

**Hornsea URC – Sunday Worship**  
**Journeying with John : Chapter 7 – 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021**



**Welcome**

**Call to worship:**

*Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!  
Serve the Lord with gladness!  
Come into his presence with singing!  
Know that the Lord, he is God!  
It is he who made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.  
Enter his gates with thanksgiving,  
and his courts with praise!  
Give thanks to him; bless his name!  
For the Lord is good;  
his steadfast love endures forever,  
and his faithfulness to all generations.  
Psalm 100*

We will start our worship by singing our first hymn Majesty

**Hymn: Majesty, majesty, your grace has found me just as I am**

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**Let us pray:**

Almighty God, You are the author of life.

We are in awe of your creation.

The vast oceans reflect your majesty.

The ever changing skies renew our lands.

The deep valleys carry your peace and shelter.

You are saviour of the world.

We are amazed at your grace.  
The nations find peace in your forgiveness.  
The sufferer hope in your healing hands.  
The burdened rest in your promise of heaven.  
You are unconditional love.  
We are privileged to be filled by your presence.  
The youth are filled with your vision.  
The old are filled with your wisdom.  
The oppressed are unchained by your freedom.  
Almighty God, Father, Son and Spirit We worship you! Amen.  
(a prayer of praise to God from [www.lords-prayer-words.com](http://www.lords-prayer-words.com))

## Reading!

Who likes reading?

I am sure that like me many of you enjoy reading and have probably read a lot more in the last year!

Do we ever stop to think how blessed we are to be able to read? As you go through your day today see how many times you read things. Cooking instructions, road signs, letters from a friend, safety information. How much more difficult would life be if we couldn't read?

What ever we read we form a picture in our minds of the people in the story. The picture I form will most likely be different to yours and we will both be different to the image the author had as they were writing.

This is why book clubs are so enjoyable, a chance to discuss the story and the characters with others and see how our ideas differ.

I don't think the Bible was written to be read from cover to cover in one go but I do think there is a benefit in reading a book from the Bible as a whole story. On a Sunday we just get part of a story and it doesn't always make sense if we take it out of context.

We have a Bible book club and we read a different book from the Bible each month and then meet and discuss it. We are reading Exodus 21-40 this month, we had to split Exodus over 2 months as it was too much all in one go! Its interesting to hear what other people think and we often have differing views. Sometimes you think "Oh that's interesting I hadn't thought of it in that way" or "I don't agree with that". There are no right or wrong answers – it's how the words speak to us.

For today's service I have been asked to read John Chapter 7 and base a service on it.

I have read it and will share some of my thoughts with you as the service continues, you may agree or disagree with what I say, you may think the words are saying something different, that's fine, God has a message for each of us and it is not always the same for everyone.

The important thing is that we keep reading God's word and sharing it with others.

Years ago not many people were able to read and stories and laws were passed on by word of mouth. We will now sing an old hymn about sharing the stories of Jesus! It was written from the perspective of a sinner asking to be told the stories of Jesus, I am sure many of you will remember this from childhood!

### **Hymn: Tell me the old old story**

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That was a blast from the past wasn't it! Has it made you think of how you first heard the stories of Jesus?

Before we hear our reading from the Bible we are going to hear a prayer from the Bible Reading Fellowship.

#### **Prayer:**

Lord, as we read the stories about you and words from you,  
Teach us something old and something new;  
Something for now and something for always;  
Something for me and something for others;  
Something known and something surprising;  
Something forgotten and something familiar;  
Something to grow your kingdom in us, in our community and in our world. Amen.

In our reading today Jesus has travelled to Judea for the Festival of the Shelters. He wasn't sure about going because he knew the authorities were planning to kill him, and it was half way through the celebrations before Jesus stood up in the temple to teach.

### **Reading: John 7 14-19 25-32 40-52**

#### **The Festival of Shelters**

<sup>14</sup> The festival was nearly half over when Jesus went to the Temple and began teaching. <sup>15</sup> The Jewish authorities were greatly surprised and said, "How does this man know so much when he has never been to school?"

