

**Theme: "Taste and see that God is good"**  
**Circuit Online Worship**  
**25<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

**Welcome & Call to worship**

O taste and see that the LORD is good; happy are those who take refuge in him.

In the Lord we will be thankful, in the Lord we will rejoice.

The LORD is good; his steadfast love endures for ever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

GOD is good, a hiding place in tough times. God recognizes and welcomes anyone looking for help.

So we come to worship the God who holds us in the palm of his hand. God is good. God is with us. God is always present.

**When morning gilds the skies, my heart awaking cries :**

‘May Jesus Christ be praised !’

Alike at work and prayer

to Jesus I repair :

‘May Jesus Christ be praised !’

Does sadness fill my mind ? A solace here I find :

‘May Jesus Christ be praised !’

When evil thoughts are near,

these words will calm my fear :

‘May Jesus Christ be praised !’

To God, the Word, on high the hosts of angels cry :

‘May Jesus Christ be praised !’

Let mortals, too, upraise

their voice in hymns of praise :

‘May Jesus Christ be praised !’

Let earth's wide circle round in joyful notes resound :

‘May Jesus Christ be praised !’

Let air, and sea, and sky,

from depth to height, reply :

‘May Jesus Christ be praised !’

Be this while life is mine, my song of love divine :

‘May Jesus Christ be praised !’

Be this the eternal song,

through all the ages long :

‘May Jesus Christ be praised !’

**Prayers of adoration and confession**

We cannot tell how much the sound of silence, creation's beauty, gloriously aflame, moves us to prayer; we cannot tell how much the sight of starlit heavens calls us to praise creation's maker, and our own.

We cannot tell how much the son of Mary, the son of God upon a tree, moves us to prayer; we cannot tell how much the man of sorrows calls us to praise the one who gives our life a meaning and a goal.

We cannot tell how much the spirit's comfort, how much the wind of freedom, how much the cry of human pain moves us to prayer.

We cannot tell, for words cannot contain the love beyond all loves, the truth that in the end there is only God.

But Lord, in the light of your love and grace we confess.

For expecting too much, for expecting too little, good Lord, forgive us.

For making easy promises and failing to keep them, good Lord, forgive us.

For hasty words and thoughtless actions, for easy answers and careless thinking, good Lord, forgive us.

For avoiding the hurt of the world and ignoring the needs of others, good Lord, forgive us.  
Those who seek shall find. Those who ask for forgiveness are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name;  
Thy Kingdom come;  
Thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the Kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

**GOD IS GOOD, we sing and shout it.**

*God is good, we celebrate.*  
*God is good, no more we doubt it.*  
*God is good, we know it's true.*

And when I think of His love for me,  
My heart fills with praise  
And I feel like dancing.  
For in His heart there is room for me,  
And I run with arms open wide.

**Psalm 34: 1-8**

I will extol the LORD at all times;  
his praise will always be on my lips.  
I will glory in the LORD;  
let the afflicted hear and rejoice.  
Glorify the LORD with me:  
let us exalt his name together.  
I sought the LORD, and he answered me;  
he delivered me from all my fears.  
Those who look to him are radiant;  
their faces are never covered with shame.  
This poor man called, and the LORD heard him;  
he saved him out of all his troubles.  
The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him,  
and he delivers them.  
Taste and see that the LORD is good;  
blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.

**John 13: 1-17**

It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.  
The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel round his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped round him.  
He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?'  
Jesus replied, 'You do not realise now what I am doing, but later you will understand.'

'No,' said Peter, 'you shall never wash my feet.'

Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.'

'Then, Lord,' Simon Peter replied, 'not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!'

Jesus answered, 'Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.' For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not everyone was clean.

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. 'Do you understand what I have done for you?' he asked them. 'You call me "Teacher" and "Lord", and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.'

### **Hear the call of the kingdom, lift your eyes to the King ;**

let his song rise within you  
as a fragrant offering  
of how God, rich in mercy,  
came in Christ to redeem  
all who trust in his unfailing grace.

Hear the call of the kingdom to be children of light  
with the mercy of heaven, the humility of Christ ; walking justly before him, loving all that is right,  
that the life of Christ may shine through us.

King of heaven, we will answer the call.  
We will follow, bringing hope to the world,  
filled with passion, filled with power to proclaim salvation in Jesus' name.

