

17 Oct 2021

Worship Sheet for Sunday 17 October Questions and answers

Job has been seeking answers from God; time has gone on with seemingly no response but Job persists as does his suffering and the pain of distance from God. Finally, God responds though it surprises Job and us, the readers. We'll look at it shortly but we do need to go on asking God questions and letting him answer even if they are not what we expected.

Call: Why are you here? What brings you here today? Have you questions for God? What if you do not like the answers? Job had so many questions for God, including those we might want to ask ourselves. Come and listen as we hear God's response. Come as we open our ears to what God has to say to us today.

Pray We exult you, Lord God, we praise you for your glory, for the grandeur of creation, the vastness of space, the minute detail of DNA and not least your readiness to give us your love, your Son. Sometimes we forget that we are mortal, and need to be put in our place-reminded just how small we are, and how powerless. Sometimes we forget that we are made in your image, creative and inventive, with the ability to love new life into being. We need to be enabled to claim our strength, and use our power well. Forgive us, gracious God, if we have tried to take your place, or failed to take our own. Enable us to work with you, not against you, in the great project to which, in Christ, we have been called: to renew the whole creation. So may we share with you in the joy of seeing beauty restored, hope re-ignited, justice established and lives redeemed, through the power of your Spirit and to the glory of your name. We pray together Our Father...

Reading Job 38:1-7 and 34-41. God answers Job.

Thought Questions are so important in learning. We encourage children to ask them; we do our best to give them answers; though it can be frustrating if all you get from them is a constant response of "but why?" Do they want more detail from you or are they craving your attention, trying to hold on to you? Sometimes it is the relationship that is more significant than the answers. Is it that way with God? We want answers but maybe what we really want is to feel God closer. Job had been over the ground many times yet his suffering continued, his well-meaning friends tried hard but didn't satisfy, and seemingly God was noticeable by his absence or at least his silence. And finally, a response, but not as expected. Not an admission he had been hard down by, not soothing, encouraging words but more of a booming, loud declaration of God's glory. A vivid word picture of a whirlwind exuding limitless power and majesty followed by God's questions to Job – was he there are creation? Could he control storms or feed lions? No – in a way he was put in his place; he wasn't up to this, compared to the living God he was a nobody – and yet God still loved him, still wanted a relationship with him. There is suffering in the world and some of it will come to our door but God isn't to blame, he is still there for us even if we don't feel him close. Can we explain? No – some of this is quite beyond us. We simply have to accept that we are powerless. God allows our questions, gives us room to lament, to mourn, to puzzle. And perhaps our mistake is to rush things, to demand clear cut answers. Maybe we just have to be still, to be silent, to acknowledge that some things are over our heads. But God wants us to hang in there; what do we REALLY want – answers or a relationship? Sometimes, eventually, we might be given both, but God's love is preferable.

Praise CH4 755 Be still and know that I am God.

Pray Lord, as we turn to pray for others we ask that you would give us a healthy view of ourselves – that we may place ourselves well and truly below you – not thinking too highly of ourselves and certainly not as though the world revolved around us. Yet, not having so low a view as though we had no place or purpose. We are your servants, you call us to use our hearts and heads, our love and our ingenuity and faith to speak, live and love for you. The world is hurting; injustice is rampant; people need all manner of answers, solutions; most of all they need love. Help us and all your people to rise to the challenge to speak out and live out the good news, to be at least your part answers to folks desperate needs and questions. Help us to be generous with our love, our service, our time. Give us patience too, the ability to get alongside others and build capacity to love and serve, not to be too quick with the answers as though we personally could solve all the world's problems but to be conduits of care, listening ears and catalysts for change – as much as anything people who make getting close to Jesus easier. Lord, we pray for all those who are hurting, those who feel let down by society, maybe feeling let down by you. We pray for the big issues but we also pray for the "little people" those who live in our town or lots of towns like it who are heavy of heart, wondering if anyone is listening. In our prayer walk we pray for those who live or work in Western/Mill Rds, Milnamair and Tesco. SILENCE. Lord hear this and all our prayers said and unsaid for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Blessing May the Lord bless you. Amen.

Notices

To assist those unable to access material via the internet we have established a phone line where people can phone in to hear the mini service or sermon.

01674 902624.

To hear the mini service people just need to dial in and wait. To hear the sermon, after dialling you need to press 1 then #. In either case there is a few seconds delay while the message loads so tell folk not to hang up! If folk press 1 for the sermon before the intro finishes the system doesn't pick up on it and it defaults to the mini service. The message now says wait until after the tone before pressing 1 but give it a few seconds after that and do press # after pressing 1.

Sermon, prayers and news (or links to them) will be uploaded to our website www.oldandstandrews.com and the Old and St Andrew's Facebook page. Feel free to copy this and pass it on to Church members or friends who might not use the web or social media

With the guidance easing there is plenty of room now to come to Church but please do still phone so that taking details for government requirements doesn't cause a delay on entry. We are now allowed to sing (subject to Angus being in level 1) though face coverings are still required.

If you are thinking of coming please phone Thelma Robb 672263 or Willie Sinclair during the week prior to a particular Sunday on 675671 so that we have contact details for trace and protect.

Please continue to pray for one another and support where you can and remember that the congregation is united in love wherever we are and however we are worshipping.

Stay safe! May the Lord bless you!

Ian

Rev Dr Ian A McLean