

Sunday 19 October 2025 Cooma Anglican HC 3

Hymn: TIS 204 Come let us join our cheerful songs

Come let us join our cheerful songs

With angels round the throne

Ten thousand thousand are their tongues

But all their joys are one

Worthy the Lamb that died they cry

To be exalted thus

Worthy the Lamb our lips reply

For He was slain for us

Jesus is worthy to receive

Honour and power divine

And blessings more than we can give

Be Lord for ever Thine

The whole creation join in one

To bless the sacred name

Of Him that sits upon the throne

And to adore the Lamb

Sentence of Scripture

Very truly I tell you, whoever obeys my word will never see death." John 8:51

The Great Commandments

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: 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.' 'This is the great and first commandment.

And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

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.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, your Son has opened up for us a new and living way into your presence; give us pure hearts and steadfast wills to worship you in spirit and in truth; through the same Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen**

Exodus 3:10-15 (NIV)

¹⁰ So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

¹¹ But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

¹² And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain. ”

¹³ Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?”

¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

¹⁵ God also said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers —the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob —has sent me to you.’ “This is my name forever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation. This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Psalms 56 (NIV)

¹ Be merciful to me, my God, for my enemies are in hot pursuit; all day long they press their attack.

² **My adversaries pursue me all day long; in their pride many are attacking me.**

³ When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.

⁴ **In God, whose word I praise—in God I trust and am not afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?**

⁵ All day long they twist my words;all their schemes are for my ruin.

⁶ **They conspire, they lurk, they watch my steps, hoping to take my life.**

⁷ Because of their wickedness do not let them escape; in your anger, God, bring the nations down.

⁸ **Record my misery; list my tears on your scroll —are they not in your record?**

⁹ Then my enemies will turn back when I call for help. By this I will know that God is for me.

¹⁰ **In God, whose word I praise, in the LORD, whose word I praise—**

¹¹ in God I trust and am not afraid. What can man do to me?

¹² **I am under vows to you, my God; I will present my thank offerings to you.**

¹³ **For you have delivered me from death and my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of life.**

Revelation 4:6-11 (NIV)

⁶ Also in front of the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back. ⁷ The first living creature was like a lion, the second

was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle. ⁸ Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying:

“‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,’ who was, and is, and is to come.”

⁹ Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:

¹¹ “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”

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

John 8:48-59 (NIV)

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

⁴⁸ The Jews answered him, “Aren’t we right in saying that you are a Samaritan and demon-possessed?”

⁴⁹ “I am not possessed by a demon,” said Jesus, “but I honor my Father and you dishonor me. ⁵⁰ I am not seeking glory for myself; but there is one who seeks it, and he is the judge. ⁵¹ Very truly I tell you, whoever obeys my word will never see death.”

⁵² At this they exclaimed, “Now we know that you are demon-possessed! Abraham died and so did the prophets, yet you say that whoever obeys your word will never taste death. ⁵³ Are you greater than our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets. Who do you think you are?”

⁵⁴ Jesus replied, “If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. ⁵⁵ Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and obey his word. ⁵⁶ Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.”

⁵⁷ “You are not yet fifty years old,” they said to him, “and you have seen Abraham!”

⁵⁸ “Very truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!” ⁵⁹ At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

This is the gospel of the Lord. **Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

Sermon - How do you never see death? John 8:48-59

The Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, 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.

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

The Prayers of the People

Let us pray for the world and the church

Response: Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our 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.

Scripture Sentence

For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. 1 Cor 11:26-28

The Confession

Knowing the goodness of God and our failure to respond with love and obedience, let us confess our sins, saying together:

Heavenly Father, you have loved us with an everlasting love, but we have broken your holy laws and have left undone what we ought to have done.

We are sorry for our sins and turn away from them.

For the sake of your Son who died for us, forgive us, cleanse us and change us.

By your Holy Spirit, enable us to live for you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God is slow to anger and full of compassion, forgiving all who humbly repent and trust in his Son as Saviour and Lord. God therefore forgives you in Christ Jesus, in whom there is no condemnation. **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 518 For the bread and for the wine

**For the bread and for the wine, For the pledge that seals Him mine,
For the words of love divine, We give Thee thanks, O Lord.**

**For the feast of love and peace, bidding all our sorrows cease,
foretaste of the kingdom's bliss we give you thanks, O Lord**

**This the bread and this the wine, Yet to faith, the solemn sign
Of the heavenly and divine! We give Thee thanks, O Lord.**

Till He comes we take the bread, Type of Him on whom we feed,
Him who lives and once was dead! We give Thee thanks, O Lord.

