

Harvest Message - 2020

The opportunity to be together is reason enough to lift our spirits today. Praise God we live in Cambridgeshire and not Caerphilly; that we have liberty to do most of what we want and are not locked in a uni flat with people we have only just met.

2020 has been a tough year, our famers included, and we still have Q4 to come; even so as people of Christian faith and leanings we must hear again St Paul when he writes:

“Give thanks in all circumstances for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thessalonians 5v18)

He means us to notice thanksgiving is within rather than because of what some events and circumstances are doing. If we take stock all of us can find this to be true.

Today’s readings – thank you to those who read for us – declare:

- a) The God we know, and worship, is GOOD (Psalm 104v1-15),
- b) He gives us food and much else to serve our needs (Deuteronomy 26v1-11), and
- c) His generosity is almost ridiculous and beyond reason (John 2v1-11).

Being thankful to God today is us, with people of faith all over the world ,declaring there is a bigger narrative in play; today’s very daunting challenges are NOT the final chapter; for God has a proven track record of taking the very little we give thanks over and multiplying it so that we and others can be blessed, revived and strengthened.

Think for a moment with me about the wedding in Cana Jesus attended.

- 1) Jesus was there as a guest not as a member of the catering team.
- 2) Jesus' previous training, skills and life experience lay elsewhere – as a carpenter in his adopted Father's family business.
- 3) Jesus had no recognised authority in the room beyond what people might do in response to what he said.

What we see is an acutely embarrassing shortfall became a moment to glimpse another realm; and Mary, Jesus' mother knew her son – 100% God but having set aside his heavenly capabilities and present as a human being – knew how to bring God's greater reality of heaven into the situation.

Jesus knew, as a human being:

- how to have an ever-open channel of communication with God,
- the hospitality team were desperate enough to listen to him, and,
- he would have lost nothing if what he said was dismissed.

As people of faith or desirous of a living connection with God we recognise today and honour the hard work of our farming families; equally it is a new moment to refocus on the work there is for us to do to enable God to bless others around us.

We too can be alert for opportunities as was Mary.

We should be ready to partner with others who are willing to risk their reputation to find God can help and work through them.

Let's shed undue reserve and negativity in this strange season – God remains good, wanting to serve with and through us so that many more can access his generosity.