



HOON HAY Presbyterian CHURCH

5 Downing Street, Hoon Hay, Christchurch
Phone: (03) 338 8901

enquiries@hoonhaychurch.co.nz
www.hoonhaychurch.co.nz

Today's Preacher: Roy Warren

Worship Leader: Allison Cooper



‘Trust is the basis of all relationships, but a small mistake can change its meaning and value: just like a missing ‘T’ can ‘Rust’ the relationship.’

Anonymous

Mission Statement

To love and serve the Lord Jesus in the Hoon Hay Community

Worshipping God as a family

Offering opportunities to grow in faith

Sharing God's love with people in our community and beyond

ORDER OF SERVICE

Welcome, Notices, Celebrations and Opening Prayer

Lighting of the Second Advent Candle

The second candle represents faith. It is called the "Bethlehem Candle" as a reminder of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem. "Jesus Christ the Light of the World" came among us.

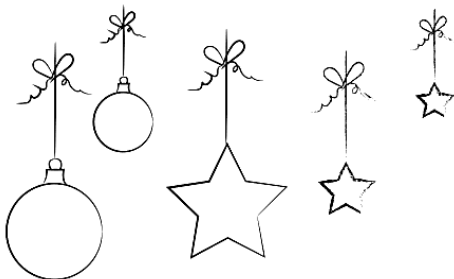
Singing: 'Morning has broken'

RESPONSIVE READING:

Psalm 30 (NIV)

- ¹ I will exalt you, LORD,
for you lifted me out of the depths
and did not let my enemies gloat over me.
- ² *LORD my God, I called to you for help,
and you healed me.*
- ³ You, LORD, brought me up from the realm of the dead;
you spared me from going down to the pit.
- ⁴ *Sing the praises of the LORD, you his faithful people;
praise his holy name.*
- ⁵ For his anger lasts only a moment,
but his favour lasts a lifetime;
weeping may stay for the night,
but rejoicing comes in the morning.
- ⁶ *When I felt secure, I said,
"I will never be shaken."*
- ⁷ LORD, when you favoured me,
you made my royal mountain stand firm;
but when you hid your face,
I was dismayed.
- ⁸ *To you, LORD, I called;
to the Lord I cried for mercy:*
- ⁹ "What is gained if I am silenced,
if I go down to the pit?
Will the dust praise you?
Will it proclaim your faithfulness?"
- ¹⁰ *Hear, LORD, and be merciful to me;
LORD, be my help."*
- ¹¹ *You turned my wailing into dancing;
you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,*
- ¹² *that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent.
LORD my God, I will praise you forever.*

And we pray the prayer Jesus taught his disciples...



THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in Heaven,
Hallowed be Your Name,
Your Kingdom come,
Your Will be done,
On earth as in Heaven,
Give us today our daily bread,
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil,
For the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory are Yours,
Now and forever.

Amen

Song: 'Love came down at Christmas'

Dedication of Offering

Intercessory Prayer

Singing: 'My Jesus I Love Thee'

SCRIPTURE READINGS (NIV)

Old Testament

Psalms 46

New Testament

2 Corinthians 8-9 & 16-18

Prayers for Others and Ourselves

Message: 'Trust or Rust?'

Singing: 'Because He lives'

Now unto Him who is
able to keep
able to keep
you from falling

BENEDICTION

And present you faultless
before the presence of
His glory, with exceeding joy
To the only wise God
Our Saviour be glory and majesty
Dominion and power both now and forever,

Amen

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU IN TODAY'S MESSAGE?

READINGS

Psalm 46 (NIV)

- ¹ God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
- ² Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
³ though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.
- ⁴ There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.
- ⁵ God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day.
- ⁶ Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.
- ⁷ The LORD Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.
- ⁸ Come and see what the LORD has done,
the desolations he has brought on the earth.
- ⁹ He makes wars cease
to the ends of the earth.
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.
- ¹⁰ He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."
- ¹¹ The LORD Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress

2 Corinthians 4: 8-9, 16-18 (NIV)

⁸ We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair;
⁹ persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.

¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

TEACHING NOTES

We are blessed to again have Roy Warren sharing with us. Roy spoke at Hoon Hay earlier in the year and we appreciate him being available again. May the Lord richly bless you, Roy, for the prayer and effort you have put into your preparation. Thank you!

‘Trust or Rust?’