Till He come we take the cup; As we at His table sup,
Eye and heart are lifted up! We give Thee thanks, O Lord.

For that coming, here foreshown, For that day to man unknown,
For the glory and the throne, We give Thee thanks, O Lord.

Thanksgiving for Offering

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

The Great 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.**

You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, making us in your own image. We praise you for your son, our saviour Jesus Christ, who by his death on the cross and rising to new life offered the one true sacrifice for sin and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people.

Therefore, we lift our voices to 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, gracious God, we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine, and pray that we who receive them in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit according to our Saviour's word, in remembrance of his suffering and death, may share his body and his blood. On the night before he died, Jesus took bread, and when he had given you thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying 'Take and eat. This is my body which is given for you.

We who are many are one body in Christ, **for we all share in the one bread.**

After supper, he took the cup, and again giving you thanks, he gave it to his disciples, saying 'Drink from this all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' We eat this bread and drink this cup **to proclaim the death of the Lord.** We do this until he returns. **Come, Lord Jesus!**

Father, as we recall his saving death and glorious resurrection, may we who share these gifts be renewed by the Holy Spirit, and united in the body of your Son. Bring us with all your people into the joy of your eternal kingdom, there to feast at your table and join in your eternal praise.

Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive praise and honour and glory and power forever and ever. Amen

The Holy Communion

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

Gracious God, thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the body and blood of our saviour Jesus Christ. Thank you for assuring us of your goodness and love, and that we are living members of Christ's body.

Father, we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Lord. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory.

Notices

Hymn - TIS 599 - Take my life, and let it be

Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee.

Take my moments and my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of thy love.

Take my feet, and let them be swift and beautiful for thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing always, only, for my King.

Take my lips, and let them be filled with messages from thee.

Take my silver and my gold, nothing, Lord, would I withhold.

Take my intellect, and use every power as thou shalt choose.

Take my will and make it thine; it shall be no longer mine.

Take my heart, it is thine own; it shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love: my Lord, I pour at thy feet its treasure-store.

Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for thee.

Blessing

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord:

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Sermon John 8:48-59 - How to not see death

Have you ever got into a big argument at work? An argument that is ostensibly about the strategic direction the company, or just your section within it, should take. But everyone knows it's really about whether one of the people arguing is more powerful or important than the other. In one sense, neither party really cares what the company does, it just has to be what they want, because they are more important than anyone else. And how often do these arguments just degenerate into swapping insults?

The Jews around Jesus have been arguing with him for many chapters, and last week, they even got to the point where they claimed to believe in him, even though in the next verse they started demonstrating that they really didn't.

This week the Jews argument has degenerated into insults. The Jews call Jesus a Samaritan and demon possessed.

To the Jews, calling someone a Samaritan was a bit like calling a new South Welshman a Queenslander at state of origin time, but it was much worse. For them it was not just a football game, but their relationship with God himself and purity of worship. Jews and Samaritans had been one country from the time of the exodus to King Solomon, about 1000 years before Jesus. But the Samaritans were defeated by Assyrians, intermarried with foreigners, and at least in Jewish eyes, corrupted their religious worship by not worshipping on mount Zion but on other mountains, particularly mount Gerazim. The feelings were particularly strained because Jews and Samaritans were related, but like arguing family members refused to ever associate with each other despite splitting nearly a millennium before. So Jews calling Jesus a Samaritan wasn't at all friendly.

Then, when the Jews say that Jesus is demon possessed, they are saying he is not in control of himself, they say he's under the control of a malevolent, unclean spirit who also opposes God. Demons always oppose God, because God created us to have self control. That's part of what it means to have been made in God's image. Calling someone demon possessed is certainly not a compliment, particularly with the language the Jews used that implies that they have all sat down together and discussed it and come to a general consensus. Aren't we right, they said, in saying you are demon possessed?

Despite these insults, Jesus doesn't respond in kind, at least not straight away. He has a three pronged response: First, Jesus tells them that he is the one who grants eternal life (vv. 48-51). Second, he tells them that he is glorified by God (vv. 52-57). And finally, Jesus tells them that he is God (vv. 58-59).

Jesus grants eternal life

In telling the Jews that he grants eternal life, he says that he isn't demon possessed, but that he honours the father, which anyone's demon possessed cannot do. Jesus is not seeking own glory, as **Philippians 2** tells us, Jesus, Philippians 2:6 (NIV) 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing. On the other hand, God the father, the creator of the whole universe should be glorified, as the living creatures tell us in **Revelation 4:11** (NIV) 11 "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things.