Hear the call of the kingdom  
to reach out to the lost  
with the Father's compassion in the wonder of the cross, bringing peace and forgiveness, and a hope yet to  
come :  
let the nations put their trust in him.

### **SERMON "BREAKFAST WITH GOD"**

Throughout the gospels there are many instances of Jesus sharing meals with his followers, friends and disciples and others, this morning I'd like to invite you to share breakfast with me, but more importantly with God.

David in verse 8 of the Psalm we heard earlier, invites his listeners, then and now, to "Taste and see that the Lord is good" The God we worship and adore, the God whose name we praise, for all his goodness towards us, has provided all the food we see before us, food which will satisfy our physical needs, a healthy diet, you might say. But, when the psalmist encourages us to "Taste and see that the Lord is good" he isn't talking about food for our stomachs, but rather food for our souls, spiritual food, food which is good for us, which sustains us, changes us and gives us new life, life in abundance with God. Food which isn't set out on the plates in front of us, but rather contained within the pages of the bible, the inspired word of God for us As Christians we need to feed on the word of God daily to discover for ourselves, the truths contained within it's pages, whether that be in snack size bites or substantial meals is immaterial, what matters is that we inwardly digest God's words to us, for as we digest them then we will grow in our knowledge and understanding of him, as we will also grow in our faith, in our trust of him and our obedience to him, but more importantly our lives will be enriched as our relationship with God and our love for him will deepen as we spend more time feeding on and devouring his words to us, seeking his guidance and direction for us, as he speaks to us through his word and through our prayer times with him, for then we will truly know ourselves to be enveloped in God's amazing love for us.

So now let us "Taste and see, that the Lord is Good" as we share in our virtual, socially distanced breakfast together.



Let's begin with our boiled egg, and you can be forgiven for wondering what message an egg has for us, well the bible is both eggs citing, challenging and life- changing, isn't it. In our reading from John's gospel, we see Jesus, getting up from the table, where he was sharing what was to become his last supper with his disciples, and to their astonishment kneeling at the feet of each of them in turn and washing their feet, stooping humbly before them as a servant kneels before his master. Jesus goes on to explain his actions to them as in verse 14 he says, "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you should also wash one another's feet. I have set you an eggs- ample that you should do as I have done for you." How good is our God, that he should leave all the glory of heaven, to come to earth in Jesus to set before us, by his life and death, the example of how, we as Christians should live our lives. Putting the needs of others before our own, humbling ourselves to be the servants of all we meet regardless of the cost to us. Jesus has no hands or feet now on earth but ours, as we continue his ministry on earth, we are called to follow his example, to reach out to those in need, the homeless, the hungry, the sick, the dying, the lonely, and the persecuted, to go the extra mile for those whose needs are greater than our own, that in all we do and are, Jesus will be seen in us. During this time of pandemic we have seen so many acts of kindness, so many demonstrations of loving our neighbour, be they known or unknown, as people of faith or no faith have reached out to those in need, with meals, food parcels, taking dogs for walks, shopping, etc. Whatever people's needs have been we have witnessed how others have sought to meet their needs, to be servants of others, as Jesus by his example, instructed us, his disciples to be. Knowingly, or unknowingly we have truly seen Jesus at work in our communities and our world. How great is our God, who in Jesus, lived and died for us that we would know, live and grow in his love for us, a love which is beyond measure, a love which is freely given and is ours to share as we follow in the footsteps of Christ, our Lord, our Saviour and our friend.

So, back to our egg, as we continue to "Taste and see that the Lord is good"

