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2nd May 2021, 5th Sunday of Easter

Collect for this week –. Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death and opened to us the grace of everlasting life; grant that, as by your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Readings This week

Acts 8:26—end, 1 John 4:7—end, John 15:1—8, Psalm 22:25—end

There is no other psalm like Psalm 22; it begins at such a low point, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” and yet it reaches such a climax with the words, “the Lord...he has done it”. Probably this describes an actual experience but, in the New Testament, it is frequently related to the cross of Christ and His resurrection. Accordingly, a parallel can be drawn between the closing words of the psalm, “he has done it” and our Lord’s great cry from the cross, “it is finished”. When John wrote in his letter, ‘he (God) loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins’, he affirmed that ‘God has done it’. This is a clause to be reckoned with. It is implicit in the teaching of Jesus, as recorded in the Gospel, “apart from me you can do nothing”

There is a world view that is in denial about the active intervention of God into a situation in order to make life right, and even denial of the existence of God - a world in which mankind is supreme. According to this secular view of life, people are the driving force of all that happens - of course, with the exception of natural events but we have come a long way towards explaining them. Who needs God? No one can exist without engaging in secular activities, and there is nothing inherently evil either in secular pursuits or in many of the material things that are a part of our life on this earth. But if we fail to understand the importance of the spiritual as compared with the secular, we can lose the meaning and values of Christianity.

A godless view of life is carrying off so many of the next generation. They need to hear our stories that testify, “God has done it”, otherwise they will not be convinced. There is also encouragement for every Christian in these four words. When things appear to be hopeless, God can come sweeping down and surprise us with His unexpected grace; then we may say “He has done it. Praise the Lord!”

Readings Next week,

Acts 10. 44-end, 1John 5. 1-6, John 15.9-17, Psalm 98

