

11th July 2021

The paper-version Service



To Begin: Find a Bible and a comfortable place. If safe, light a candle and read prayerfully through the service. If you have access to worship music, choose a song and listen to it as you begin or read, or even sing, the song from this Sunday's Service set out below.



Opening Prayer: Almighty and most glorious God, you give life through your Holy Spirit to all who believe in you through Jesus. Help us in our unbelief and transform us by your Spirit, that streams of living water may flow through us to your praise and praise. **Amen.**

Song:

Come down, O Love divine!
seek out this soul of mine
and visit it with your own ardour
glowing;
O Comforter, draw near,
within my heart appear,
and kindle it, your holy flame
bestowing.

There let it freely burn
till earthly passions turn
to dust and ashes in its heat
consuming;
and let your glorious light
shine ever on my sight,
and make my pathway clear, by your
illuming.

Let holy charity
my outward vesture be,
and lowliness become my inner
clothing;
true lowliness of heart
which takes the humbler part,
and for its own shortcomings weeps
with loathing.

And so the yearning strong
with which the soul will long
shall far surpass the power of human
telling;
for none can guess its grace
till we become the place
in which the Holy Spirit makes his
dwelling.

Read: John 7:25-44 – God is believable

A summary of the talk given by Roy Lewis. About 30 years ago a pastor from New Zealand stayed at our

home; he was speaking at a church leaders conference, and he used a phrase I have never forgotten –

“THE MAIN THING IS, TO KEEP THE MAIN THING, THE MAIN THING!”

That’s a bit of a tongue-twister but a great maxim. I don’t think that John the Apostle knew the maxim, but he knew its principles and his Gospel keeps to the Main Thing – which is to believe that Jesus is the Christ, or Messiah and the Son of God.

Our theme for Sunday July 11th, is GOD IS BELIEVABLE.

But first let me ask it as a question - IS GOD BELIEVABLE?

There are many loud and knowledgeable voices in today’s world who argue strongly and, for some, persuasively that God does not exist and that Jesus, if indeed He existed, was not who He claimed to be. But there are other voices that maybe receive less prominence who contest strongly that God is real who can be known, and St. John promotes that belief.

In 2009 a survey was conducted of professors at Universities in the USA. It asked over 1400 professors to indicate whether or not they believed in God. This is the summary of that survey, published by Oxford University Press: -

“Contrary to the view that religious scepticism predominates in the academy, we find that the majority of

professors, even at elite research institutions, are religious believers.”

Here is the summary of the survey: -
I don’t believe in God (138) - 9.8%
I don’t know whether there is a God – (186) 13.1%
I do believe in a higher power (271) 19.2%
I find myself believing in God some of the time (61) 4.3%
While I have doubts, I feel that I do believe in God (235) 16.6%
I know God really exists and I have no doubts about it (495) 34.9%
No answer (32) 2.2%
A minority had no belief, and by far the majority DID believe.

Based on that I would not ask IS GOD BELIEVABLE, but say GOD IS BELIEVABLE!

And so back to John’s Gospel and The Main Thing is to keep the Main Thing the Main Thing!

Throughout his Gospel John kept repeating how essential it was to believe in Jesus, and in Chapter 20 he summarised his Gospel with these words: *But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.* John 20: 31

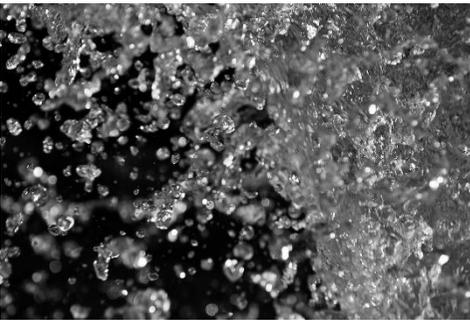
It is all about believing in Jesus, not merely as a good man and an amazing

teacher, but as the Messiah; the Saviour; the Son of God.

In John 5:28 Jesus was asked – *“What must we do to do the works of God?”* To which Jesus replied, *“The work of God is this, to believe in the One He has sent.”*

And now let us come to our reading for today and the occasion when Jesus spoke to them with all the confused and confusing opinions as to who Jesus was.

Read John 7:37-39.



The occasion was the Feast of Tabernacles which lasted eight days. All through the first seven days water from the Pool of Siloam was carried in a golden pitcher and poured out at the altar to remind everyone of the water God miraculously provided for a thirsty Israel in the wilderness. It seems that on the eighth day there was no pouring of water – only prayers for water – to remind them that they came into the Promised Land.

In the Old Testament water is significant spiritually, as it spoke of the spiritual thirst of men and women. Jesus then made it clear that He fulfilled what the Old Testament writers recorded about thirst being quenched and water from the wells of salvation. Our spiritual thirst is quenched and met in Jesus.

We must come to Him, not working through human merit, but simply by believing that Jesus is in fact Who He said He was.

The Son of God: The Messiah; The Saviour of the World.



Prayers: Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:4-6)

- Pray for this day, and the coming week.
- Pray for justice, mercy, peace, and hope.
- Pray for individuals, for neighbours, for family and friends.
- Pray for the Church.



Collect: 6th after Trinity: Merciful God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as pass our understanding: pour into our hearts such love toward you that we, loving you in all things and above all things, may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**



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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. **Amen.**

Blessing to be declared over yourselves, COGS, the communities around us and our whole nation. 'The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.' (Numbers 6:24-26 NIV).

The Notices: We are now holding ticketed and socially distanced services in the building on Sundays at 9.30am. Further information on our website or by ringing our vicar, Howard.

If you know of others who would like to receive this, or you would rather not receive it; or if you find yourself isolated and not able to get neighbours, friends, or family to help, then ring Howard, 01420 563344.