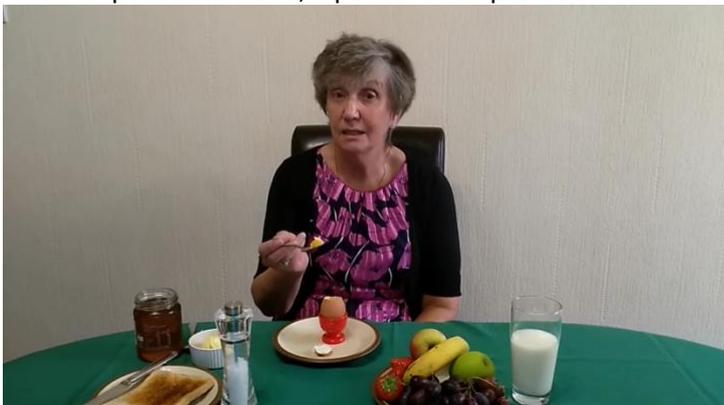


But first let's sprinkle some salt onto it, to bring out the flavour. Jesus, in Matthew 5 says of his followers, and therefore of us, "That we are the salt of the earth" A great compliment yes, but with it there is also an obligation, for as Christians we are not simply to revel in those words, but rather to act on them, for just as salt adds to the flavour of our food, so we too are to add flavour to the communities and the world around us, by the way we live, by the words we speak and by the actions we take. We shouldn't be seen to blend in with society or to live our lives by the world's standards, rather we should be seen to be different, our words, our actions should not only be seen to be beyond reproach, but worthy of the God we worship and adore. We live in a society and a world which desperately needs to be flavoured with the love of God, a world which needs to "Taste and see that the Lord is good," but all too often, before the pandemic that is, the church could be likened to a SALT CELLAR where we as Christians are often too busy enjoying a salt party in the salt cellar rather than going out into our communities and adding flavour to God's beautiful world, by gossiping the good news of the gospel to all we meet, knowing that we go in the strength and the power of God, a God whose grace and goodness is

beyond measure. There's a challenge that maybe all of us need to face up to in these times of seeming hopelessness and uncertainty, the question is, are we willing to do just that?



Now I don't know about you, but I like dippy eggs, in other words soft boiled rather than hard, eggs with runny yolks are my personal preference. There are many references in the bible to yokes, not egg yolks of course, but heavy wooden yokes, however the yoke, which Jesus speaks of in Matthew 11, is a yoke of love rather than one of wood. For Jesus says, "Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" Picture if you will the farmer ploughing his field, not with a tractor, but with a horse, harnessed to the plough with a yoke around its neck, the ground is hard, no headway being made to turn the soil, the farmer exhausted, stops and ties a second horse to the plough, suddenly the weight is lifted, the going becomes easy. Often in life we become tired and exhausted, weighed down by the heavy burdens we carry, burdens of pain, anxiety, loneliness, guilt, overwork and sometimes even our faith can become a burden, to the point where we begin to lose sight of God. But Jesus doesn't say, come on, shake yourself out of this, instead he gently and lovingly invites us to, "Come to me, and I will give you rest." What a relief those words are to us, what a weight is lifted from our shoulders as Jesus says "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me" When we, for want of a better description, yoke ourselves with Jesus, then the burdens we carry become lighter, the going becomes easy, just as it did for the farmer when two horses were yoked together. Jesus is our gentle and humble Saviour, one whom we have much to learn from, one who expressed his love for us as he died on the cross, one who walks with us, when the going gets tough, one in whom we can find rest for our souls, rest which promises us, healing, love and peace with God, a peace which passes all human understanding.



"Taste and see that the Lord is good" for his goodness goes on forever.



Would anyone like a piece of toast? There is,

of course no mention of toast in the bible, but toast as we all know is bread that's been warmed up, bread is quite significant throughout both the old and the new testaments, for various reasons, but for me, one of the most notable and meaningful mentions is found in John's gospel chapter 6, verse 35. Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty." What a promise for all believers in Christ to hold on to.

We eat bread in whatever shape or form to satisfy our physical hunger and therefore sustain our physical life. But in order to satisfy and sustain our spiritual life then we have to be in a right relationship with Jesus, who is, as he says "the bread of life" on whom we, figuratively speaking, feed. But if we are to feed on him, then Jesus must always be at the centre of our lives, invited and involved in all of our daily living, for that is where Jesus longs to be, that is why he came to earth and that is why he willingly died on the cross for us, that we would come to know him as our Lord and our Saviour. The one through whom we have the promise of eternal life with God, our heavenly Father.



But back to our toasted bread, before we can taste it, then we need to butter it, now I'm sure you're all aware that in biblical times the word butter wasn't known, but it's the fact I'm spreading it on the toast that's important. Right at the end of Matthews gospel, Jesus gives the Great Commission to his disciples then and to us, as his disciples today, that we are to "Go and make disciples of all nations" we are commissioned to Go and spread the good news of the gospel to all we meet, be they near or far. We by our words and actions are to share and to spread God's amazing love to friend and stranger alike as we tell others what knowing Jesus means to us, and how his presence in our lives has changed our lives for the better. We are called to stand up and speak out, to grasp every opportunity God hands to us, to tell others of God's love for them, in other words to encourage them to "Taste and see, that the Lord is good."



