

First Week of Advent

Sunday 29 November 2020

Reflection 1 - Day 1

Restore us, O Lord

Our readings for this week are from Psalm 80.1-7,17-19, Isaiah 64.1-9, Mark 13.24-37 and 1 Corinthians 1.3-9. I personally enjoy it when readings are brought together, as it can sometimes appear to be a puzzle where the hearer or reader is left to work out the links.

The beauty of the Bible and the Spirit of God who speaks through it is that it is clear that the Bible is the living Word of God. We can know this through the wonderful fact that seven people could read the same passage and seven different, but equally full, understandings of the passage could be brought out.

Psalm 80 speaks to us today. How many of you reading this are feeling tired? Not only do we have the seasonal changes that are brought upon us every year: the increased darkness in the late afternoon, the cold and the leaves slowly dying and leaving the tree branches bare. This year we have the ongoing trial that is the COVID situation as well. How many of you reading this are feeling weary?

The psalmist cries out, "*Restore us, O Lord [...] let your face shine, that we may be saved*" (Psalm 80.3,19).

That is his message, he repeats it twice: *Restore us, O Lord!* The author (or rather lyricist or poet) begins by recognising God's might and glory, "*You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth*" (v.1). If you're feeling tired and not sure how to pray, start by remembering how powerful, wonderful and awesome our God is, *Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.*

This Advent let us reflect on how God is working in our lives and how He continues to work in our lives. *Comfort and Joy* will be a continuing theme throughout church, may God bring you comfort, as He restores you and His face shines upon you.

Father God,

You are amazing. You have created this whole world and you created me. I see your hand still at work with every new baby born and in the life of every living creature on earth. Thank you for your constant presence in my life, even when sometimes I don't see you or don't feel you nearby.

Help me to trust in you.

I am tired, God, please restore me. Shine your face upon me and be gracious to me.

Help me to be a light to others and bring your restoration and light to them too.

Amen.