

Gospel

Matthew 21:23-32

The Authority of Jesus Challenged

²³ When Jesus returned to the Temple and began teaching, the leading priests and elders came up to him. They demanded, "By what authority are you doing all these things? Who gave you the right?"

²⁴ "I'll tell you by what authority I do these things if you answer one question," Jesus replied. ²⁵ "Did John's authority to baptize come from heaven, or was it merely human?"

They talked it over among themselves. "If we say it was from heaven, he will ask us why we didn't believe John. ²⁶ But if we say it was merely human, we'll be mobbed because the people believe John was a prophet." ²⁷ So they finally replied, "We don't know."

And Jesus responded, "Then I won't tell you by what authority I do these things.

²⁸ "But what do you think about this? A man with two sons told the older boy, 'Son, go out and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹ The son answered, 'No, I won't go,' but later he changed his mind and went anyway. ³⁰ Then the father told the other son, 'You go,' and he said, 'Yes, sir, I will.' But he didn't go. ³¹ "Which of the two obeyed his father?"

They replied, "The first."

Then Jesus explained his meaning: "I tell you the truth, corrupt tax collectors and prostitutes will get into the Kingdom of God before you do. ³² For John the Baptist came and showed you the right way to live, but you didn't believe him, while tax collectors and prostitutes did. And even when you saw this happening, you refused to believe him and repent of your sins."



NLT

Introduction to the Readings

EZEKIEL 18:1-4, 25-32 Emphasizing individual retribution for sin as opposed to the traditional tribal retribution, Ezekiel defends the fairness of God's judgment. He then repeats God's challenge that each person repent of his or her sin and live righteously.

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-13 Paul tells the Philippians how to live as Christ lived, selflessly, sacrificially and in faith that God will enable them to do so. The central part of the reading may have been an early Christian hymn with deep theological meaning, perhaps originally composed by Paul himself.

MATTHEW 21:23-32 Challenged by his opponents to identify his authority as he was teaching in the temple, Jesus refused. He further challenged them with a simple but obvious riddle about John the Baptist. When they refused, he excoriated them for not believing John the Baptist when even tax collectors and prostitutes did so.

John Shearman



Christian Love in Action
Sunday 1st October 2017
Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity
Proper 21

Welcome to Worship

9.30am **Holy Communion**, St Peter's, Thornbury
11.00am **Iona Holy Communion**, St Mary's, Black Torrington
6.30pm **Evening Prayer**, All Saints', Bradford



Readings

Ezekiel 18: 1-4, 25-32
Philippians 2: 1-13
Matthew 21: 23-32

Collect

Lord of creation,
whose glory is around and within us:
open our eyes to your wonders,
that we may serve you with reverence
and know your peace at our lives' end,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Jesus said "For those who exalt themselves will be humbled,
and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

Luke 18:14b

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PLEASE PRAY FOR:



The Mission Community: Revd Richard Freeman and the Bradworthy Benefice, Revd Preb Kathy Roberts and Highampton Church

St Mary's Electoral Roll: Bryan Lawrence, Val Letheren, Ernie and Hilary Luxton, Iris Marsden, Revd Gerry and Katharine Matthews

Those who are ill: Jenny Searle, Dorothy Chandler, Avis Radford, Lorna Harris, Maurice and Joan Thomas, Brian Ough

The Benefice Primary Schools as they hold their harvest services and the strengthening of church and school links

The Rohingya Refugees facing increasing hostility in southern Bangladesh

The Family and Friends of Peter Evans

Rest in Peace: Peter Evans.

October Diary

Mon 2nd	8.00am	Morning Prayer, St Mary's, Black Torrington
Tues 3rd	8.00am	Prayer Breakfast, The Rectory
	2.00 pm	School Harvest Service, Bradford School, Bradford
	7.45pm	Saturday Church planning Priestacott Barn, Bradford
Wed 4th	8.00am	Morning Prayer, St Mary's Black Torrington
	9.30 am	School Harvest Service, St Mary's Black Torrington
Thurs 5th	8.15am	Morning and Silent Prayer,
	9.00am	Iona Holy Communion, All Saints', Bradford
Sat 7th	10am - 1.00pm	Brunch, Black Torrington Village Hall
	7.00pm	Compline, St Peter's Thornbury
Sun 8th	9.30 am	Holy Communion, All Saints, Bradford
	11.00 am	Family Holy Communion, St Mary's, Black Torrington
	6.30 pm	Harvest Service, Holy Cross, Highampton (see below)

Highampton Harvest Service



8 October at 6.30 pm in Holy Cross Church, Highampton followed by a Bring and Share supper with auction of produce.



The proceeds will be in aid of the Farm Community Network. We hope that you can join us for this special service!



Installation of Revd. Elizabeth Burke as Rector of the Holsworthy Benefice

7.00pm - Monday 6th November at St Peter and St Paul, Holsworthy
Please come along and show your support
All welcome!

Focus on Compassion

USPG - United Society Partners in the Gospel – is an Anglican mission agency supporting churches around the world in their mission to bring fullness of life to the communities they serve.

Together, we are working to improve health, tackle poverty, put children in school, challenge discrimination, nurture leaders, give a voice to women, and much more. Together, we are working to improve health, tackle poverty, put children in school, challenge discrimination, nurture leaders, give a voice to women, and much more.



In Zimbabwe, we initiated a national programme to tackle HIV stigma so more people will come forward to receive counselling and treatment.



In Myanmar, we are supporting a programme to take healthcare into isolated rural communities.

In Europe, we are supporting work among refugees and migrants who became separated from their families after fleeing war and persecution in their home countries.

In South Africa, we have developed a programme to provide church leaders with practical development skills.



Worldwide, we are working with our church partners to tackle the impact of climate change and to campaign for climate justice.

School Harvest Services



Tuesday 3rd October - 2.00pm at Bradford School
Wednesday 4th October - 9.30am at St Mary's, Black Torrington
Wednesday 11th October - 2.30pm at Highampton School



Please come along and support our children

To Think About Forgiveness

To excuse what can really produce good excuses is not Christian charity; it is only fairness. To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable, because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you. This is hard. How can we do it? Only, I think, by remembering where we stand, by meaning our words when we say in our prayers each night, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." We are offered forgiveness on no other terms. To refuse it means to refuse God's mercy for ourselves. There is no hint of exceptions and God means what He says.

C. S. Lewis

