



From your presence let my vindication come!
As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness;
when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness.

Psalm 17:2, 15

Truth is what we seek in our worship, O God
the truth that never fails us.

Acceptance is what we search for in our worship, O God:

In Jesus you have made clear that each person is accepted.

Your love is what we encounter in our worship; the love that never lets us go.

You have found us, you hold us, your love will never fail us.

Hymn 602

*O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee:
I give thee back the life I owe,
that in thy ocean depths its flow
may richer, fuller be.*

*O Light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to thee:
my heart restores its borrowed ray,
that in thy sunshine's blaze its day
may brighter, fairer be.*

*O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee:
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
and feel the promise is not vain,
that morn shall tearless be.*

*O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee:
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
and from the ground there blossoms red
life that shall endless be.*

Invocation

Gracious God, who knows the yearning of the human heart,
you come to us in the mercy of the Christ who shares our human story:

we come now in hope, we come now in faith.

Eternal Spirit of life, immersed in human journeying, staying and sustaining, calling and
leading us in a voice of endless love and compassion:

we bring you our praise this day.

In our isolation from one another make our fellowship real as you enter our waiting life.

Come quietly into our midst and touch each longing soul:

for we are still your faithful community acknowledging your reign among us.

Amen

Confession and Assurance

O God, we confess that there are times when we want to possess you simply for ourselves demanding that our needs be met.

Correct our hearts and desires, Lord Jesus Christ. Shape our thinking and our lives as you find best for us, we pray

When we look around us, tired and discouraged, overwhelmed by the enormity of life's ongoing challenges both for ourselves and for those around us:

Correct our hearts and desires, Lord Jesus Christ. Shape our thinking and our lives as you find best for us, we pray

When we feel like ignoring others or sending them away because we have so few resources to offer; when we look at what we hold dear in our own lives and decide against reaching out as your faithful people:

correct our hearts and desires, Lord Jesus Christ. Shape our thinking and our lives as you find best for us, and the world about us, we pray.

Help us to receive with joy your constant invitation to enter into life in all its fulness as resurrection people playing their part in realising your reign in the world. No-one who comes to God will ever be turned away empty. Jesus the Christ among us knows our deepest needs and bids us come. We are forgiven and renewed by faith!

We celebrate all that you bring to every day and in every moment.

Thanks be to God!

Hymn 114

*Blessed be the everlasting God,
the Father of our Lord,
be his abounding mercy praised,
his majesty adored.*

*When from the dead he raised his Son,
to reign with him on high,
he gave our souls a lively hope
that they should never die.*

*Saints by the power of God are kept
till the salvation come;
we walk by faith as strangers here
till Christ shall call us home.*

Scripture Genesis 32:22-31

The same night he arose and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them and sent them across the stream, and everything else that he had. And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." And he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my

life has been delivered." The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip.

In this is a word of the Lord for us.

All night I wrestled with an angel,
sure He carried words that I must make my own
Hour after hour I fought and cried because I could not win,
Because I feared those words would die unknown.
And by the time this morning bled the skies
I'd neither won nor lost, but I could fight no more;
As that first fire of light began to rise
I turned, went out barefoot, into the dawn
Empty of everything and heard the choir of birds
And all at once I knew what I should write
(with apologies to David Stevens)

Reflection

Non Sequitur



The ancient story of the Garden of Eden was a story about the failure of humankind to maintain a right relationship with God and the alienation of humankind from God that was the outcome. Thus humankind was constantly seeking thereafter to re-engage with God but always failing to do so. We saw one of the ancient stories about this recently in the story of Jacob's ladder and his dream of the angels facilitating a re-engagement through the temporary linking of heaven and earth. The Hebrew scripture for today re-visits the quest, again through the experience of Jacob.

Jacob finds himself wrestling with a stranger until dawn breaks when his protagonist declares that he has in fact striven with God and with men and will henceforth be known as Israel i.e. in Hebrew "prince of God".

The ongoing saga of humankind's quest for a right relationship with God is, in Jacob, now finding a new high-point on the journey towards the realisation of the promise to Abraham of countless descendants; and blessings in the eyes of all nations.

The destiny of Israel is the path to right relations between humanity and God and this is to find ultimate fulfilment in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and the establishment of the reign of God through this "second Adam".

Gospel Matthew 14:13-21

Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves." But Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They said to him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Thanks be to God for the Gospel.

Praise be to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Reflection

Today would have seen us celebrating the Sacrament of Holy Communion at St Andrews if we were not in isolation. The renewed relationship between humanity and God finds its sacramental expression in a meal of five loaves and two fish presided over by Jesus on the shores of Galilee and now forever re-enacted at the Lord's Table "in remembrance of him" as we who are his faithful people seek to give expression to his life in our world as the final realisation of the restored right relation between God and humankind. And so our concluding hymn is John Bell's hymn for the celebration of the Sacrament:

Hymn 259

*Among us and before us, Lord, you stand
with arms outstretched and bread and wine at hand.
Confronting those unworthy of a crumb,
you ask that to your table we should come.*

*Who dare say No, when such is your resolve
our worst to witness, suffer and absolve,
our best to raise in lives by God forgiven,
our souls to fill on earth with food from heaven?*

*Who dare say No, when such is your intent
to love the selves we famish and resent,
to cradle our uncertainties and fear,
to kindle hope as you in faith draw near?*

*Who dare say No, when such is your request
that each around your table should be guest,
that here the ancient word should live as now,
'Take, eat and drink — all this is meant for you'?*

*No more we hesitate and wonder why;
no more we stand indifferent, scared or shy.
Your invitation leads us to say Yes,
to meet you where you nourish, heal and bless.*

Prayers for Ourselves and Others and Lord's Prayer

Live in us, O God as you give us life, over and over again through word and sacrament.

We see the majesty of your mercy to us and all creation in the renewal of your relation with us through Jesus Christ, the Second Adam.

We know that the needs of the world about us never end and our own needs are ever before you.

We come to you in prayer trusting that your reign will find fulfilment for all.

May the prophetic voices among us challenge us to see and hear what might be possible when your eternal reign embraces the whole creation as Jesus embraced those of long ago on the lakeside of Galilee.

And we know that we are now those who must hand to you the small offerings for the feeding of the thousands whose needs are so great in a world where so many are ignored by their fellows.

May we find ways of welcoming them in their needs rather than turning them away.

Gather us all into the sacred meal of your compassion and love, Lord Jesus Christ even as we pray in the words you taught us

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 for ever.***

Amen.

Hymn 238

One Lord, in one great name
unite us all who own you:
cast out our pride and shame
that hinder to enthrone you;
the world has waited long,
has travailed long in pain;
to heal its ancient wrong,
come, Prince of Peace, and reign.

Benediction

May God spread the feast before the world,

Christ Jesus invite us all to come

and the Spirit join us all into the wonder of human community.

Amen

Reverend Graeme Kerr