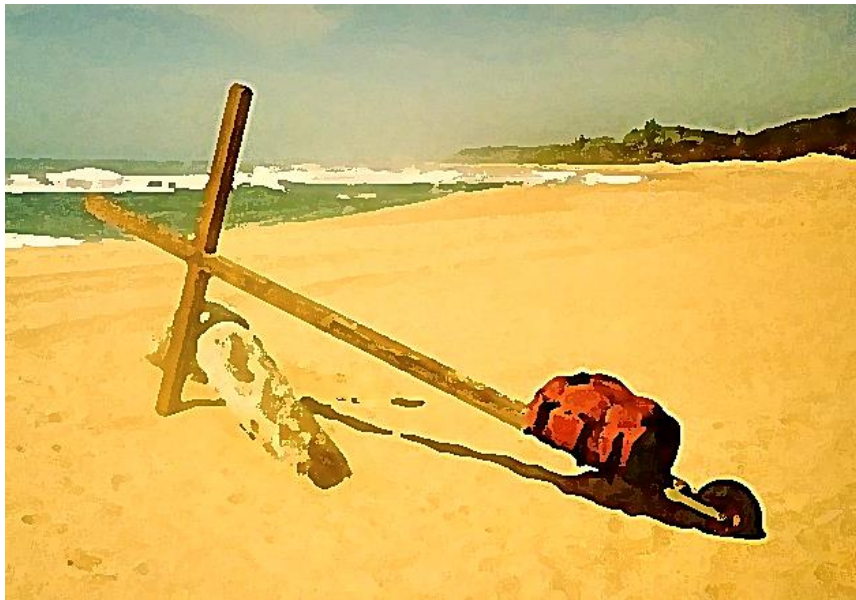




CHURCH OF CHRIST THE CORNERSTONE

Lent Meditations – Week Five

WILL YOU COME AND FOLLOW ME...



Through the weeks of Lent the invitation is there to take a journey with God and with others as we follow the steps that took Jesus to the cross and through the cross to resurrection life. The journey is from where we are now to where God is leading us. We don't always know where the journey will take us, so we can't get the tourist guide book out and pick and choose the sights we want to see. We may take the time to follow where others have led and look at what has been important for them, but more importantly we can take up the invitation to look again at what it means to take that journey as disciples, those who are learning from God and one another as we go.

Will you come and follow me... in all of your life?

We have now officially reached springtime and, although we look at Christ's death, it is in order to see the new life which God wants for the whole of creation.

Finding Justice, sowing seeds of promise

The way ahead now looks impossible,
strewn with the rubble of the covenant we've broken.

Jesus, the Negotiator, secures a fresh promise:

Death is inevitable but not the end.

Lord, help us shake the dust from our clothing, the dirt from our souls, to make room for New Life and glory to come. AMEN

Jeremiah 31:31-34

The days are coming, says the Lord, when I shall establish a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, a covenant which they broke, though I was patient with them, says the Lord. For this is the covenant I shall establish with the Israelites after those days, says the Lord. I shall set my law within them, writing it on their hearts; I shall be their God and they will be my people. No longer need they teach one another, neighbour or brother, to know the Lord; all of them, high and low alike, will know me, says the Lord, for I shall forgive their wrongdoing, and their sin I shall call to mind no more.

The people that God has called have not done a great job of obeying laws and commandments. They've also tended to keep the religious parts of their lives separate from their work, recreation and other aspects of life.

- **Jeremiah speaks of having God's law written on our hearts, with the implication that we wouldn't need to look up a book of rules but would know what God would want us to do. How does that work for you? What is your experience of trying to decide what might be the right way to behave in any situation? Is it that easy?**

- **These verses speak of the possibility of a new start. Letting go of the past isn't easy. Are there aspects of your past life which make it difficult for you really to enjoy life? (This may bring up some really personal and difficult things for you- so, if you are in a group, be aware of how this might affect both you and others)**

John 12:20-33

Among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Gentiles. They approached Philip who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, 'Sir, we would like to see Jesus.' Philip went and told Andrew and the two of them went to tell Jesus. Jesus replied, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. In very truth I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains that and nothing more; but if it dies, it bears a rich harvest. Whoever loves himself is lost, but he who hates himself in this world will be kept safe for eternal life. If anyone is to serve me, he must follow me; where I am, there will my servant be. Whoever serves me will be honoured by the Father.

Now my soul is in turmoil, and what am I to say? "Father, save me from this hour"? No, for it was for this that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name.' A voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it and I will glorify it again.' The crowd standing by said it was thunder they heard, while others said, 'An angel has spoken to him.' Jesus said, 'The voice spoke for your sake, not mine. Now is the hour of judgement for this world; now shall the prince of this world be driven out. And when I am lifted up from the earth I shall draw everyone to myself.' He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

- **These words are not easy to hear. They speak of new life and possibility, but also of struggle, suffering and death. What do you think 'hating yourself' means? Do you have experiences**

that you can share that would help both yourself and others if you are in a group?

- In what ways do you think that the words about 'drawing everyone to myself' have been or might be worked out?

Take time to consider:

- What would a 'new life' mean for you? Are there aspects of life which could do with a makeover?
- God is concerned with the whole of our lives. What are the things that you fill your time with? It may be work- whether paid or not, but what are the things you do for fun?
- Are there parts of your life that you wouldn't want others, or God to know about? Are you prepared to let God be involved in everything? (This may be a question to reflect on your own). Are there aspects of this that you struggle with as a Christian?
- What support or resources do you draw on to help you?
- Are there ways in which the church supports you? Could there be more?

If you have time to consider this:

What resources would we need as a church to be able to better support people in their recreational life?

You may choose to consider these questions as a group, with friends or on your own. If you want to discuss and aspects further, either talk with your group leader or contact the ministers: ernesto@cornerstonemk.co.uk
obrenda.mosedale@cornerstonemk.co.uk

For further reflection:

You may also like to read the following passages and reflect on them.

Psalms 51:1-12; Hebrews 5:5-10