Now if I were to offer you the choice of this bar of chocolate or a piece of this fruit, then I wonder how many would choose the fruit? Yet in truth we all know that it's the fruit which is good for us, to eat fruit promotes healthy eating, it's part of our five a day. There are of course many kinds of fruit, some we'll like and some we won't, some are soft and juicy, some are hard and crunchy, but there's another kind of fruit known to Christians, it's not one we can purchase in the shops, but never the less it's still one which is good not only for us, but also for those whom we come into contact with each day of our lives. That fruit is of course the fruit of the spirit, which Paul describes for us I Galatians 5. He writes, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. A little more fruit than the 5 a day prescribed for healthy living and yet how much healthier would we be, if all of the fruits were active and working in our lives. The fruit of the Spirit though can't just be conjured up in us, for the fruit of the Spirit is the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and therefore can only be obtained with Christ's help, for they are the character traits which are found in the very nature of Christ, character traits which we see displayed over and over again, throughout his life and his ministry on earth. The character traits we see in Jesus are character traits which we should also want to see in our lives, traits which can be ours if we let the Spirit take charge of our inner being, for then the fruit of the spirit will grow in us. But for this to happen then we must first give our lives totally to Jesus, to remain in him as he remains in us, to love him with all our hearts and to strive to be like him as we live for him, each day of our lives. I wonder though which of these qualities we want to see the Spirit produce in us? Would it be love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness or self- control or would it be all of them? Think for a moment what a wonderful world it would be if everyone was filled with the fruit of the Spirit, but that's maybe just a pipe- dream or a hope, for now though lets just pray that the spirit will produce in us a plentiful supply of fruit, fruit which will change us, to be a better person, a person more like Jesus, and ultimately go on to make this world a better place. And now I think it's time we all had a drink of milk and maybe a spoonful of honey.



When the Hebrew nation were enslaved in Egypt God promised them that he would lead them out of slavery and on into the promised Land, a land flowing with milk and honey. Their journey was long and fraught with problems, diversions and difficulties, but eventually, they reached the Promised Land, and as they tasted of the milk and honey they did experience for themselves that the Lord is good.

When we give our lives to Jesus, then we too set out on a journey to the Promised Land, which Jesus died, that we might, in God's time, enter. Until the day comes when we kneel at the feet of our Father in heaven then we continue on our journey with Christ, in the knowledge that you and I are so special and precious to God, for we are his beloved children,



the “Apple of God’s eye”

So let us always continue to “Taste and see that the Lord is Good” and be ever thankful for all his goodness to us. AMEN. GOD BLESS YOU ALL.

**YES, God is good—in earth and sky,**  
From ocean-depths and spreading wood,  
Ten thousand voices seem to cry:  
'God made us all, and God is good'.

The sun that keeps his trackless way  
And downward pours his golden flood,  
Night's sparkling hosts, all seem to say  
In accents clear that God is good.

The merry birds prolong the strain,  
Their song with every spring renewed;  
And balmy air and falling rain,  
Each softly whispers: 'God is good'.

We hear it in the rushing breeze;  
The hills that have for ages stood,  
The echoing sky and roaring seas,  
All swell the chorus: 'God is good'.

For all thy gifts we bless thee. Lord,  
But chiefly for our heavenly food,  
Thy pardoning grace, thy quickening word,  
These prompt our song, that God is good.

### **Prayers of Intercession**

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy.

O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; it is in dying that we are born again to eternal life.

**Longing for light, we wait in darkness.**  
Longing for truth, we turn to you.  
Make us your own, your holy people,  
light for the world to see.

Christ, be our light !  
Shine in our hearts.  
Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light !  
Shine in your Church gathered today.

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.  
Longing for hope, many despair.  
Your word alone has power to save us.  
Make us your living voice.

Longing for food, many are hungry.  
Longing for water, many still thirst.  
Make us your bread, broken for others,  
shared until all are fed.

Longing for shelter, many are homeless.  
Longing for warmth, many are cold.  
Make us your building, sheltering others,  
walls made of living stone.

Many the gifts, many the people,  
many the hearts that yearn to belong.  
Let us be servants to one another,  
making your kingdom come.

**Blessing**

Go forth into the world in peace;  
be of good courage;  
hold fast that which is good;  
render to no one evil for evil;  
strengthen the fainthearted;  
support the weak; help the afflicted; honour everyone;  
love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit;  
and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with  
you always. Amen.