

The word "hate" (v. 26) is surprising, until we recall that exaggeration was a common linguistic trait in Hebrew, as Jesus does here: "hate" means love less, be less attached to. The disciple must find his prime security in Jesus, not in his or her family, nor in preserving one's "life". One must be prepared to suffer, as Jesus did on the "cross" (v. 27). In vv. 28-32, Jesus uses two examples to advise full realization of the cost of being a follower, before enlisting. You must be so dedicated to the cause that you are willing to forfeit all that you have. Then vv. 34-35: don't allow your allegiance to Christ to deteriorate and so become ineffectual. If you do, God will throw you away as useless! If you are prepared for the challenge, grasp it! © 1996-2022 Chris Haslam

~ Notices ~

Wine at Communion

A reminder that you are warmly invited to receive from the chalice, if you wish. For the time being, the host will continue to be brought to people in the pews and then those that wish to receive from the chalice are invited to the altar rail.

Ukraine The Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal has launched a special appeal encouraging all parishes in Ireland to support the appeal. To donate please use the link on our website: <https://clareanglicans.ie> or go direct to: www.christianaid.ie

Burren Walk Saturday 24th Sept starting at 10.30am from the parking area just past the Carron Research station (on what3words app – install.fulfilling.cluttered). We shall first meet outside Cassidy's Pub in Carron at 10.15am, with lunch perhaps at the Burren Perfumery or Caherconnell fort around 1.15pm. I shall put the sign-up sheet back in church – please put a tick by your name if you can make this date. Total cost €150 for the group.

Living the Questions Course Start date to be confirmed, but please put your name down on the sign-up sheet if you are interested so I can gauge numbers.

Book Club There is a sign-up sheet if you might be interested in joining a church book club.

Choir

This is an appeal to anyone who might like to reform a choir for St Columba's Church, sadly put in abeyance by the Covid pandemic. Please let the Rector know if you would like to be part of a church choir.

Concerts booked

Friday 23rd Sept 7.30pm – *Music Generation Clare* with trad trio Pádraig Rynne, Tara Breen and Jim Murray

Friday 14th October 7.30pm– *Jaskane*, chamber/folk trio

Website: clareanglicans.ie

YouTube: www.youtube.com/c/clareanglicans

Facebook: www.facebook.com/clare.anglicans

Rector: Email: frkevinobrien@me.com

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<http://nrsvbibles.org> The *Common Worship psalter* is © The Archbishops' Council of the Church of England, 2000.



11th Sunday after Trinity 2022 (Year C)

Collect

God of constant mercy, who sent your Son to save us: remind us of your goodness, increase your grace within us, that our thankfulness may grow, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Suggested Hymns - For the online service you might like to view these hymns with lyrics on YouTube.

- 1) I bind unto myself today
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KURERen9Vyc>
- 2) My song is love unknown
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lv7OZSoA22w>
- 3) God be in my head
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNNdXRX_-E4
- 4) I heard the voice of Jesus say (576)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYqgBMrmeZA>

Deuteronomy 30.15-20

See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Psalms 1

Happy are those
who do not follow the advice of the wicked,
or take the path that sinners tread,
or sit in the seat of scoffers;
but their delight is in the law of the Lord,
and on his law they meditate day and night.
They are like trees
planted by streams of water,
which yield their fruit in its season,
and their leaves do not wither.
In all that they do, they prosper.
The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgement,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
for the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

Philemon 1-21

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our dear friend and co-worker, to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the church in your house:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

When I remember you in my prayers, I always thank my God because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith towards the Lord Jesus. I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective when you perceive all the good that we may do for Christ. I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do your duty, yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me. I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back for ever, no longer as a slave but as more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. So, if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

Luke 14.25-33

Now large crowds were travelling with Jesus; and he turned and said to them, 'Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, saying, "This fellow began to build and was not able to finish." Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

Post Communion Prayer

God of all mercy, in this eucharist you have set aside our sins and given us your healing: grant that we who are made whole in Christ may bring that healing to this broken world, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Commentary

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

The setting is the plains of Moab, as the Israelites prepare to cross the Jordan into the Promised Land. The book states that Moses is the speaker, but the laws given in Chapters 12-28 are updated versions of those in earlier books. Times have changed since Sinai: the people were semi-nomads then; now they are farmers and shepherds. It is a time of religious revival, of new commitment to God. V. 6 puts the Law in a new light: God will "circumcise your heart" – he will

work changes within the people so love becomes the driving force. Note also v. 20: "loving the Lord your God ...". They will keep the Law because they love God.

