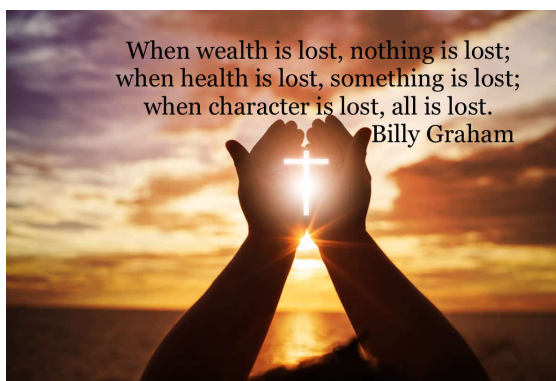


## 'Dorset South & West Written Service, Sunday September 11th 2022.



### **Lost** **Prepared by Revd Jean Quick'**

#### **Call to Worship:**

The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.....  
To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.  
Excerpts from 1 Timothy 1: 12-17 which is a prayer of gratitude for God's Mercy

#### **STF 353**

Jesus is Lord! Creation's voice proclaims it,  
for by his power each tree and flower was planned and made.  
Jesus is Lord! The universe declares it;  
sun, moon and stars in heaven cry: Jesus is Lord!

*Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Lord!*  
*Praise him with alleluias, for Jesus is Lord!*

Jesus is Lord! Yet from his throne eternal  
in flesh he came to die in pain on Calvary's tree.  
Jesus is Lord! From him all life proceeding -  
yet gave his life a ransom, thus setting us free.

Jesus is Lord! O'er sin the mighty conqueror,  
from death he rose; and all his foes shall own his name.  
Jesus is Lord! God sends his Holy Spirit  
to show by works of power that Jesus is Lord.

#### **Prayers of Thanksgiving and Confession.**

Take a moment to look around where you are sitting at this moment.

What do you see?

What are the items that surround you?

What memories do they hold?

The place where you are sitting,

The pictures that surround you; maybe of family or friends?

Think of the person or people that you are with, or will have seen in the last week.

Let's give thanks to God for everyone and everything that brings such joy to our lives.

Our lives are richer because they are here for us and we thank God for His daily provision.

We praise him for the love he surrounds us with

His unending love so reflected in each and every part of our lives.

Maybe this week or in the recent past you have misplaced something that you valued.

Do you recall the sadness and anxiety it caused? But oh gosh the joy when you found it!

Maybe this week or in the recent past you lost your way for a moment?

Your cool demeanour lost in a few unnecessary outspoken words, for example?

Or the way you behaved even if just for a moment, that you would rather not have done?

We cause our Heavenly Father such sadness when we lose our way and act in ways that do not reflect His love. He knows our thoughts and ways and truly forgives us when we come to Him.

**Lord in your mercy hear our prayer. Amen**

### **Gospel Reading: Luke 15: 1-10**

#### The Parable of the Lost Sheep

Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, 'This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.'

So he told them this parable: 'Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbours, saying to them, "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost." Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who need no repentance.'

#### The Parable of the Lost Coin

'Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbours, saying, "Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost." Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.'

### **STF 440**

Amazing grace - how sweet the sound -  
that saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost, but now am found,  
was blind, but now I see.

God's grace has taught my heart to fear,  
his grace my fears relieved;  
how precious did that grace appear  
the hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils and snares  
I have already come;  
God's grace has brought me safe thus far,  
and grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,  
his word my hope secures;  
he will my shield and portion be  
as long as life endures.

And, when this heart and flesh shall fail  
and mortal life shall cease,  
I shall possess within the veil  
a life of joy and peace.

When we've been there ten thousand years  
bright shining as the sun,  
we've no less days to sing God's praise  
than when we first begun.

### **Reflection**

How many ways can you think of about how we use the word Lost?

Here's a few examples you can probably think of more...

“Help! We're lost!”

Thankfully She turned up with my lost keys .

How sad she just stood there, feeling completely lost.

He said, I'd be lost without her.

Oh if only one could recapture one's lost youth.

It was such a lost opportunity!

It's a memorial to the lost crewmen.

They lost the election.

I am Just lost for words.

Confession time, when I was very young and if my Mother spent too long chatting to friends in the department store, I would play the game getting lost! I knew someone would take me into the office if I tearfully told them I had lost my Mummy and they would give me a treat while they found her. Distraught Mum, whose hand I had slipped earlier, would come to the collection point, but she never played the game as I thought she would with hugs and kisses.

It was more like the Rolf Harris song about a little boy getting lost in a big shop....

The Chorus goes, 'I've lost my Mummy, a-ha-ha-haaaa ....

Middle verse:

Just then his mother appeared on the spot

Gave him a hefty whack

That oughta teach you to go and get lost!

And the little boy's voice floated back

I've found my mummy, a-ha-ha-haaaa 'I've found my Mummy!'