<sup>16</sup> Jesus answered, "What I teach is not my own teaching, but it comes from God, who sent me. <sup>17</sup> Whoever is willing to do what God wants will know whether what I teach comes from God or whether I speak on my own authority. <sup>18</sup> Those who speak on their own authority are trying to gain glory for themselves. But he who wants glory for the one who sent him is honest, and there is nothing

false in him. <sup>19</sup> Moses gave you the Law, didn't he? But not one of you obeys the Law. Why are you trying to kill me?"

## **Is He the Messiah?**

<sup>25</sup> Some of the people of Jerusalem said, "Isn't this the man the authorities are trying to kill? <sup>26</sup> Look! He is talking in public, and they say nothing against him! Can it be that they really know that he is the Messiah? <sup>27</sup> But when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from. And we all know where this man comes from."

<sup>28</sup> As Jesus taught in the Temple, he said in a loud voice, "Do you really know me and know where I am from? I have not come on my own authority. He who sent me, however, is truthful. You do not know him, <sup>29</sup> but I know him, because I come from him and he sent me."

<sup>30</sup> Then they tried to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come. <sup>31</sup> But many in the crowd believed in him and said, "When the Messiah comes, will he perform more miracles than this man has?"

<sup>32</sup> The Pharisees heard the crowd whispering these things about Jesus, so they and the chief priests sent some guards to arrest him.

## **Division among the People**

<sup>40</sup> Some of the people in the crowd heard him say this and said, "This man is really the Prophet!"<sup>Ⓞ</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Others said, "He is the Messiah!"

But others said, "The Messiah will not come from Galilee! <sup>42</sup> The scripture says that the Messiah will be a descendant of King David and will be born in Bethlehem, the town where David lived." <sup>43</sup> So there was a division in the crowd because of Jesus. <sup>44</sup> Some wanted to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him.

## **The Unbelief of the Jewish Authorities**

<sup>45</sup> When the guards went back, the chief priests and Pharisees asked them, "Why did you not bring him?"

<sup>46</sup> The guards answered, "Nobody has ever talked the way this man does!"

<sup>47</sup> "Did he fool you, too?" the Pharisees asked them. <sup>48</sup> "Have you ever known one of the authorities or one Pharisee to believe in him? <sup>49</sup> This crowd does not know the Law of Moses, so they are under God's curse!"

<sup>50</sup> One of the Pharisees there was Nicodemus, the man who had gone to see Jesus before. He said to the others, <sup>51</sup> "According to our Law we cannot condemn people before hearing them and finding out what they have done."

<sup>52</sup> "Well," they answered, "are you also from Galilee? Study the Scriptures and you will learn that no prophet ever comes <sup>53</sup> <sup>[d]</sup> from Galilee."

### **Where are you from?**

Two things stood out to me from this chapter - No one was sure who Jesus was and they were fixated on where he was from!

Some people thought he was the Messiah but were afraid to say anything in case the authorities heard. They had heard about the miracles he had done but because of what others were saying they were undecided.

And what was it with people from Galilee! It's a bit like they're saying nothing good ever came from Galilee.

People wanted to believe he was the Messiah but no prophet had ever come from Galilee!

Scripture told them that the Messiah would come from the royal line of David in Bethlehem.

And they seemed to think the Messiah would just appear and they wouldn't know where he comes from.

Would they not have heard about the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem?

Was the confusion because of the many stories going around? You know what its like when someone says something and it gets passed on by word of mouth, things can be misheard or added to as word is passed around, a bit like chinese whispers!

Were they missing the point?

I think so, Jesus tells them in verse 16 that he is not teaching his ideas but the ideas of God who sent him.

Jesus had come from God. Via Bethlehem and Nazareth maybe, but from God.

What about us? Where do we say we are from? Probably the place we live or the place we were born, but we are from God.

