

# Starters for Sunday

## *Eighth Sunday after Pentecost*

**3 August 2014**

The Mission and Discipleship Council would like to thank Rev Alan Hamilton-Messer, Associate Minister of Queensferry and Dalmeny Parish Churches for his thoughts on the eighth Sunday after Pentecost.

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## Quick Guide...

*Helping people prepare for reading the Bible in worship can make a real difference. Overcoming nerves, reading in ways suitable to the text, speaking clearly etc.*

You may wish to email these three links to the people reading Scripture on Sunday to support them in their involvement in worship: [Managing your nerves](#); [Creative readings](#); [Worship at the Lectern](#).

### Prologue

Our readings this week continue to show how much God cares for His creation. We read about lives changed forever. We hear about the innocent people suffering but also that God understands. God even shows His love for those who disobey Him and turn away from Him. We see that God wants to bless His people and we see that come about with miracles taking place and people being blessed.

### [Genesis 32: 22-31](#)

#### Introduction

Hebrews 13:2 says "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unaware." Most of us would probably be shocked if we really knew how involved God's angels are in human events and human lives.

The Old Testament book of Genesis tells us of a man who was literally "touched by an angel." His name was Jacob. That touch forever changed his life, because when he was "touched by an angel" he really had an encounter with the living God.

### [Psalm 17: 1-7, 15](#)

Unjust and innocent suffering in this world is something I don't understand. I don't suggest in any way that I understand it, but I want to say this to you, I know somebody who does understand it, and He is going to explain it to us one day.

There are things in my life and things in your life that we don't understand. I can't explain your trouble, because I don't even know why I have had to go through certain things; but He is going to explain it someday.



How do we deal with false accusations as we try to live righteously before ungodly and sometimes vindictive people? David gives us five great responses to this type of unfair attack.

### [Isaiah 55: 1-5](#)

Isaiah was speaking to the people of Israel who were exiled from their homeland. They had refused to obey God's laws and now they were suffering the consequences of their actions. God had allowed the Assyrian army to be his instrument of reprimand. Their land had been conquered and they had been taken prisoner in Babylon for seventy years. These are the people who sat and wept by the rivers of Babylon, laughed at by their captors, surrounded on every side by the images of the gods who had apparently defeated Jehovah, the living God of Israel.

These people were strangers in a strange land, separated from their homeland by hundreds of miles of wilderness. They felt estranged from their God who they believed had turned his back on them. The beauty of Jerusalem and its temple were only a faded memory that brought them pain to think about. These unfulfilled longings brought them to the edge of despair.

### [Psalm 145: 8-9, 14-21](#)

As we look at Psalm 145, we will see that true worship is designed to radically impact our lives. This Psalm is an alphabetical acrostic. What that means is that David begins each verse with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet. If you've ever tried to write poetry, you will know that it takes a lot of thought and attention to detail to express what is on your heart. I can't imagine how long this took David to do but I'm sure he tackled it with vigour. The writers intend that these kind of literary devices enable the listener or reader to remember the content a bit more easily.

This is really David's jewel of praise. This is the last psalm that has David's name linked to it and the title, "A psalm of praise" is used only for this one. This hymn is categorised by praise not thanksgiving or even prayer. It's set apart for a specific purpose, much like Psalm 86 is referred to as "*A prayer of David*".

It is glorious in its beauty and almost breath taking in its grandeur. This psalm also has a special blessing associated with it. According to the ancient Israelites, those who recited this psalm



twice in the morning and once in the evening, a person who sang this psalm out loud three different times during the day would be “happy”.

### [Romans 9: 1-5](#)

This sermon looks at the Apostle Paul’s deep concern for the lost Jewish nation. And asks what we should do in response to a lost world before us. When we allow the love of Christ to flow we will tend to emphasise the positive aspects of those around us, our family and friends. Paul delighted in the fact that the Jews were given the covenants, the commands and the Law of God, but he wanted more for them.

