

24 May 2020

To all members of the St James Traditional Services

A Weekly Word of Encouragement: Closeness to God

Psalm 84 – my favourite psalm; a pilgrim’s psalm. Read it reflectively.

The greatest treasure in life is God Himself. God’s temple is beautiful, precious and desirable, not because of its architecture, but because God is there. The heart’s deepest longings are met in the living God Himself and personal closeness to Him. Nothing counts like being close to God.

Life is a pilgrimage – a spiritual journey. There are dry and barren experiences (the Valley of Baka, v. 6), but even in those times of trial and suffering, we can go from strength to strength as God enables us to experience new growth in trial and suffering – growing in our trust in Him.

The most insignificant life lived knowing God is infinitely better and richer than living in luxury without God. Nothing worth having will ever be withheld from you – you are never the loser in trusting God (Romans 8:32) – everything worth having in life is found in Him and being close to Him.

Set your heart on closeness to Him: there you are truly blessed. Living a life near to God always involves time in His presence through prayer and His Word.

Prayer:

Lord, my sense of nearness to You comes and goes, but I want to live my whole life close to You. Show me what that will entail, and grant me the love and grace to do it. Help me in my driest periods to know You are present and working things for my good. In the pilgrimage of my life, incline my heart to desire You above all other – the treasure of greatest price. Amen.

Remember:

- keep praying daily
- keep reading God's Word
- keep in touch with one another, and know that I am only a phone call away: 0438 455 493.

Robert

MAY - Week 4

COLLECT (ASCENSION DAY)

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that as we believe your only begotten Son to have ascended into heaven, so we may also in heart and mind there ascend, and with him continually dwell; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

COLLECT (SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION)

O God, the king of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: leave us not desolate, but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us, and exalt us to where our Saviour Christ has gone before, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for evermore. Amen.

OUR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Join with us in praising God for all that he has been doing in Children's and Families Ministries during this time of great change. It has been an utter joy to work together with the team to plan, film and produce our weekly Children's ministry 'Alive in the Big Tent'. We have had our creativity and technology skills pushed and challenged, but we know that this has been under God's great plan and we have seen such fruit already from this different way of doing ministry.

Praise God for all the kids and families who are tuning in each week, sharing together in the fun and teaching as they learn more about Jesus as a family. Please pray that each family will find one nugget of truth to treasure each week.

Pray for patience for kids and families who have been isolated together (making allowances for each other's faults because of their love – Eph. 4:2!). Pray for protection for kids and the community as the kids return to face-to-face teaching at school, and for comfort and encouragement - they have navigated new technology and methods of learning in a very challenging time of change, and we pray that God would use this, like all things, for their good.

We also praise God for our own families, who have continued their own schooling and work online; been our back up presenters and been filmed at the last minute many times; worked so hard to edit and produce our videos; and taken on more of the household tasks to free us up. Please continue to pray for God's leading in all that we do, for ongoing energy and encouragement, and for the discipline to take time to rest.

Sarah Legge and Kym Abbott

FOR OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Ruth & Des Bright, Sally Anne Deck, Joan Ford, Kath Holloman, Ursula Ibaraki, Rosemary Gordon-Smith, Dawn Hope, Rob & Janine Jones, Shirley Mills, Ross Moody, Jan Roach, Liz Rupp, Ruth Sutton, Eve Syme, Daphne Valtilla, Jane Vernon, Chris Wood and Bob Young appreciate your ongoing prayers for comfort, healing & protection.

We commend to your fatherly goodness all who are sick or sad, that you might comfort and relieve them, giving them patience in their sufferings, and a good outcome through all their afflictions. All this we ask for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.