

God's Faithfulness

July 30, 2023

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ online ministry. This week we had an open mic sharing time rather than a sermon. We focused our thoughts on God's faithfulness. Thank you to Ed and Rhonda for being in the video and to all those who participated. Because of the way the service was structured that section of this video is audio only. The scripture reading is Lamentations 3 19 to 26. We'd like to wish happy birthday this week to Dorothy, Ed, Len and Sherry.

Welcome, Announcements, Prayer

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome you here today and our time together. Don is away this week having some time away and so we're gonna be doing something a little different today and Adam will introduce that at some point in time. Okay there's the spotlights on me now. Can you see me? Good. I mean we have you know we're celebrating a birthday. Dave's having a birthday this week. Is that right Dave? Okay like 39 plus. Yeah, okay.

And okay this first item. Darlene Mowat did pass away this week. She was on life support and decision was to take her off life support. So it's a very difficult situation because it doesn't fit our natural narrative of how life ends. You know perfectly healthy one minute and dead the next is not the normal way that people die these these days. So it's a tragedy for a lot of people, a lot of her family and people who know her and many tears have been shed because of it. But interestingly out of the embers of this grief they harvested her organs and some of you know Jeff he got one of her kidneys. He desperately needed it to be able to continue to live and raise his family. Even though we grieve for the Mowats, they're still out of this grief. Goodness comes and for that we are grateful to God. Let's pray.

Our Father in heaven we are grateful for the life that we have. We're grateful because it provides opportunities that we can be your servants and that we can be your hands and your feet. The people that we live with that we contact each day that we might be in some way a small blessing, the spiritual encouragement. We pray Father for the Mowat family today. We pray for Fraser and his children and their grandchildren as they mourn the passing of Darlene. We're grateful for her life that she lived, faithful to you. As an example to us as a servant like Jesus was, she was too. We pray for that family that they might even in this time of grief look up and be grateful for the time that they've had with her and that the things that they've learned from her they might incorporate them in their lives and be better people because of knowing her. We're thankful for this time that we can be together today. We're thankful for the opportunity to sing and to pray, to read scripture and to think about things that are important and then take these things with us as the church leaves the building and goes. We go our way to be with people and to help people know you. We're thankful for this time and we pray that we might use it wisely, that we might honor you in what we do. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

Communion

Good morning. That video happened yesterday and this is today. It's the next day. And when the people found Jesus on the other side of the lake they said to him, "Teacher, when did you get here?" Jesus answered, "I'm telling you the truth. You are looking for me because you ate the bread and you had what you wanted, not because you understood my miracles." They came to him because he fed them.

They came to him because they'd seen him turning water into wine. They wanted, they wanted wine, they wanted fresh water, they wanted food, they wanted comfort from the storms and that's kind of true today in some cases. There are people who follow God because what they want is they want wealth, health and happiness and that's what they're hoping to get. And Jesus goes on to say, "Don't work for the food that spoils. Instead work for the food that lasts for eternal life. This is the food which the Son of Man will give you because God the Father has put his mark of approval on him."

Now what is eternal life? And if we move on and we move to John 17, Jesus tells us what eternal life is. He said eternal life means to know God, the only true God, and to know Jesus Christ whom he sent. And that's what we're working for is to know God, not to have wealth, health and happiness. He says, then Jesus says, "I am the bread of life. Those who come to me will never be hungry. Those who believe in me will never be thirsty. If we come to him, we will have a thirst and we will have a hunger met that far surpasses the worldly things." It's far more than that. And then he goes on and he says, "I am telling you the truth. He who believes has eternal life and eternal life is that relationship with God both now and eternally and forever. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate manna in the desert but they died.

They had said to Jesus earlier, they said, "Can you do a miracle?" Because we had manna. We could, people had manna before. "Can you do a miracle?" And he's saying, "That miracle is nothing. They ate that manna and they died. That's just a representation of me. But I am the bread of life. You're not going to die. You're going to have eternal life and you're going to have meaningful life and long life. But the bread that comes down from heaven is such a kind that whoever eats it will not die, which is Jesus. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If you eat this bread, you will live forever." And then he said, "I am telling you the truth. If you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in yourself. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life and I will raise them to life on the last day."

And then he goes on, "My blood is the real drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood live in me and I live in them. The living Father sent me because of him I live also. In the same way whoever eats me will live because of me. This then is the bread that came down from heaven. It is not like the bread that your ancestors ate, but then later died. Those who eat the bread will live forever."

And I think this is the whole essence of what we're doing today. What we're doing today is this bread and this wine is just a representation of eating Christ's bread, Christ's wine, in that we take Christ into us and that's when we have life that's everlasting, that is eternal, life that is abundant, and life that surpasses whatever circumstances on this earth are, not the bread that they had as the manna. Let's pray.

Thank you God for coming to earth so that we could have a better understanding of you, that we could love you more, that we could have a deeper level of love for you. Thank you for taking our sins to the cross so that we could eat your body and drink your blood and we could fully surrender to you. May we live in you and may you live in us the way our relation and may our relationship last forever. In Jesus' name, amen.