He gloried in the fact that the Jewish nation had enjoyed special standing and revelation from God in the past. Yet, he knew that it was not enough to rely on what had happened in the past to gain eternal life. Even though the Jews had persecuted Paul he served them by preaching Christ as the only way for their salvation. He said, "I have a heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart" for their salvation. Paul knew the kinds of topics to emphasise with his fellows since he clearly saw their eternal destiny as his chief concern.

### [Matthew 14: 13-21](#)

Jesus feeds 5000 men plus women and children with 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish.

The feeding of the five thousand is the only miracle Jesus performed that is recorded in all four Gospels. It happened during the Passover season about a year before Christ’s death. At this time several things had happened. Jesus had been rejected by the people in His hometown. He left the area as they were tried to push Him off a cliff. His disciple’s had just returned from preaching and teaching, a trip He had sent them on. Jesus had also just heard that Herod had beheaded John the Baptist.



## Sermon Ideas

### A short sermon outline

#### Matthew 14: 13-21

Jesus wasn't afraid of Herod; He knew His time had not yet come. But He needed a bit of time to how they had got on. He knew they also needed time to recharge their batteries.

So they all got into a boat and crossed the Sea of Galilee to a deserted place to be alone. But when the people heard that Jesus had left they followed on foot. When Jesus saw that the crowds had followed them He had compassion for them and began to heal them of any afflictions they had.

The disciples noticed that all of these people were starting to get hungry and restless. So they came to Jesus and said, send these people away, Lord. It is getting late and we have no way to feed them, so send them on their way now. Let them go to the villages and fend for themselves!

Now here is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He is the person who had provided manna and water in the desert for the children of Israel. He is the one who provided when Elijah and the widow lacked food. He provided when Hezekiah suffered bad health and when Job was sick with boils.

But the disciples still didn't get it, Jesus told them there was no need to send the crowd away. But Jesus really catches the disciples off guard by saying, "You give them something to eat." Can you imagine the look on the disciple's faces; they must have been dumbfounded! "Give them something to eat? We have nothing but five loaves and two fish." They have forgotten that they also had the Christ, Jesus the Son of God.

This is exactly how He will treat us. He will have compassion for each one of us. All we have to do is turn to Him and put our trust in Him. He will take care of all our needs, not that He will take care of all our wants, but He will provide the necessities of life.



## Time with Children

### Kids Talk: True or false

I'm going to read you a list of some so called facts and I want you to tell me if they are true or false.

1. If you dropped a 10 pence piece from the top of the Empire State building in New York, when it landed it would be totally stuck in the pavement. (False)
2. You know what bubble wrap is? That sheet of plastic with little bubbles in that we all like to pop? Well did you know that every time you break one of those little bubbles you release a toxic gas that could kill you? (False)
3. You can post a coconut through the Royal Mail without wrapping it first. (True).
4. If all of the people living in China jumped up and down at the same time we would feel the earth shake in Scotland. (False)
5. If you stare at the sun while you are wearing contact lenses they will melt and stick to your eyeballs. (False)
6. Most milk shakes you buy in burger bars don't have any milk in them. (True) They contain carrageen gel.
7. Koala bears live in Australia. They are always drunk because they eat the leaves of the eucalyptus tree which contain alcohol. (False)
8. The famous scientist Albert Einstein was not very clever at school. (False)
9. Some workers in America couldn't move a dead whale so they blew it up and showered the whole town in whale blubber. (True)
10. Bubble Gum is made from spiders legs. (False)
11. If you tread on the cracks in the pavement a monster will come and get you. (False)

In the world we live in today it's often hard to decide which things are true and which are false.

Some things sound true but they are only stories, other things sound like stories but they are true.



Many times there is no really easy way to know the difference. These stories have been around for years and they come and go as fashions and ideas change.

But truth always stays the same forever, it never changes.

That's one reason why the Bible has survived or thousands of years.

There's no other document in the world today that has stood the test of time like the Bible.