The New Testament reading today is from Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 4:8-9 +16-18). Here Paul says, ‘Therefore we do not lose heart’(v.16). He well understood what it took to overcome and live a victorious life, and in our reading, we see the reality of being able to overcome. But that’s easier said than done, isn’t it? Especially when we live in very uncertain and anxious times. It’s tough for individuals and churches as we all seek to navigate our way through the Covid crisis.

This morning a childhood memory will serve as a good illustration of the consequences of not trusting in our heavenly Father. Failing to trust can rob us of so much, particularly our peace. We scarcely need reminding that so much in our world is subject to decay and rust. Every living thing breaks down eventually. Ironically though, rust is caused by the most important elements to sustain life. Water and oxygen!

Rust forms on certain metals when it is wet with moisture and there is plenty of oxygen. When these things are present under the right conditions, metals like iron and steel get covered in that familiar, brown and yellow tinge. The rust is caused by the nature of the material. Interestingly though, if water falls on living things, like a plant which has plenty of oxygen, generally the plant will grow. Living things have the potential to grow, even in hard times. Inanimate objects can’t grow, but they can (and will) decay.

How many tears have you cried? What disappointments, discouragements, or tragedies have you known?

In Proverbs 13:12 Solomon says, ‘Hope deferred makes the heart grow sick’ Crying is a good release and part of a healing process, but what is happening within our heart?

Due to our response, our heart may continue to be soft and remain as it was created. *or*, it can become hard like iron and change from being what it was created to be.

Right now, maybe due to pain and possible fear, our heart is at risk of becoming hard like iron. It may be hard to trust when it is raining in our lives. Trust or Rust?

In tough times I encourage you this week to mediate on these truths and the Bible references:

Five reasons why God can be trusted:

1. He is All Knowing (Psalm 147:5)
2. He is Ever Present (Psalm 46:1)
3. He is All Powerful (Jeremiah 10:12-13)
4. He Can’t Break His Word (Psalm 33:11)
5. He Cannot Fail (Joshua 21:45)

PASTOR'S REFLECTION

Yet another Christmas is upon us and with the disruption of a further lockdown in August, it seems to have crept-up rather quickly this year. I do think as we get older Christmas rolls around increasingly quickly anyway!

Children, especially young children, get very excited with the thought of presents and Santa, but the real meaning of Christmas (the Advent) is less tangible to them and as adults, we need to teach children about Christ coming to earth in engaging and age-appropriate ways. I like to quote G. K. Chesterton (1874-1936) on generations of faith when he said, 'We need to teach the oldest truths to the youngest people' – so true!

Crass commercialism has completely swamped the meaning of Christmas in our time, and younger generations are mostly brought-up completely void of any knowledge of not only Christmas, but of the Bible, or even anything remotely Christian. Forty years ago, I recall a (very secular) history lecturer telling students we couldn't have a proper grasp of historical developments if we lacked an elementary understanding of Scripture. But I doubt that would be said by many lecturers today!

With the on-going uncertainty and fear of the pandemic and the possibility of a new strain reaching our shores, plus the relentless commercialism that will swamp us, how can we still our minds and prepare for Christmas? I have a few suggestions.

Firstly, let's get re-acquainted with the context of the Advent story. We know that Roman-controlled Palestine at the time of Jesus' birth was very oppressive for the Jewish people. Even the name 'Palestine' has pagan origins. Scholars believe it originally comes from the word 'Philistia,' which refers to the Philistines who occupied part of the region in the 12th century B.C. As we know, this land was promised to the descendants of Abraham and conquest and settlement of the Promised Land shapes the entire Old Testament narrative, including battling the Philistines (from Samson's time onwards). And yet, we also know, *God never left His people*, not then, or later – or now. It's really important to understand that God is still in charge even though we struggle to see it. That was true in 1st century Palestine and it's true today during the pandemic.

Secondly, we know the verse 'Be still and know that I am God' (Psalm 46:10), but the key is to practice it. Stillness and quiet are antidotes to urban madness but we have to fight to reclaim them in a very noisy world full of distractions. Try setting aside 20 minutes to half-an-hour of silent meditation on the Advent story (e.g. Matthew 1 and/or 2). Your soul will be revived.

Thirdly, ask God to fill you with a fresh revelation of the Advent. It's hard in this to put aside childhood nostalgia about Christmas (not that there's anything necessarily wrong with that), but *we need continual Spirit-led reminding of what God has done for us in Christ*. I think of a dry sponge that softens and comes to life when water is placed upon it. I can get 'dry' through all the busyness and rushing at this time of year. But if I make the time and effort to simply be still, wait, and ponder, God will continue to prove Himself faithful.

Blessings for a good week.

Michael