

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

9 February 2020
Bulletin for the 5th Sunday after Epiphany

HYMNS: 171 355 528 346

INTROIT: Praise the LORD! Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who takes great delight in His Commandments!

His descendants will be mighty in the land. The generation of upright people will be blessed.

There will be wealth and riches in his home, and his righteousness continues for ever.

Light will shine in the darkness for upright people. He is merciful, compassionate and just.

All will go well for the man who is generous and lends and conducts his affairs justly.

He will surely never be shaken. A righteous man will be remembered for ever.

He will not be afraid of bad news. His heart is steadfast, full of confidence in the LORD.

His heart is firm. He will have no fear, until he looks in triumph on his adversaries.

He has distributed freely. He has given to the poor. His righteousness endures for ever. His horn will be lifted high in honour.

Psalm 112:1-9

COLLECT: O Lord, keep Your family, the Church, continually in the true faith, that, relying on the hope of Your heavenly grace, we may ever be defended by Your mighty power; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

READINGS: Isaiah 58:3-9a Your light will be like the dawn.

1 Corinthians 2:1-16 To know only Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Matthew 5:13-20 You are the light of the world.

SERMON: 1 Corinthians 2:1-16 Wisdom and foolishness, faith and Spirit

¹ When I came to you, fellow-Christians, to proclaim the testimony of God to you, I did not come as a person who was superior in speech or wisdom. ² For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. ³ I came to you in weakness, in fear and with much trembling. ⁴ I did not speak and preach with persuasive words of wisdom but with the demonstration of the Spirit and power, ⁵ that your faith might not rest on human wisdom but on the power of God.

⁶ However, we speak wisdom to those who are mature but not the wisdom of this age, or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.

⁷ No, we tell about the wisdom of God in a mystery, a wisdom that has been hidden but that God ordained before the ages for our glory. ⁸

None of those who rule this world has known it. For, if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹ Rather, as Scripture has said, "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has comprehended what God has prepared for those who love Him." ¹⁰

Nevertheless, God has revealed it to us through His Spirit. The Spirit searches out all things, even the deep things of God. ¹¹ For what human being knows the things that belong to the human being except the human being's spirit in him? In the same way, no one knows the things that belong to God except the Spirit of God. ¹² We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who comes from God, that we may know the things that God has freely given to us. ¹³ We speak about these things in words not taught by human wisdom but in Words taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who have the Spirit. ¹⁴ However, an unspiritual person does not receive the things of the Spirit of God. For they are foolishness to him, and he cannot know them because they are discerned spiritually. ¹⁵ The spiritual person judges all things but he himself is not judged by anyone. ¹⁶ For "who has known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him?" However, we have the mind of Christ.

Is God Fair?

²⁹ Yet the family of Israel says, 'The behaviour of the Lord is not fair.' Are the ways in which I behave not fair, you family of Israel? Are your ways not the ones that are unfair? ³⁰ "Therefore, family of Israel, I shall judge each of you according to his conduct," declares the Lord GOD. "Repent, and turn away from all your rebellious acts, so that sin may not cause your downfall. ³¹ Cast away from you all your rebellious acts, which you have been committing! Make yourselves new hearts and new spirits. Why should you die, O family of Israel?" (Ezekiel 18:29-32).

There are people who say that they have lost all faith in God because there are so many evils, so much hurt and heartache in the world all around us. Sometimes we see innocent people suffering and godly people being persecuted while at the same time wicked and godless people seem to prosper. All this happens in the world that God created. We are tempted to ask a searching

question: “Is God fair?”

The people of Israel accused God of not being fair. Rebellious people, as they repeatedly were, thought that they could rise up against the holy, almighty God and accuse Him of doing things that were not fair! The Lord could not remain silent. He had to set the record straight, as we say. He said, “*Are the ways in which I behave not fair, you family of Israel? Are your ways not the ones that are unfair?*” Today, too, there are people who want to find fault with the holy and just God. How often have you heard people say, “Why does God allow this or that to happen to me or to someone else? If God is almighty, why doesn’t He put an end to all of this wickedness in the world? Is He really fair?”

If you really want an answer to the question, “Is God fair?” then let God speak for Himself, which He does in Holy Scripture. Search the Scriptures, and you will discover that God is not only fair, but He has gone far beyond being fair in all of His dealings with people. God is much more than fair! God’s Word tells us that all of the evil in this world is not of God’s making. He created a perfect world, and all of the evil in the world is of people’s making. Our first parents listened to the devil and sinned. Then sorrow and sickness, hurt and heartache, disease and death, and everything that is evil came into the world. You cannot lay any evil at God’s doorstep! For all of the evil in the world, we have ourselves to blame. Now what?

Don’t shake your fist in God’s face! Listen to God, who tells you that He will give you a new heart and a new spirit. Turn to God and receive from His forgiving lips the assurance of peace and pardon. The Lord takes no pleasure in seeing the wicked and the ungodly dying. “*As surely as I live, declares the Lord GOD, ‘I certainly take no pleasure in the death of a wicked person. Rather, I take pleasure in the wicked person’s turning from his way so that he may live. Turn back! Turn back from your evil ways!’*” (Ezekiel 33:11). “*The Lord . . . is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance*” (2 Peter 3:9).

God is not only fair, He is exceedingly loving. He so loved you and all people that He sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world. Jesus lived the perfect life in our place. He took our sins in His own body to the cross and suffered and died to redeem us. He rose from the dead and conquered death and the devil. He invites us to believe and trust in Him, and He promises, “*Because I live, you also will live*” (John 14:19).

Welcome to all with us today!

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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

16 February 6 Epiphany	23 February The Transfiguration	26 February Ash Wednesday
8.30am OAK HC 8.30am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.00am GRN HC 9.00am MINDEN LR	8.30am TMBA HC 8.30am OAK LR 9.00am GRN LR 10.30am AUB HC 9.00am LOWOOD LR	7.30pm MARBURG HC 27 February 7.30pm OAK 1 st mid-week Lenten Service
Sunday, 16 February		
READINGS: Deuteronomy 30:15-20; 1 Corinthians 3:1-9; Matthew 5:21-37		
HYMNS: 527 345 358 (789 839) 515		
Sunday, 23 February		
READINGS: Exodus 24:8-18; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9		
HYMNS: 164 37 147 (364 840) 452		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tuesday, 11 February, 7.30pm. Men’s Fellowship at Oakey.

Saturday 15 February, 10.00am. CoC/Sem. Committee meeting at Troy’s Road. Elections will be held at this meeting. If you have an item you want placed on the agenda, see Pastor or the secretary Ian Manz.