Generation after generation has read the Bible and found that it contains only the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

You can always trust the Bible and you can always trust Jesus Christ.

## **Prayers**

### **Collect**

Almighty God,  
your Son Jesus Christ  
fed the hungry  
with the bread of his life  
and the word of his kingdom.  
Renew your people with your heavenly grace,  
and in all our weakness  
sustain us by the true and living bread,  
Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who lives and reigns  
with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### **Prayer of approach, confession and Lord's Prayer**

Loving God we come into your presence today. Another week has gone by, we have had some success, some disappointments, but we have tried to be your people.



In our worship may we open our hearts and make real the love of God. Today we come because we need your presence in our lives. Refresh, renew and heal us with the power of your loving Spirit.

In our worship, our fellowship and in our service may we open our hearts and make real the love of God. Because of Jesus, we come in confidence before you Lord God. Forgive us Father when we hide our faith, when we are so unsure of the power of your presence within us that we avoid people that we think might test us. Because they are different or challenging – just not the same as us. Forgive us when we doubt the faith we have, when we want to trust you more – but just cannot take the steps. Lord God, in Jesus Christ, we see the power of love to overcome those things that hold us back, those barriers that separate us from each other. In our worship, our fellowship and in our service may we open our hearts and make real the love of God. Amen

Lord's Prayer

### **Prayers of thanksgiving and for others**

Almighty God, Father of all mercies we give you thanks for all your goodness and loving kindness to us and to all you have made. We bless you for our creation, preservation and all the blessings of this life. But above all we bless you for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ and for the means and grace and for the hope of glory. And we pray that you will give us such an awareness of your mercies that with truly thankful hearts we may show you our praise, not only with our worship, but in our lives, by giving ourselves to your service, and by walking before you, in holiness and righteousness all our days,

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with and the Holy Spirit be honour and glory throughout the ages, Amen.



## Musical Suggestions

CH4 519	Love divine all loves excelling
CH4 352	O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing
CH4 485	Dear Lord and Father of Mankind
CH4 543	Christ be our light
CH4 286	Tell out my soul
CH4 549	How deep the Fathers love
CH4 555	Amazing grace

*Amazing grace (My chains are gone)* Chris Tomlin

([www.hymnlyrics.org/requests/amazing\\_grace\\_my\\_chains\\_are\\_gone.php](http://www.hymnlyrics.org/requests/amazing_grace_my_chains_are_gone.php))



## Additional Resources

### Resourcing Mission



[Resourcing Mission](#) is host to Starters for Sunday and other key mission resources for download and purchase. Online booking is available for [Mission & Discipleship events](#). Please check back regularly, as new items are being added all the time. If there is something you'd like to see on this new site, please [contact us](#) via the website.

### Prayer Resources

These materials are designed to be a starting point for what you might look for in prayers. [Pray Now 2013](#) is available now from [St Andrew Press](#). [Revealing Love](#) will be available to purchase from November 2013.



### Music Resources

The hymns mentioned in this material are ideas of specific hymns you might choose for this week's themes. However, for some excellent articles on church music and ideas for new music resources, please check out our online music magazine [Different Voices](#).

### Preaching Resources



These materials are designed to be a starting point for what you might preach this Sunday. [Preachers Perspectives](#) is a resource where we have asked twelve preachers to share the insights they have gathered through their experiences of writing and delivering sermons regularly.

### Scots Worship Resources

[The Kirk's Ear](#) - Scots in the Kirk series for Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and other times of the year

[Wurship Ouk bi Ouk](#) - Metrical psalms, hymns, prayers and words for worship

[Scots Sacraments](#) may give you helpful material if you are celebrating Communion or have a Baptism.

*The Mission and Discipleship Council would like to express its thanks to the Rev Alan Hamilton-Messer for providing us with this Sunday's material.*

*Please note that the views expressed in these materials are those of the individual writer and not necessarily the official view of the Church of Scotland, which can be laid down only by the General Assembly.*