Thankfully I never received any sort of 'whack', but certainly I knew of her displeasure. Only as an adult could I look back and regret the anguish and distress my game of getting lost must have put her through. I guess I just wanted her whole attention.

Our gospel reading tries to help us understand how our Heavenly Father deals with the times we find ourselves lost in so many different ways. Notice the different ways people seem to be lost in the passage. The description of tax collectors unlike today's HMRC. To be known as a tax collector implied corruption and working with an unjust government. Now let's not get lost in political criticism! Or lose sight of what today's taxation does provide.

We also don't want to be the sinners that we read about alongside the tax collectors. What about those who are grumbling about who Jesus gives his attention to? Have they, 'lost the plot'? What does it say to us about our grumpy moments? Do we sulk or celebrate?

Then Jesus tells stories so that they and we can understand the ways of God and not lose our way in the world's standards.

Still today we warm to the stories. How many times have you turned the house upside down looking for something you have lost? When you find it, don't you just have to tell someone and all your anxiety is turned to joy.

So often it's the mundane things we take for granted and never give a second thought too. Going out of the front door, you pick up keys, no further thought, it's so routine, nothing to celebrate.

Then they are not there in the usual place! The panic and all colours of emotions and thoughts. You just can't put words to the relief when you find them, the joy and going out and locking the door is a whole new experience.

Or suppose you misplace one item from something you collect. I have a few beads,..... no that's a bit of an understatement for my hobby! If I can't find a particular bead friends don't sympathise. "oh but you have so many", they might say. "Ha! Ha! What if you lose one piece of your five hundred piece jigsaw"? I might retaliate. "You still have 499 pieces!". Absurd of me, the picture would be incomplete.

We all have so much and yet we know how important just one part of the collection is. Maybe it's a piece that has an important memory attached to it?

So how much more precious when we think of the way we describe lost in relation to ourselves and then fully understand how we can never be lost in our Heavenly Father's sight.

Nothing about us is mundane or unimportant.

We have His undivided attention, even in those times when we lose the plot or play out the getting lost game in something that takes us away from God and our faith.

We are never, never Lost to Him. He forgives and rejoices when we come to Him.

Just one difference in this Lost description, yes God searches for us in our lostness but we are not like the passive lost items, just sitting in the darkness waiting to be found. Instead we are called to be proactive and repent and to reach out to the loving arms of our Heavenly Father and be found in His joyous presence.

## **Prayers for others and the Lord's Prayer.**

We pray for the Church throughout the world: may it always be a Church of inclusion, welcoming all, near and far, into the community of God's people, *and* always a Church of refuge and compassion for sinners. We pray for the church we belong to and our Circuit churches and the churches in our neighbourhood. May we not lose sight of our calling to be the places that welcome all people and to bring them into the joy of your presence.

**Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for the community of nations: may world leaders devote their energies to a harvest of justice and peace for all peoples, especially those for whom justice and peace are but a dream. We pray for those nations and leaders that have lost sight of the needs of the world to really work together so that everyone might have just what they need to live together in harmony and peace.

**Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for an end to racism in our land and every land: may there come about a new beginning of acceptance and inclusion by all peoples for all peoples, we pray for immigrants and migrants, fleeing in fear and seeking a new life: may they be welcomed graciously, and treated with dignity and respect in every corner of the globe. May we never lose sight of what they have lost in their unimaginable plights.

**Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for the safety of all who offer themselves in service to others. For those serving in the armed forces, in service to our medical needs and those in every act of public service. May we never lose sight or gratitude for those who undertake so many tasks that make our life so much easier.

**Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for the seriously ill in our community and among our family members and friends: may they know the comfort of your love and the care of those near to them.

**We offer all our prayers together in the words of the Lord's Prayer.....Our Father .....**

### **STF 638**

Through all the changing scenes of life,  
in trouble and in joy,  
the praises of my God shall still  
my heart and tongue employ.

Of his deliverance I will boast,  
till all that are distressed  
from my example comfort take,  
and charm their griefs to rest.

O magnify the Lord with me,  
with me exalt his name;  
when in distress to him I called,  
he to my rescue came.

The hosts of God encamp around  
the dwellings of the just;  
deliverance he affords to all  
who on his succour trust.

O make but trial of his love;  
experience will decide  
how blest are they, and only they,  
who in his truth confide.

Fear him, you saints, and you will then  
have nothing else to fear;  
make you his service your delight,  
your wants shall be his care.

### **The Blessing**

May we be overflowing with faith and love  
and seek out those who are lost.  
May we seek to side with the poor and sit with the  
just;  
and mourn for the earth in ways that bring  
restoration.  
May we rejoice with heaven over any who turn to  
God.  
And may God judge us to be faithful;  
May Christ Jesus strengthen us ;  
And may the Holy Spirit fill us with wisdom and  
grace.  
May we go in peace to love and serve the Lord,

***In the name of Christ. Amen.***

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