub, 1989.
Cartoons by Michael Leunig
Front image from publicdomainvectors.org
Image on page 5 from Pat Gaines on flickr.com
Music compiled by Ian Dearden

Reflection:

William Barclay, "Study Bible: Luke 9: 57-62". studylight.org.

Here we have the words of Jesus to three would-be followers.

(i) To the first man, his advice was, "Before you follow me, count the cost." No one can ever say that he was induced to follow Jesus under false pretences. Jesus paid men the compliment of pitching his demands so high that they cannot be higher. It may well be that we have done great hurt to the church by letting people think that church membership need not make so very much difference. We ought to tell them that it should make all the difference in the world. We might have fewer people; but those we had would be really pledged to Christ.

(ii) Jesus' words to the second man sound harsh, but they need not be so. In all probability the man's father was not dead, and not even nearly dead. His saying most likely meant, "I will follow you after my father has died." An English official in the East tells of a very brilliant young Arab who was offered a scholarship to Oxford or Cambridge. His answer was, "I will take it after I have buried my father." At the time his father was not much more than forty years of age.

The point Jesus was making is that in everything there is a crucial moment; if that moment is missed the thing most likely will never be done at all. The man in the story had stirrings in his heart to get out of his spiritually dead surroundings; if he missed that moment he would never get out.

The psychologists tell us that every time we have a fine feeling, and do not act on it, the less likely we are to act on it at all. The emotion becomes a substitute for the action. Take one example--sometimes we feel that we would like to write a letter, perhaps of sympathy, perhaps of thanks, perhaps of congratulations. If we put it off until to-morrow, it will in all likelihood never be written. Jesus urges us to act at once when our hearts are stirred.

(iii) His words to the third man state a truth which no one can deny. No ploughman ever ploughed a straight furrow looking back over his shoulder. There are some whose hearts are in the past. They walk forever looking backwards and thinking wistfully of the good old days. Watkinson, the great preacher, tells how once at the seaside, when he was with his little grandson, he met an old minister. The old man was very disgruntled and, to add to all his troubles, he had a slight touch of sunstroke. The little boy had been listening but had not picked it up quite correctly; and when they left the grumbling complaints of the old man, he turned to Watkinson and said, "Granddad, I hope you never suffer from a sunset!"

The Christian marches on, not to the sunset, but to the dawn. The watchword of the kingdom is not, "Backwards!" but, "Forwards!" To this man Jesus did not say either, "Follow!" or, "Return!" he said, "I accept no lukewarm service," and left the man to make his own decision.

Marcus J Borg, *"Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time: The Historical Jesus and the Heart of Contemporary Faith."* NY, HarperCollins, 1995: 135-136.

What picture of discipleship do we get by looking at the stories in the gospels about the relationship between Jesus and his disciples? ... Like the macro-stories of the Old Testament, the story of discipleship is not just about the past, not just about "them," but also about us.

As a journeying with Jesus, discipleship means being on the road with him. It means to be an itinerant, a sojourner; to have nowhere to lay one's head, no permanent resting place. It means undertaking the journey from the life of conventional wisdom, from life in our Egypt and life in our Babylon, to the alternative wisdom of life in the Spirit. To journey with Jesus means listening to his teaching - sometimes understanding it, sometimes not quite getting it. It can involve denying him, even betraying him.

That journey is in his company, in his presence. ... It leads from life under the lordship of culture to the life of companionship with God.

It is an image of the Christian life not primarily as believing or being good but as a relationship with God. That relationship does not leave us unchanged but transforms us into more and more compassionate beings, "into the likeness of Christ." It is the vision of the Christian life spoken of so eloquently by Paul in a densely packed passage in 2 Corinthians:

And we all, with unveiled faces, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the likeness of Christ from one degree of glory to another. And this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.

Beholding the Spirit, we are being changed into the likeness of Christ.

