

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

4 Parables and Outsiders

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

What characteristic do you most admire in other people?

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

Give each person a stone and then pray

Pray

“In God is my safety and glory,
the rock of strength.
Take refuge in God all you people.
Trust him at all times.
Pour out your hearts before him
for God is our refuge.”

Psalm 62:7-8

What do you want to say to God? Speak with him in a few minutes of silence.

Conclude your prayer time and pray for your meeting

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

We will compare and contrast three of Luke’s great parables which contain significant stories about outsiders. They are the parables of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), the Prodigal Son (15:11-32), and the Pharisee and Tax Collector (18:9-14). The group might wish to read all three parables together and then answer the following questions.

1 Are there any common themes running through these parables? If so, what are they?

2 What do the Priest and the Levite, the older brother and the Pharisee have in common?

3 What were the shock-factors in each of the parables?

4 Why do we find the Prodigal Son more attractive than the older brother?

5 What do the Good Samaritan and the Tax Collector have in common?

6 What does Jesus want to teach us about the Father, about ourselves, and about our responsibilities in these parables?

7 What kind of Spirituality is commended by these parables? What values are found in this spirituality: e.g. honesty, realism, humility, compassion?

8 Where do we see these values at work in the parables?

9 Is there anything else you have seen looking at these parables together?

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