This made me think. God created me and you, which is amazing, but if we stop and think of the bigger picture. This is the same God that created the world and who created every other human being from Adam to babies that will be born today, how amazing is that? People from every age, and from every country it really is beyond our comprehension isn't it?

I sometimes think we reduce God to our small part of the world and forget how big our God really is.

So shall we remind ourselves as we sing, and do the actions if you want, Our God is a great big God!

### **Hymn: Our God is a great big God**

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### **Christ will come again** - will we recognise Him

Having read of all the confusion of who Jesus was I wondered what we would have thought had we been part of that story, *would* we have recognised him?

And as we follow Jesus and proclaim that he will come again.

**Will** we recognise him?

When will that be? In our lifetime? Tomorrow? 2000 years from now?

Where will he appear? Hornsea? Africa? America?

What will he look like? I doubt he will have the sandals and flowing robes of scripture.

We don't know - it will be in God's time and plan.

The stories in the Bible such as the story of the wise virgins who were ready and had extra oil for their lamps, tell us to be ready.

What does it mean to be ready?

Does it mean we have to be ready to leave everything and follow Jesus? Maybe.

I think its more about how we follow Jesus in our everyday lives, about recognising everyone as a child of God.

I think this poem by the Rev Studdart Kennedy warns about being complacent and missing the event.

From: "The Unutterable Beauty", the collected poetry of the Revd G.A. Studdert Kennedy, Anglican priest and army chaplain during the 1914-8 war, known as "Woodbine Willie" because he always had a cigarette to offer. Published by Hodder & Stoughton, 1927

### **Poem:**

When Jesus came to Golgotha, they hanged Him on a tree,  
They drove great nails through hands and feet, and made a Calvary;  
They crowned Him with a crown of thorns, red were His wounds and deep,  
For those were crude and cruel days, and human flesh was cheap.

When Jesus came to Birmingham they simply passed Him by,  
They never hurt a hair of Him, they only let Him die;  
For men had grown more tender, and they would not give Him pain,  
They only just passed down the street, and left Him in the rain.

Still Jesus cried, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do,"  
And still it rained the wintry rain that drenched Him through and through;  
The crowds went home, and left the streets without a soul to see,  
And Jesus crouched against a wall and cried for Calvary.

Our next hymn reminds us how marvellous it is to have a saviour who loves us just as we are.

**Hymn: I stand amazed in the presence**

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**Prayers of intercession:**

As part of God's family, let us pray for the church and for the world, and let us thank God for His goodness and His many gifts.

God our Father, we remember before you the kaleidoscope of people we call 'the church':

- Those who organise our church and have so much to think about on Sunday mornings that they scarcely have time for their own worship;
- Those who look after our young people who need ideas, patience, a sense of humour and our thanks;
- The people we usually sit near and are missing, known and precious to you

May your blessing rest on each one.

God our Father, we remember before you the world's great needs and its unnoticed sorrows:

- The countries where some are intoxicated with war, but most are desperately weary of it
- The countries where a silent slaughter is still happening while the world's gaze has moved on
- The countries where disease leads to isolation and disability
- The countries in deep need where children die for want of clean water

May your blessing rest on each one.

God our Father, we remember before you our families, friends and the community in which we live:

- The friend we have neglected for too long;
- The neighbour who always looks so burdened and so anxious
- Those who are struggling with illness or pain
- Those in our town who work for the good of others

May your blessing rest on each one.

God our Father, we remember before you the names on our hearts and in our prayer book today

May your blessing rest on each one

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer. **Amen.**

In our final hymn we sing of the glory of God

**Hymn: To God be the glory**

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH/LISTEN](#)

I have shared a few of my thoughts after reading John chapter 7, perhaps you would like to read it this week and see where it takes you?

**Closing prayer:**

As we go into a new week Lord

May there be moments that remind us how great you are

Moments that show us your glory

Moments that show us your love

Moments when we can share your love with others

And may we be ready with open eyes and hearts to recognise these moments. Amen