God is also the judge, so when the Jews dishonor Jesus, whom God sent, they thereby dishonor his father, God and he is the judge, the only one who can grant eternal life.

So, whoever obeys Jesus' word will not see death - because Jesus honours the father, the father listens to him, the father is the judge and the only one who can save anyone from death. Jesus clearly responds to the Jews argument that he is demon possessed this way, without insults.

God honours Jesus

So, not only is Jesus saying that he gives eternal life, he says he gives eternal life because God the father honours him. So the Jews see they are getting nowhere dishonouring Jesus and are dishonoring God when they try, they then try to invoke their patriarch Abraham.

They know that even the greatest Jewish patriarch, Abraham, as well as all the great prophets, died. Since Jesus is saying that anyone who obeys his words will escape death, he is implying that he is even greater than Abraham and the prophets, who all died. - this is complete heresy to them. It is like someone telling a physicist that they are smarter than Isaac Newton, Alfred Einstein and Stephen Hawking, the three greatest theoretical physicists combined. Jesus being greater than Abraham is inconceivable to them

Jesus trumps this by invoking God - scribes invite him to tell them who he thinks he is - by implication, how great he thinks he is, but he declined, saying to glorify himself would mean nothing. Instead he says that his father, the one whom the scribes claim as their God, glorifies him.

Not only does he say that they only claim the true God as their God, he bluntly says they don't even know their God - ouch.

He says he knows God, and to rub it in, he said that if he said he didn't know God, he would be lying, like they obviously are - double ouch! To round it out, he said not only does he know God, and he obeys him, unlike the Jews. This is creeping into insulting the Jews, or it would be if it wasn't 100 percent true, which Jesus always is.

To highlight this, Jesus again invokes Abraham - he says: Your father Abraham (the Abraham you say is your father) rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad."

He is speaking as if he knew Abraham personally, which he does, and this really sets them off. Abraham is understood to have lived somewhere between 2100 and 1900 years before Jesus was talking to the Jews, and they reckoned Jesus couldn't have been anywhere near 50 years old - he couldn't possibly have been a very well preserved 2000 year old!

Jesus claims to be God

Jesus' final statement in this argument was "before Abraham was born, I Am. Not only was he claiming to be very old, he is using the name God told Moses to tell people who he was at the burning bush - I am, or in Greek ego eimi, or in Hebrew Yahweh.

The Jews understand precisely what Jesus is saying but this- he is referring to himself with God's special personal name: I am or Yahweh. Older versions of the Bible use the name Jehovah which is a transliteration of the bowls of the name Yahweh and the vowels of the Hebrew title lord or Adonai. This is because the Jews desperately wanted to avoid profaning God's name or blaspheming. They would never say it, and to remind them they wrote it this way.

Even though Jesus used the words I am, He and the Jews knew exactly what he was saying - that he is God, perfectly divine. If this wasn't true, and the Jews were not prepared to accept that, then it was blasphemy of the highest order, and under Old Testament law punishable by death. The Jews picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

Conclusion

In our reading today, Jesus has made it clear that he is not demon possessed, but in fact in the truest sense of the phrase. This is who Jesus is, this is Jesus's identity, but what does this mean for us? Identifying someone by name, or even by title, means nothing unless that name and title is somehow significant. You knowing that I am Martin Christensen didn't mean anything unless you know that I am the locum at Cooma Anglican and that I minister to you here in Jesus's name.

So what does it mean that Jesus honours God the father, God the father honours him, and that he is God the son?

One of the most important consequences of this for us is that whoever obeys Jesus's word will never see death. Jesus is the one and only way to eternal life.

For the last 3 months we have worked our way through John's gospel and seen that he is the bread of life, living water, ruler of the wind and waves, and that he alone has the words of eternal life. He is the truth who sets us free and the one to be believed for eternal life, God the Son who is worthy of all worship and praise with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

People, like the Jews in today's reading have argued about Jesus identity and the consequences for us, but John the gospel writer was absolutely sure that Jesus was all these things, and the only way to eternal life. Throughout John we have heard clear statements that Jesus is all these things, the Word who was with God and was God, the way the truth and the life, the only begotten Son, whoever believes in him having eternal life.

John believed that whoever obeys Jesus's word will never see death, and he lived the rest of his earthly life seeking to obey Jesus's words and not has eternal life.

Do you have the same goal in this life, to obey Jesus words and join John in the life to come?