



St Mary the Virgin Baldock



“Building with Christ”

Rector's Blog – day 48

Dear Friends

This is many people's favourite passage from the bible

1 Corinthians 13, verses 4 - 8

4Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant 5or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. 7It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8Love never ends.

This is part of a much larger section, at least three chapters worth in fact, which St Paul writes to the Corinthian Church about life in the Holy Spirit. He gives quite a lot of examples of what the Spirit empowers Christians to do, gifts of prophecy, healing, preaching, teaching and so on. I hope you can see the role of the Spirit filled Church today in all of these, but perhaps especially at the moment, in prophecy. However greater than all these, in fact 'the still most excellent way' in which the Spirit works, is through love. And that's how the wonderful chapter 13 of 1 Corinthians is introduced. Love is the still more excellent way of living on the Spirit.

Paul then tries to define the undefinable. How would you define love, God's love, real love? Paul does it by describing it. Read the quote at the top again and see what I mean. Are you good at loving like this? As long as you think you're not very good at it, you're probably doing OK! Divine love is beyond our attaining at the moment until we are living in the fullness of the Kingdom of God but that shouldn't stop us practising. After all, the Spirit is our guide.

There are a lot of people out there at the moment who are needing loving. Their certainties have started to crumble and their expectation that life will keep chugging on as normal has been called into question. The most anyone can say about the future is that we have no clue what it will bring but it probably won't be pretty.

Christianity is the only structure I know that gives any form of secure hope for the future and any sort of rationale that explains why what is happening, is happening. I hope you have picked up some of what I believe are the answers to these questions from these emails over the last 6 weeks. Remember, Christianity started because of one man who claimed to be God's Son. This man loved the world and was crucified for it. He died but was raised to life to prove that 'love never ends'. In fact it conquers everything else that challenges it. And if that's true, then we have a God who is so ridiculously devoted to his creation that he will go to the most extreme lengths to nurture and protect it. And that's why our hope is founded on rock rather than sand. So surely it is only loving and kind to tell these people whose certainties built on sand, not rock, have been washed away? Do you think we are doing that? And how might we do it more lovingly and better?

Here is a prayer

Holy God,
You call us “beloved”
And you love us with a fierceness
that is at once unsettling and comforting.
May your Divine love dwell within us
and be enacted through us so that
No matter what language we speak



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Love will dance within each word we say;
When you call us to stand up for justice,
Love will be the power that drives our actions;
When we seek knowledge,
Love will compel us beyond idle curiosity all the way to truth;
When we offer our prayers in faith,
Love for you will fill our hearts with peace;
When we give of ourselves and our possessions,
Love for you and your people will shine above love for worldly things.
Thank you, God, for the gift of love,
And empower us to walk the path love opens before us.
Amen

And here is a poem by Christina Rossetti

I have no wit, no words, no tears;
My heart within me like a stone
Is numbed too much for hopes or fears.

Look right, look left, I dwell alone;
I lift mine eyes, but dimmed with grief
No everlasting hills I see;
My life is in the falling leaf:
O Jesus, quicken me.

My life is like a faded leaf,
My harvest dwindled to a husk:
Truly my life is void and brief
And tedious in the barren dusk;
My life is like a frozen thing,
No bud nor greenness can I see:
Yet rise it shall--the sap of spring;
O Jesus, rise in me.

My life is like a broken bowl,
A broken bowl that cannot hold
One drop of water for my soul
Or cordial in the searching cold;
Cast in the fire the perished thing;
Melt and remould it, till it be
A royal cup for Him, my King:
O Jesus, drink of me.

Every blessing

Andrew



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If you would like to join us for evening Prayer today (Tuesday) it is at 4.30pm

Topic: Zoom Evening Prayer on Tuesday

Time: May 26, 2020 04:30 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84564876364?pwd=L2x3aTFpZXptelpjTGFlGpNTmw3UT09>

Meeting ID: 845 6487 6364

Password: 523474

The times for Evening Prayer for the rest of the week are

Wednesday 5.00pm

Thursday 4.30pm

Friday 5.00pm

Saturday 5.00pm

Sunday Morning Worship and 9.30am and Evening Prayer at 6.00pm