Our reading summarizes Chapters 27-28, which tell of: the ways in which the Israelites will be blessed if they keep this expanded and updated covenant; and the consequences of failing to keep many of the laws, i.e. being excluded from the community.

Then it offers a choice: keep the laws in love and obedience, or suffer the consequences of following other paths. Keeping the Law because you love God will have many benefits, including long life ("length of days", v. 20).

Psalms 1

This psalm is an introduction to the book of Psalms; it contrasts the fate of the godly and the ungodly. Vv. 1-3 speak of the happiness of the godly. They do not live as the ungodly do; rather they constantly ("day and night", v. 2) and joyfully study and observe Mosaic law; their well-being is like trees which bear fruit. They are prosperous. But, on the other hand, the ungodly are "like chaff" (v. 4): in manual threshing, the crushed sheaves were tossed into the air, where the wind blew the chaff away. So, say vv. 5-6, their fate will be disaster: they will be excluded from the fellowship enjoyed by those who follow God's ways, and will suffer – unlike the godly, over whom God keeps watch.

Philemon 1-21

This appears to be a personal letter to Philemon, a slave owner, but it is also addressed to "the church in your house" (v. 2). In the first century, the Christian community gathered at a member's house. It is likely that the letter was read during worship. Paul writes not using his authority as an apostle (as he does in other letters) but as a "prisoner" (v. 1). (Perhaps "Apphia", v. 2, was Philemon's wife and "Archippus" his son.) It opens as letters usually did: from Paul, to various addressees, followed by best wishes (v. 3). Paul wishes "grace" (the Greek greeting) and "peace" (the Jewish) as well – from God. Thanksgiving (vv. 4-7) was also customary. The "saints" (v. 5) are those set apart for God's work in the world, i.e. all Christians. Perhaps in v. 6 he says: may greater understanding of all that comes through being incorporated in Christ strengthen your sharing of faith. Philemon ("you", v. 7) has been instrumental in nurturing Paul and other Christians.

"Onesimus" (v. 10), a slave, has run away from Philemon's house. While visiting Paul, he has been converted to Christianity: he is Paul's "child". A penalty for leaving a master was death, so Paul is in a delicate position, pleading for the man's life. Paul did not try to free Greco-Roman society of slavery, because he had higher priorities; rather he pleads for one slave. Rather than "command" (v. 8), he appeals "on the basis of love" (v. 9), the very foundation of the faith. The slave's fate is in his master's hands; Philemon can choose to preserve his life. May his "good deed" (v. 14) be "voluntary", of his own free will. Onesimus is a Greek word for useful or beneficial. He has been changed from "useless" (v. 11) to "useful" – both to Philemon and to Paul; in v. 20, Paul speaks of "benefit". Paul sends him back to his master (v. 13), bearing this letter, although he would have preferred to "keep him with me". May Philemon take him "back forever" (v. 15) as a slave and as a "beloved brother" (v. 16) in Christ. May Philemon treat Onesimus as he would Paul (v. 17). Paul offers to take on himself any and all punishment that may be in store for the slave (v. 18). May he be treated as a fellow Christian. V. 19b may indicate that Philemon came to Christ through Paul. Paul is "confident" (v. 21) of Philemon's "obedience" to Christ.

Luke 14:25-33

In vv. 13-24, Jesus has told the "crowds" that even outsiders, the poor and the disabled are called to God's kingdom. Now he tells what is required to become a follower.