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WEEKLY LETTER – 4 SEPTEMBER 2022

Luke 14.25-33

Ha ha – He's back the teacher of difficult truths!

Having read this well-known passage about being a disciple, I wonder what you are thinking? Perhaps you are writing down your thoughts in a diary, or as part of a series of reflections on Luke's gospels? Writing our thoughts down will help you to understand more, and causing a change in your thinking.

What's going on in this passage? From time to time Jesus explains truths that he must have known would cause his disciples to struggle. He has explained the necessity of his death, the radical new nature of greatness, and here in this short passage Jesus expresses himself in a spirited and plainspoken way about the innate demands of being a disciple of his.

Jesus is saying something we all know is true. Each day, you have to decide what you renounce and which basket you put your eggs in, to show what you value. God knows there will be occasional disappointments and false starts, as there have been with all the saints who have gone before us. We also know God cannot and never will give up on you, for 'you are made for eternity'.

Jesus is simply asking for your fidelity, your honesty, your obedience, and of course your generous spirit, so that you can enjoy the greater freedom given to his saints. This is what we mean by, 'daily walking with Jesus'.

For as we walk, with our eyes on the values in the 'Good news', we can step by step continue along the path of having a more natural and loving relationship with the Risen Christ. But we have to, or need to listen attentively and honestly to the 'teacher of difficult' truths. There is no escaping from this fact.

Or, put it another way, you have to resist the downward drift. We all see in the world, and therefore 'take possession' of your souls and incline your hands to God. This path will lead you on a journey in which, you will know, you have truly lived. For Christ calls us all to be more obedient to his heavenly secrets/difficult truths, so that we may become more like the saints and source of light to others.

Therefore let us pray to be more courageous in living out our faith, evermore deeply in love with Jesus Christ, confident in the knowledge that our obedience to Jesus' example and God's truth, our lives will be enriched, and therefore those who we meet in our daily walk with the risen Christ.

Stephen

A Prayer for Pakistan (Christian Aid)

Compassionate God, Hear our prayer for the people of Pakistan;

for those who have lost their lives in the floods and for those forced from their homes.

Yet again, God, it is the poorest who are hit hardest and those who lose most.

Our hearts are heavy with the death, distress and destruction we see.

But we are not helpless to act. God of love and justice:

Call us to generous giving for those in need and urgent action to combat climate chaos.

Let those in need today know they are not alone. And unite us in hope for a world where all can live in safety and security.

Amen.

Please Note: there will be no letter delivery next week due to holidays

**Sunday Morning Worship in Christ Well, and on Zoom, at 10.30 am will be led by Rev Dr Noel Davies.
We will celebrate Communion.**

Bible Readings: Luke 15.8-10: Luke 24. 36, 45-49: 1 Thessalonians 1.1-10: Ephesians 4.11-16.

Cycle of Prayer in the Swansea Region – we will pray for Tabernacle, Mumbles.

Prayers for Every Household – Manor Road, nos. 37-71

Loving and compassionate God, we ask your healing for those mentioned,
and for others who may be concerned for their health.
In the name of Jesus we ask this prayer. Amen.

Completely known – completely loved (Jeremiah 18.1-11: Psalm 139.1-6. 13-18: Philemon 1.1-21: Luke 14.25-33)

Creator God, you know us inside out, you know our thoughts when we are far away.
You surround us with your love and comfort. In you, there is safety and security.
In you, there is acceptance =, not just a part of us, but of all of us, with all our failings and flaws.

Redeemer God, you bring us joy with your endless love, with your abundant justice and your peace.
Your grace and mercy encircle us, bringing light in to our darkness,
light, which cannot be extinguished; light which will never go out.

Spirit, you blow through our lives, with our warm breeze and your rushing gale.
You are the one who brings life to our bones, and causes our hearts to beat.
You are the one who guides us, drawing us closer to your. Amen.

Lewis Reay (URC Prayer Hand book 2022)

