

10TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – (OT-20)
ST PETER'S ANGLICAN CHURCH BUNDOORA
Sunday 17th August 2025

Fr. Stephen Monsieigneur

Readings: Isaiah 5:1-7 / Ps 80:1-2, 8-19 / Hebrews 11:29-12:2 / Luke 12:49-59¹

Theme: *Embracing faithfulness in a finite world.*

Isaiah 5:1-7

5 I will sing for my beloved my love song concerning his vineyard:
 My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill.
² He dug it and cleared it of stones and planted it with choice vines;
 he built a watchtower in the midst of it and hewed out a wine vat in it;
 he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded rotten grapes.
³ And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah,
 judge between me and my vineyard.
⁴ What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it?
 When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield rotten grapes?
⁵ And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard.
 I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured;
 I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.
⁶ I will make it a wasteland; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with
 briars and thorns;
 I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.
⁷ For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah
 are his cherished garden;
 he expected justice but saw bloodshed;
 righteousness but heard a cry!

Ps 80:1-2, 8-19

¹ Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
 you who lead Joseph like a flock!
 You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth
² before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.
 Stir up your might,
 and come to save us!
⁸ You brought a vine out of Egypt;
 you drove out the nations and planted it.
⁹ You cleared the ground for it;
 it took deep root and filled the land.
¹⁰ The mountains were covered with its shade,
 the mighty cedars with its branches;
¹¹ it sent out its branches to the sea
 and its shoots to the River.

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¹² Why then have you broken down its walls,
 so that all who pass along the way pluck its fruit?
¹³ The boar from the forest ravages it,
 and all that move in the field feed on it.
¹⁴ Turn again, O God of hosts;
 look down from heaven and see;
 have regard for this vine,
¹⁵ the stock that your right hand planted.
¹⁶ It has been burned with fire; it has been cut down;
 may they perish at the rebuke of your countenance.
¹⁷ But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
 the one whom you made strong for yourself.
¹⁸ Then we will never turn back from you;
 give us life, and we will call on your name.
¹⁹ Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;
 let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Hebrews 11:29-12:2

²⁹ By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. ³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. ³¹ By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.
³² And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, ³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵ Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Others suffered mocking and flogging and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned to death; they were sawn in two; they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented— ³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains and in caves and holes in the ground.
³⁹ Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰ since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.
 12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

Luke 12:49-59

Jesus the Cause of Division

⁴⁹ “I have come to cast fire upon the earth, and how I wish it were already ablaze! ⁵⁰ I have a baptism with which to be baptized, and what constraint I am under until it is completed! ⁵¹ Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! ⁵² From now on five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; ⁵³ they will be divided:

father against son
 and son against father,
 mother against daughter
 and daughter against mother,
 mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law
 and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

⁵⁴ He also said to the crowds, “When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, ‘It is going to rain,’ and so it happens. ⁵⁵ And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, ‘There will be scorching heat,’ and it happens. ⁵⁶ You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time? ⁵⁷ “And why do you not judge for yourselves what is right? ⁵⁸ Thus when you go with your accuser before a magistrate, on the way make an effort to reach a settlement, or you may be dragged before the judge, and the judge hand you over to the officer, and the officer throw you in prison. ⁵⁹ I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the very last penny.”

SERMON

Each day and to varying degrees, we all face challenges and temptations that test our faith and our commitment to living a righteous life. It is in these moments of trial that we must remember the teachings of our scriptures the promises of the risen Christ and trust God.

Given current world affairs, wars and leaders who abuse power, or more locally, the challenges of refugees, homelessness, and politicians who are drawn to the popular rather than the truth, it is easy to feel overwhelmed and to question our path. We may wonder why we must endure such hardships and whether our efforts to remain faithful are truly worth it. I say YES,-- our faithfulness to God, our perseverance in the face of trials, and our commitment to living out God's teachings are essential for a righteous and fulfilling life.

Our scriptures today remind us that God is always with us, guiding us and providing us with the strength we need to overcome our challenges. Starting with Isaiah² We hear the parable of the vineyard, where God laments the unfaithfulness of His people. The passage reminds us of the importance of remaining rooted in God's Word. Just as the vineyard was expected to produce good grapes, we are called to bear the fruits of righteousness. When we fail to do so, we risk facing the consequences of our actions, just as the vineyard faced destruction for yielding rotten grapes.

Emphasizing the importance of seeking God's restoration and guidance. The psalmist³ cries out to God, asking for divine intervention and help in times of distress. This passage reminds us that we must turn to God in our times of need, trusting that God will provide the strength and support we require. It is not always easy, but it is only through our faith and reliance on God that we can find the courage to face our challenges and overcome them. It is important to remember that in Christ we are never alone.

² 5:1-7

³ Psalm 80:1-2, 80:8-19

In the Hebrews⁴ passage We are reminded of the great cloud of witnesses who lived by faith. We are encouraged to use the gift of reason to discern God's will and to persevere in our faith journey. The examples of faithfulness and perseverance set by those who came before us serve as a powerful reminder that we, too, can overcome our trials and tribulations through faith. We are called to run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus as the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.

Then we hear Jesus speak of the urgency of living out our faith.⁵ Jesus, exceptionally pointed, tells us that He has come to bring division, not peace, and that we must be prepared to make difficult choices in following Him. Again, not always encouraged by the world. This passage challenges us to recognize the urgency of our faith and to make a commitment to living out God's teachings, even when it means facing opposition and division.

As we navigate the challenges in our lives, our society, and even the world, we must remember that our faithfulness to God, perseverance in trials, and living out God's teachings are essential for a righteous life. What might such an action look like?

Some real-life examples of how the teachings from today's scriptures can be translated into actions:

1. Faithfulness in Relationships:

- Working through differences you may have with others with patience and understanding, ensuring the relationship remains strong and fruitful.

2. Seeking God's Guidance:

- Pray, for instance, when you are facing a dilemma, maybe a decision where somebody will not get what they hope for, spend time in prayer, asking for God's direction and clarity.

3. Perseverance in the Face of Trials:

- By continuing to pursue your goals despite the obstacles that may tend to be distracting, for example, a student who struggles academically might continue to study diligently, seeking help from teachers and peers, and ultimately achieving their academic goals through perseverance.

4. Living Out Faith with Urgency:

- Volunteer to assist in making life better for others, advocate for the rights of the marginalized, or participate in community service projects to make a positive impact in their community.

5. Community Support and Encouragement:

- Drawing from the teachings in **Hebrews 11:29-12:2**, communities can come together to support and encourage one another in their faith journeys. This can be seen in support groups, church communities, or even informal gatherings

⁴ Hebrews 11:29-12:2

⁵ Luke 12:49-59

where individuals share their experiences, offer encouragement, and pray for one another.

6. Acts of Kindness and Compassion:

- perform acts of kindness and compassion such as helping a neighbour in need, offering a listening ear to a friend going through a tough time, or simply showing kindness to strangers.

By embodying these teachings in our actions, we can live out our faith in meaningful and impactful ways, making a positive difference in our lives and the lives of those around us.

Let us pray,

O'Lord, grant us the strength to remain faithful, the courage to persevere through trials, and the wisdom to live out Your teachings. May our actions reflect Your love and grace and inspire others to seek You. Guide us always along our journey. Amen.