

DOXOLOGY (Romans 16)

4 and last Sunday of advent

Advent is traditionally a time of expectant waiting and preparation for Christmas; yesterday it all changed.

When everything around us changes, we need to look for a new anchor, for a new safe place. We have quoted Hebrews 12,26 several times: God say: "I will shake the earth once more , so that only that which is unshakeable remains"

If we are looking for a safe anchor, we need to go to God and His words -- there is no other!

in v 25: "Now all Glory to God who is able to make you strong"

- able to create a whole universe, out of nothing; so vast we will never explore
- he says he is able to make us strong; isn't that what we all need right now?

God is able to make us strong. Paul in Eph 3: explains: what sort of strength

God wants to give us the strength of knowing His love, the strength to understand just how wide, how long, how high and how deep that love is. God's love is the strength we need to face life, every moment of it. God's love is deeper and wider than any disappointment. And God wants to and is able to fill us with that strength.

So Together with Paul we exclaim "all glory to our God who is able to make us strong"; our part in it?: acknowledge our weakness, come with open hands ASK. Ask and you will be given.....

The second statement Paul is making:

v 25 "the message about Jesus Christ has revealed God's plan"

- from before creation!
- never changed, never will change, it will remain Plan A into all eternity
- not fully revealed from beginning;

A + E in garden: relationship with them, that he wanted to make them stewards of His creation; God`s plan was to involve them in his work on earth- later Noah: one day remove everything that stands against Him, His authority; not a new plan, just plan A more fully revealed. Noah experienced that God sticks to his plan

- when Jesus came to live on earth, some people started to realise that God`s plan was that we will live with him for ever; and that His love for us is so strong that He is willing to pay the most enormous, sacrificial price to achieve this 1)

- more: I believe that we will discover more of God`s plan as we wait for his second coming: what will we learn about God`s plan from our present situation?

So, Paul is saying that God is able, and God has a great plan: do we believe that? Do we believe it with all our hearts in every situation? God is able to stop the covid 19 virus at just the right time?

When I hear God speaking through the prophet Jeremiah, “I have plans for you for good, not for disaster, but for a future and a hope” , do I still believe that God`s plan will be fulfilled however Britain leaves the EU?

If I do believe both in God`s ability and in His unshakeable plan, with our minds and with our hearts, I am free to praise and worship and honour without fear, with great joy and with an overflowing heart, whatever the circumstances are.

GLORY

“All glory to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, forever.”

As we wait expectantly and prepare, let us join in, together, alone at home, Whether in words of old hymns or new songs of my own, made up, heart response, words tu

The restrictions have just tightened , and it will affect most/all of us

There are absolutely no limits set for our praise of God: let us make use of this unlimited freedom to worship, to thank, bless God, to bow down before Him, to commit ourselves, our lives, our future to Him afresh!

This could be the most joyful Christmas yet!!

Maybe it helps to know that Paul's letter to the Christians in Rome is really a summary of all the teaching Paul has done in the previous 25 years. It is sometimes described as the climax of his teaching. Here, he said it all. That leads him, after 16 ch. to these last three verses Mary read to us. If you had a problem following what Mary read, it's not Mary's fault. I have asked Mary to read _____ but any translation is a grammatical minefield.

But it was never intended to be a grammatical exercise: it is simply Paul's heart overflowing with amazement, gratitude, praise and thanksgiving. Paul is overwhelmed by God's greatness, and he is running out of words.

I find that really encouraging: Paul, the great teacher, comes up against the inadequacy of human language to describe Almighty God. So I am not the only one!!