



Daily reflections for
June 27th to July 2nd



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(click on the blue writing that is underlined to be taken to the bible passages or further reading)

Monday June 27th - [Luke 9.51-62](#)

Luke's Gospel now reaches a major turning point. After Peter's confession and the subsequent revelation on the mountain of Transfiguration, Jesus looks towards Jerusalem where, like Elijah, he will be 'taken up' into heaven (see 2 Kings 2.11). In the mountaintop vision of Jesus with Moses and Elijah, there is talk of Jesus' departure (9.31), but the Greek word is 'exodus'. Jesus' journey of liberation towards his ascension takes him through crucifixion and resurrection. On the way he calls followers to be 'fit for the kingdom of God' (9.62), and Luke packs his account of the journey with matters of great importance for disciples.

The Samaritans, through whose villages he must pass, refuse to welcome a Jewish pilgrim travelling to a holy place whose status they reject. But, unlike Elijah, Jesus will not allow the Jews' traditional enemies to be consumed by heavenly fire (2 Kings 1.10). His disciples must learn to set aside age-old prejudices, so that they can appreciate the importance of being open to the faith of others, even those they despise. Soon he will tell of a travelling Samaritan whose compassion provides ample evidence of the neighbourliness that Moses looks for (10.25-37). And later on the journey, Jesus will heal a group of lepers, and the only one to bother thanking him will be a Samaritan (17.11-19).

The urgency of the coming of God's kingdom means that some conventions must now be suspended, including creature comforts and the duty to bury one's father (Jesus' 'shock language' is very different from Elijah's concession in 1 Kings 19.20ff). Followers of Jesus are like those who plough well: straight furrows are the fruit of focused attention, with eyes fixed on what is both important and urgent. Everything else is perilous distraction.

Following you, Jesus, does not guarantee an easy life. There are challenges and obstacles as the sinful life constantly fights with our Spirit-filled life. We are sorry when our human condition takes over and we fight using our own efforts. We're sorry for the times we retaliate when others are hurtful to us. We're sorry for relying on our own ideas and neglecting the wisdom of the Spirit's guidance. We're sorry for all the excuses we offer to get out of things you ask us to do. We're sorry for letting you down, for our complacency. We know some things can't wait. And that you call for action.

Forgive us, Lord. Help us to centre our life on you, heeding the urgency of your call. **Amen.**

(click on the image below to listen to the song - if double click opens in whole screen)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFna4pEF7M8>

For further reading check out [Working preacher](#).

Tuesday June 28th - [1 Kings 19.15-16,19-21](#)

After his victory over the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, Elijah fled from the wrath of Jezebel, wife of King Ahab (1 Kings 18.1–19.3).

Eventually God's still, small voice told him what to do next. His anointing of new kings for Israel (Jehu) and its arch-enemy Aram (Hazael) turned out to be a mixed blessing. Jehu went on to free Israel from the House of Omri (2 Kings 9–10; Ahab was its last ruler), but his son Jehoahaz was later humiliated by Hazael (2 Kings 13.7). Elijah was also told to appoint Elisha as his successor. There are superficial similarities to Jesus recruiting his disciples in this week's Gospel, but the work of Israel's prophets is painted on a much broader political canvas. Yet, those who are called to face the possibility of martyrdom (Luke 9.23) should hardly be regarded as politically safe.

God, help us not to waste our time
but to live for you each day.
God, help us to know what is urgent and important,
and to do it. **Amen.**

(click on the image below to listen to the song - if double click opens in whole screen)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZzU0x1IFvBw>

For further reading check out [Working preacher](#).

Wednesday June 29th - [Galatians 5.1,13-25](#)

Paul insists throughout Galatians that freedom comes through Christ, not Moses. He realises that by playing down the authority of Moses he could leave his churches without a moral compass. So, he stresses that Christ's freedom is not a recipe for self-centred anarchy (v.16: 'gratify the desires of the flesh') but the mandate for a paradoxical kind of slavery: '...through love become slaves to one another' (v.13), which Paul regards as the key to Moses' teaching. All individuals and communities need a degree of regulation. But for Paul nothing is more important or urgent than the freedom-as-slavery won by Christ.

Christ's followers live with the competing pull of 'flesh' and 'Spirit'. In this they experience a kind of crucifixion (v.24), but also the life-giving power of the Spirit (vv.16-25; cf 3.2-5). Most of the 15 named 'works of the flesh' in verses 19-21 undermine social as well as personal life. By contrast, 'the fruit of the Spirit' brings peace to divided communities and struggling individuals alike.

Let our hearts be glad and our tongues rejoice.
When we walk in companionship with the Lord
we are filled with joy in his presence.
Let us praise the Lord. **Amen.**

(click on the image below to listen to the song - if double click opens in whole screen)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ch-b1VktqQ>

For further reading check out [Working preacher](#).

Thursday June 30th - [Psalm 16](#)

In the crisis of competing loyalties (vv.3-4), the psalmist is confident that God's blessing and wise advice will see him through. His whole life is bounded by God (vv.6-9), so that he is unperturbed by the thought that he will end up in 'Sheol' and 'the Pit', the underground realm of the dead. Words that acquire a deeper meaning in the light of Jesus' resurrection (Acts 2.25ff) here express the psalmist's trust in God's protective goodness, in which he 'rests secure' (v.9).

Almighty God,
you created the heavens and the earth,
and yet you call us to follow you.
Thank you that we can be with you for ever.
Amen.

(click on the image below to listen to the song - if double click opens in whole screen)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apLjJlfLq-o>

For further reading check out [Working preacher](#).

Friday July 1st - Reflect on the past week's readings.

What have you learned?

Where have you clearly heard the Holy Spirit speaking to you?

What are you going to change in your life going ahead?

Jesus took action when it was needed.
He suffered on the cross where our sins were nailed with him.
We are forgiven.
He paid the price for all our wrongdoing and set us free from the power of sin.
Let us live in that freedom.

(click on the image below to listen to the song - if double click opens in whole screen)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zundjUFazfg>

Saturday July 2nd - thought for the week and Sunday's readings can be found at <https://www.kelsocountrychurches.org.uk/services/thought-for-the-week/>