

SUNDAY 22 June 2025 - St Paul's Cooma 9.30am

Introduction

Hymn - TIS 4136 - THERE'S A WIDENESS IN GOD'S MERCY

There's a wideness in God's mercy
like the wideness of the sea,
and forgiveness in his justice
sealed for us on Calvary.

There is plentiful redemption
in the blood that has been shed;
there is joy for all the members
in the sorrows of the Head.

For the love of God is broader
than the measures of our mind;
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.

But we make his love too narrow
by false limits of our own,
and we magnify his strictness
with a zeal he will not own.

If our love were but more simple
we should take him at his word;
and our lives would be illumined
by the goodness of our Lord.

Greeting

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. **And also with you.**

Sentence of the day

One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?" John 5:5-6

Prayer of Preparation

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' Jesus said: 'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

Prayer of the Day

Pour out upon us O God, the power and wisdom of your Spirit, so that we, who have been baptised into Christ and made your children through faith, may know your Son's power to heal, and, being made one in him, may overcome all barriers that divide us; through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen**

The Ministry of the Word

Isaiah 35:1-7 (NIV)

¹ The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, ² it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our God.

³ Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; ⁴ say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you." ⁵ Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. ⁶ Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. ⁷ The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Psalms 139:1-14 (NIV)

¹ You have searched me, LORD, and you know me.

² **You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.**

³ You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.

⁴ **Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely.**

⁵ You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me.

⁶ **Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.**

⁷ Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

⁸ **If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.**

⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,

¹⁰ **even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.**

¹¹ If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,"

¹² **even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.**

¹³ For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

¹⁴ **I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.**

Hebrews 12:11-17 (NIV)

¹¹ No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

¹² Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. ¹³ “Make level paths for your feet,” so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.

¹⁴ Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵ See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. ¹⁶ See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son. ¹⁷ Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. Even though he sought the blessing with tears, he could not change what he had done.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

John 5:1-15 (NIV)

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ

1 Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. 2 Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. 3 Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. [4] 5 One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?” 7 “Sir,” the invalid replied, “I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.” 8 Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” 9 At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked. The day on which this took place was a Sabbath, 10 and so the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, “It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat.” 11 But he replied, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’” 12 So they asked him, “Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?” 13 The man who was healed had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there. 14 **Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, “See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.”** 15 The man went away and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had made him well.

This is the gospel of the Lord: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

Sermon - John 5:1-15 - Jesus's Knowledge, Compassion and Power

The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God the Father, Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose from the dead, he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins and the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers

Let us pray for the world and the church.

Response: God of Peace, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

The Lord's Prayer

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray,

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Prayer of Preparation

We do not presume to come to your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

The Confession

God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy, welcoming sinners and inviting them to the Lord's table. Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, confident in God's forgiveness.

Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent, and are sorry for all our sins. Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith: pardon you and set you free from all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Greeting of Peace

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

Hymn - TIS 485 - My God, accept my heart this day

**My God, accept my heart this day,
And make it always Thine,
That I from Thee no more may stray,
No more from Thee decline.**

**Before the cross of him who died,
Behold, I prostrate fall;**

Let every sin be crucified,
And Christ be all in all.

Anoint me with Thy heavenly grace,
And seal me for Thine own,
That I may see Thy glorious face,
And worship near Thy throne.

Let every thought and work and word,
To Thee be ever given;
Then life shall be Thy service, Lord,
And death the gate of heaven.

The Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Loving God, we thank you for this world of wonder and delight. You have given it to us to care for, so that all your creatures may enjoy its bounty.

Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

We thank you that when we turned away from you, you sent Jesus to live and work as one of us, and bring us back to you. He showed us how to love you and set us free to love and serve one another.

Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

We thank you that on the cross Jesus took away our sin, all that keeps us from each other and from you. He frees us from hate and fear, from all that destroys love and trust.

Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

And so with everyone who believes in you, with all the saints and angels, we rejoice and praise you, saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

And now we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine; may we who receive them, as Jesus said, share his body and his blood.

On the night he was betrayed, he took bread and gave you thanks. He broke the bread and gave it to his friends, and said, 'Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper he took the cup and gave you thanks. He shared the cup with them and said, 'This is my blood poured out so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me.'

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

You have gathered us together to feed on Christ and to remember all he has done for us.

Fill us with your Spirit that we may follow Jesus in all we do and say, working for justice and

bringing your peace to this world that you have made. Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours for ever and ever. Amen

We who are many are one body, **for we all share in the one bread. The gifts of God for the people of God.**

Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts with thanksgiving.

After Communion

Father of all we give you thanks and praise that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world. **Keep us in this hope that we have grasped: so we and all your people will be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name.**

Hymn - TIS 187 -Let all creation dance

**Let all creation dance In energies sublime
As order turns with chance Unfolding space and time
For nature's art in glory grows
And newly shows God's mind and heart**

**God's breath each force unfurls Igniting from a spark
Expanding starry swirls with whirlpools dense and dark
Though moon and sun seem mindless things
Each orbit sings Your will be done**

**Our own amazing earth With sunlight cloud and storms
And life's abundant growth In lovely shapes and forms
Is made for praise a fragile whole
And from its soul heav'ns music plays**

**Lift heart and soul and voice In Christ all praises meet
And nature shall rejoice As all is made complete
In hope be strong all life befriend
And kindly tend creation's song**

Notices

Dismissal

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the love of God, and the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always **Amen**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Sermon John 5:1-15 - Jesus's Knowledge, Compassion and Power

In our gospel today, Jesus deliberately goes to the pool at Bethesda knowing there will be crowds of sick people there. We know that word of his miraculous abilities, and particularly his ability to heal has got out, but we also know from last week that healing was not his primary focus. He only healed to point to more important things. This is really obvious this week as of the dozens, if not hundreds of sick people at the pool, he only heals one, and not the rest, at least at that time.

