

DARLING DOWNS PARISH OF THE AELC
TRINITY OAKY, ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,
BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA

5 August 2018
Bulletin for the 11th Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 518 347 208 510

INTROIT: All whom You have made will praise You, O LORD. Your devout people will bless You. They will talk about the glory of Your kingdom and speak about Your power, in order to make known to the descendants of Adam the mighty things that He has done, and the glorious grandeur of His kingdom. Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. Your dominion endures throughout all generations. The LORD is faithful in all His works, and gracious in all His deeds. The LORD supports all those who are falling. He raises up all who are bowed down. The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food at the right time. You open Your hand, and You satisfy the desire of every living thing.

The LORD is righteous in all His Ways, and faithful in everything that He does.

The LORD is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth.

He does whatever those who fear Him desire. He hears their cry and saves them.

The LORD watches over all who love Him, but He will destroy all wicked people.

My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD. Let every living creature bless His holy name for ever and ever!

Psalm 145:10-21

COLLECT: Merciful Father, You gave Your Son Jesus as the heavenly bread of life. Grant us faith to feast on Him in Your Word and Sacraments, that we may be nourished unto life everlasting; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

READINGS: Exodus 16:2-15 The LORD sends the Israelites manna and quails.

Ephesians 4:1-16 The unity of the church, and Christ's gift of the ministry, that the church might grow in love.

John 6:22-35 Jesus the bread of God gives life to the world.

SERMON: Ephesians 4:1-16 Live in a manner worthy of people whom the Lord has called.

Christianity is the Absolute Religion

An absolute is something that is true for all people of all ages. It is true whether it is spoken today, in the past, or in the future. An absolute stretches from the dawn of time to eternity. It was true for Adam, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, the apostles, and Luther. It is true for the people of today and for all people who will be born. Christianity is the absolute religion. It alone gives us the way of salvation. It alone is based on the inspired, inerrant, and unchanging Word of God.

Christianity is the absolute religion because it gives us the only way to heaven: faith in Jesus Christ, who saved us from our sins. All man-made religions teach salvation by a person's own good works. They teach that a deity or a standard must be appeased by the works that a person performs. Christianity is unique in that it is the only religion that teaches salvation by grace, apart from works. The Apostle Paul writes, "*For we conclude that a person is justified by faith, apart from the works of the Law,*" (Rom. 3:28), and "⁸ *For by grace you have been saved through faith. This is not of yourselves. It is the gift of God,* ⁹ *not of works, that no one may boast,*" (Eph. 2:8-9).

Jesus has been the way to heaven for all people throughout the ages. There are those who say the people of the Old Testament were saved by keeping God's law. This is not true. God did use a law covenant with the people of Israel to keep them intact as a nation until Jesus could be born (Ex. 24; Gal. 3:24). However, the main covenant of the Old Testament was the promise God made to Abraham that He would send the Saviour from Abraham's line (Genesis 15). Peter indicated it was not possible to keep the law covenant God made with Israel when he said, "¹⁰ *Now then, why are you testing God by putting a yoke on the necks of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we*

have been able to bear? ¹¹ No! Through the grace of the Lord Jesus we believe in order to be saved, just as they also do,” (Acts 15:10-11). Jesus said that Abraham was saved through faith in the Saviour who was to come, “Abraham your father rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it and was glad,” (John 8:56). Paul also declared that Abraham was saved through faith in Jesus (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6; Gen. 15:6). The prophet Habakkuk indicated salvation came through faith in Christ (Hab. 2:4). People of the Old Testament were saved through faith in Jesus Christ, the same as we are.

Jesus made it clear that He is the only way to heaven. He said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me,” (John 14:6). The apostles repeated this assertion. Peter declared, “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved,” (Acts 4:12). Throughout his letters, Paul made it very clear that “a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law,” (Rom. 3:28).

Yes, Jesus is the only way to heaven. There is no other way. The idea, that all religions lead to heaven or that we all worship the same God but just call him by different names, is a soul-destroying lie. In fact, postmodernism today condemns Christianity for asserting that Jesus alone is the way to heaven. Postmodernism believes it is better for a person to have a variety of religious beliefs rather than just one. Yet the Bible is clear. Jesus is the only way to heaven. What a comfort it is for people of all ages to be able to rest their faith on God’s promise that “whoever believes in Him [Jesus] will not perish but have eternal life,” (John 3:16). Christianity is the absolute religion because it gives us Jesus, who is the only way to heaven.

Welcome to all worshipping with us today! May God bless our worship of Him by His serving of us!
 Pastor Peter Ziebell, Phone 0407583922.
 Email him at paziebell@gmail.com
 Weekly sermons and bulletins are available at www.aelc.org.au.
Please notify pastor of anyone who is unwell or in need of a visit.

COMING SERVICES

12 August 12 Pentecost	19 August 13 Pentecost	26 August 14 Pentecost
8.30am OAK HC 8.30am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.00am GRN HC	8.00am TMBA Bible Study & 9.00am HC 8.30am OAK LR 9.30am GRN LR 10.30am AUB HC	8.30am OAK HC 8.30am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.00am GRN HC
Sunday, 12 August		
READINGS: 1 Kings 19:1-8;	Ephesians 4:17-5:2;	John 6:35-51
HYMNS: 525 358 304 289 839 436		
Sunday, 19 August		
READINGS: Proverbs 9:1-10;	Ephesians 5:6-21;	John 6:51-69
HYMNS: 461 357 300 (173 839) 181		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tuesday, 14 August, 7.30pm. Men’s Fellowship at Oakey. Opening devotion: Hosea.

Bible Studies:

TMBA: Sunday, 19 August.

GRN: Friday, 17 August.

AUB/OAK: Friday, 31 August.