

WITNESS – Reaching out to others *(Aim for 20 – 30 minutes)*

Ffald-y-Brenin Blessings

Heavenly Father we take upon ourselves the mantle of authority that Jesus delegates to us and in His name we speak to every household in Hungerford and say to you:-

1 Relationships

We bless you in the Name of the Lord. We bless your marriages that they may be strong and whole. We bless the relationship between each marriage partner that it may be loving, forgiving, merciful and strong. We bless every intergenerational relationship within each household that there may be peace and love and understanding flowing between each one.

In Jesus' name we bless every network of wholesome and supportive friendship.

2 Health

We bless your health that you may be strong and well. In Jesus' name we resist any sickness or disease which seeks to invade this parish and to every person in the parish we say, be well, be strong, be healthy. To any who are sick right now we say we bless you in Jesus' name with a speedy recovery.

3 Wealth

We bless your wealth that you may have plenty to replace poverty. We bless you to have enough to live and enough to give. We bless the work of your hands that whatever you turn your hand to which is wholesome may be profitable. We bless every wholesome enterprise that is conducted by you that it may prosper and be successful. We bless the local businesses that they may be successful and profitable.

4 Education

We bless the local schools that they may be secure, safe places for teachers and pupils alike. We bless the children's capacity to learn and develop relationships and we bless their simple trust in Jesus that their trust may grow and become enriched.

5 Church

We speak to the Church and we say we bless you in the Name of the Lord that the Holy Spirit and the Word of God may flow out from you in power. We bless the hearts of all who live in the parish that they may be quickened to hear and respond to the Voice of the Living God. We bless all who live and work here, that the overflow of the blessings of the presence of the kingdom of God may fall upon you.

LUKE'S GOSPEL GOSPEL FOR THE OUTSIDER

3 Encounters with Outsiders

WELCOME – Breaking the ice *(Aim for 10 minutes)*

Who have you met that made an impact in your life?

WORSHIP – Meeting the Lord *(Aim for 10 – 15 minutes)*

Read Colossians 3.16-17

Spend some time either out loud or in silence praying that each phrase of these verses will be evident in your own life.

Pray for your meeting, that you will all be drawn closer to God.

WORD – Applying the truth
(Aim for 40 – 45 minutes)

Most of the encounters described in this chapter come from Jesus' Galilean ministry and from two events in the final weeks of Jesus ministry in and around Jericho before he finally comes to Jerusalem. We will look at these encounters in two blocks: the Galilean encounters and the Jericho encounters, encompassing the six meetings with Jesus.

The Galilean Encounters

There are four in this chapter: with a paralytic (Luke 5:17-26), a centurion (7:1-10), a sinful woman (7:36-50), and the Gerasene demoniac (8:26-39). You may wish to read these accounts again as a group or individually, and, having done so, consider these questions.

1 Are there any features in common in these encounters, either in the way Jesus handles them or in the people themselves?

2 If you were to draw a chief characteristic in each of these encounters what would they be?

3 What would be the chief testimony of the Paralytic, the Centurion, the sinful woman, and the demoniac, do you think?

4 What do these encounters teach us about Jesus?

The Jericho Encounters

Shortly before his passion and crucifixion, Jesus had two memorable encounters around Jericho with Bartimaeus and Zacchaeus (see 18:35ff and 19:1ff).

5 What are the chief contrasts between these stories, and what is so striking about Jesus' conversation with each individual?

6 In both cases the crowds did not want Jesus to engage with them; why was that? What is so similar about these stories?

7 Summarise what you have learnt from these encounters

Taken from
Whitworth, P., (2014) *Gospel for the Outsider*, Durham: Sacristy Press