So Jesus obviously has a very important reason to make the special trip and endure the crowds for this short time. As you heard, as soon as he heals the man, he leaves because of all the crowds, even before he can tell the man who he is. He obviously didn't want to be among the crowds for any longer than he needed, and so, like last week, he wasn't there specifically to heal someone, but to show who he was. Specifically, this week Jesus shows his knowledge, his compassion and his power

Jesus Knows us

One of the first things we notice is that Jesus knew the man had been paralysed for a long time. He knew this without being told. We are told that the man had been paralysed for 38 years, but when Jesus asks him if he wants to get well, the man doesn't mention this. He only that he can't get to the water whenever it is stirred up and so be healed.

Just as Jesus knew all about this man, just as Jesus knew all about the Samaritan woman at the well a couple of weeks ago, so does Jesus know each of us. Jesus who knows you perfectly—He knows everything about you, inside and out, and all you have ever felt or thought or done.

As we read in our Psalm this morning ¹ You have searched me, LORD, and you know me. ² You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. ³ You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. ⁴ Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely."

We cannot hide anything from Jesus - he knows everything we have ever done or thought, everything about us, warts and all, Yet, as he did with the paralysed man, he has complete compassion on us.

Jesus has Compassion on us

This is the second point: In his compassion Jesus heals the man immediately. Did you notice he didn't even wait around long enough for the man to know who he is. The man didn't know who Jesus was, and so Jesus couldn't have healed the man because of his faith in Jesus. The man was paralysed, so couldn't have been healed because of the man's religious observances.

Since the healing is not in response to anything religious or faithful about the man, it simply comes from Jesus' compassion. At least 9 times in the gospels we read Jesus is moved by his compassion, and in this case, because of his compassion, he heals the man, and he heals him immediately.

Jesus seems to be in so much of a hurry that he then leaves the crowded pool before the man could know who healed him. With all the other disabled people there, the lame, the blind and the paralysed, if it were found out that Jesus had healed one man, he wouldn't have been able to move for others wanting to be healed. But later, for a second time, he actively seeks out to find the man, but this time in a much quieter place, in the temple. Note that the man didn't go looking for Jesus, but Jesus went looking for him, just as Jesus is always searching for us, whether or not we think we are looking for him. Jesus had no intention of walking away from this man and leaving him with nothing more than a healed body. He wanted him to have much more.

In this quieter place, Jesus says to him: "See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you." This time, the man does learn who Jesus is, and note his gift of healing came before the command to not sin. Jesus, in his compassion, healed the man's lameness, but although it came later,

Jesus's greater compassion was for this man's eternal salvation, and indeed for world's eternally salvation, which is what the healing miracle was pointing to.

When Jesus finds the man again, he warns the man to make his eternal salvation sure. The 'something worse' that Jesus is referring to is the final, eternal judgement that is coming to all, the only thing that would be worse than the man's 38 years of paralysis. Jesus is saying that the issue is the man's eternal salvation, not his health. Jesus healed the man, not to make him physically whole, but to make him holy. He wanted the man to have a relationship with God, and his sin, or lack of holiness, was standing in his way. He knows this man needs this relationship, and this holiness, and so he warns him that, if he turns away and mocks this gift, or if makes an idol out of his health, and embraces sin as his way of life, he will perish, and perish eternally. Jesus in his compassion does not want this for the lame man, and in fact he doesn't want it for anyone - not the least for anyone here today.

Jesus has power

So, in showing his compassion, Jesus demonstrated his power with the gift of healing. He healed the lame man immediately, as we have seen, before he even knew who he was. He heals the man, and tells him to pick up his mat and walk, and he did. As we discussed last week, Jesus truly has power to heal,. He had that power to heal both when he walked on earth, and today, even if today he often works through medical professionals and pharmacologists.

As I mentioned, amongst the crowds of sick people at the pool, Jesus only heals one. But that was enough to point people towards himself. Dozens of people didn't get healed then, but you see, when Jesus walked on earth, we only received foretastes of his healing power. The full healing of all his people and all their diseases and disabilities awaits his second coming. And the point of those foretastes, for the lame man and for us, is to call us into relationship with him, into faith and holiness.

I'm sure you will have also noticed that all this happened on the Sabbath, and that this upset the Jewish leadership. Jesus did it on the Sabbath to show that God works on the Sabbath. God takes no days off. He is constantly at work for the reason that we might be whole and have the eternal rest that only he offers. However, we will learn a lot more about the Sabbath in next week's reading, so I won't be talking more about the Sabbath today.

Conclusion

Today, by healing one person in the midst of dozens, Jesus pointed us to his complete knowledge of us, his compassion and his power for all who know and believe in him. My prayer today is that the Lord open your eyes to know Jesus personally. To know him as one who knows you, and has compassion on you. As the one who has power for your body and your soul in this life and the next. Jesus has come with saving and healing power, but that power is first for the sake of your relationship with God, for your holiness. Jesus holds your relationship with him, his Father in heaven and his Holy Spirit as his highest priority for the sake of your everlasting health, and only then your physical and mental health on this earth. AMEN