

Reflections for Sunday 2 May 2021

Please remember in your prayers the families of;

Roger Johnson (Whose ashes were interred at Willoughby)

Susan Skinner (funeral at Willoughby)

Alan Moore (funeral at Hill Wootton)

The family of Colin Whittaker (Grandborough) who died on 28th April.

Also all the wedding couples who are finally able to plan their weddings and blessings in our churches over the summer months.

We hold them all before our loving God.

Prayer for this Sunday;

Eternal God

Whose Son Jesus Christ is the vine that holds us together,

And is the way, the truth and the life,

Help us to walk in His way

To rejoice in the truth

And to share His risen life,

And bring His love to others.

Amen,

Please do contact me if I can help to support you in any way.

With my love and blessings, Barbara

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The Gospel reading for this Sunday is John ch. 15 vv. 1 – 8 and contains the reference *"I am the true vine"*.

This is last one of the famous "I am sayings" in John's Gospel. And it is probably the most significant.

There are seven of the "I am" sayings.

1. I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. (John 6;35)

God bringing to each one of us all that we need – Jesus said this to His disciples because they were so frightened after He had walked on the water on Lake Galilee.

2. I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life. (John 8;12)

Jesus spoke these words to defend himself to the Pharisees who were trying to trap him after he had defended the adulterous woman.

3. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. (John 10;9)

Jesus spoke these words after he had given sight to a blind man on the Sabbath.

4. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (John 10;11)

After Jesus said this – the Pharisees started to believe that Jesus' miracles were not from a demon.

5. I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me even though they die, will live. (John 11;25)

Jesus said this after the death of his close friend Lazarus, and these words of comfort are often used at a funeral.

6. I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14;6)

Jesus' words at the Last Supper – just after he had washed his disciple's feet.

7. I am the true vine, and my father is the vine grower. (John 15;1)

Jesus words of comfort and teaching to his disciples as he tried to explain to them that after his death on the cross – they would be comforted and inspired by the Holy Spirit – and the words that followed this reading talk about love and bring us Jesus’ commandment to “Love One Another”

These are all very definite and certain sayings – laying down exactly what Jesus wants us to believe about his Father in heaven.

Each one of the sayings begins with a definite statement of what Jesus is about – but not in a way of making himself more important.

Whilst I was pondering on these sayings, I remembered that Boots advert on TV, in which various beautiful models were saying things like “I am beautiful”, “I am gorgeous” finishing with “I am worth it!”

This is not what Jesus is about in these “I am” statements. What Jesus is doing here is almost as if he is stating his credibility, before going on to explain what he is about and what he can do for each one of us.

And in the same way what we as Christians can do to help others through being grounded in our faith.

John ch. 15 vv. 1 -8

15 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. ² He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes[Ⓜ] to make it bear more fruit. ³ You have already been cleansed[Ⓜ] by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become[Ⓜ] my disciples.