Reading

Lamentation 3:19-26

Good morning. The reading this morning is Lamentations 3 verses 19 through to 26. I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. I will remember them and my soul is downcast within me. Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope. Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning, great is your faithfulness. I say to myself the Lord is my portion, therefore I will wait for him. The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him. It is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.

Sharing Time

Okay so this is something we haven't done for a while. What we're gonna do is there's a microphone set up on a stand about halfway back on this side. I have a microphone that I'm gonna carry around and if you have a favorite scripture reading that you'd like to share or a song that I or Ed know that (preferably one that's in the book but if not then we'll do our best) then you can you can holler that out and we will do our best. I picked "God's Faithfulness" as kind of a jumping-off idea but you do not have to limit yourself to that. If you have a, if you have a story from your life about God's faithfulness or about God working in your life or Jesus working in your life or the Spirit please feel free to share that. As I say, I've got--I will have a microphone. I'll wrap it up toward the end but if you want to pray, if, if nobody has anything, we will sit here quietly for 15 minutes and that is okay, too. We will just be together in God's presence. So that's, that's kind of what we're, kind of what we're doing for for the, the middle part of the service today.

I have a favorite passage: Psalm 11 verse 3 and 4. It's only two verses. When the foundations are being destroyed what can the righteous do? The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord is on his heavenly throne. He observes the sons of men. His eyes examine them.

"The resurrection of the dead" But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised and if Christ has not been raised our preaching is useless and so is your faith. More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But if he did not raise him if--but if he did not raise him in fact the dead are not raised. Where if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either and if Christ has not been raised your faith is futile. You are still in your sins. Then those who also have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ we are to be pitied more than all men. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead.

We know that Jesus performed many miracles in his life on when he was on the earth but I know that one day, four and a half years ago, he performed the biggest miracle I know because he brought my son back from life. And I want to thank him especially for keeping us safe and being he is so faithful to us every day. And we try to be faithful to him. We thank him for his great love and passion and for keeping us safe and for being with Martin and giving him stronger life every day and give him a better walk in this world. Thank you.

Since it's sharing time I'll share the some news from Care and I. We- we're selling our house and we're probably moving to Waterloo. I don't work at Great Lakes anymore and God provided a seasonal job

right away, it seemed, that pays the bills. And the selling of the house part was a--God is so faithful. I mentioned to one colleague that we were thinking of selling our house and another colleague overheard and said, "oh, we've been praying for a house with a backyard!" So they're, they've made an offer to buy our house without an agent which saves us \$30-40,000, so God is faithful there. We are, we are looking to be homeless for a little while and maybe travel. I would like to praise God in the form of a prayer and at the end if you agree with the praise, I would ask you to give your amen! And if you really agree, give your amen loudly! I think that's a kind of scriptural. Our Lord and God, thank you for being so faithful. For being so loving that you could love even us. For being so forgiving that you could forgive even us; even me. Thank you for being so powerful that you could send worlds spinning and revolving. Thank you for being such an architect and designer and builder. You create systems that interact with other systems; the bees visit the flowers and the fruit and things grow to your glory. Thank you. Thank you for being so sacrificing that you could give so much for this world. Thank you Jesus for your love and your teaching, your example. Thank you Holy Spirit. Please guide us in paths of righteousness, deliver us from evil for your kingdom's sake. Bless the words of our mouth and the works of our hands for your kingdom's sake. All this we pray in Jesus name, amen.

I'm going to read the James James 5 verse 13 to 20. "The Prayer of Faith." Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. Is anyone of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord and the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well. The Lord will raise him up. If he has sin he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain and did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed and the heavens gave rain and the earth produced crops. My brother, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back remember this: whoever turns the sinner from an error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins. Thank you.

I requested this last song because it highlights how praise is not really linked to our circumstances in life and how life is messy. Life is very, very messy and I think that was highlighted for a lot of us this week in the compound sentence of "Darlene is coming off life support; Jeff is prepping for surgery to get a kidney." And that is, this song has been in my head since I heard that sentence I knew I needed to sing it I knew that it was a highlight for where we are where a lot of us are this week.

Thanks, everybody.

Closing

In our Bible class this morning we looked at the some encouragement from the book of Joshua and in Joshua chapter 1 several times, three times God says to Joshua, "Be strong and courageous." Well, it's easy to say for the Lord to say be strong and courageous when you feel like your life is collapsing in around you but there is some truth to that being strong and courageous is a choice a choice that goes beyond circumstances and helps us to channel our life and the direction of our life in a positive way. I'm supposed to be leading a closing prayer but I'm going to have us sing a prayer. Number 777 and in the first verse there is: but for strength that we may ever live our lives courageously let's sing and pray together at this time.

Copyright & Contact

Thanks for watching or listening. The Beamsville Church of Christ meets at 4900 John Street, Beamsville, Ontario. Scripture quotations marked NIV, taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version, NIV, copyright, 2011 by Biblica, Inc., used by permission, all rights reserved worldwide. Scripture quotations marked G-N-T are from the Good News Translation in today's English Version, Second Edition, copyright, 1992 by American Bible Society, used by permission. You can learn more about the congregation on our Facebook page or at BeamsvilleChurchofChrist.ca.