



# Christ Church & St Saviour's Chadderton

Church Family News: 29<sup>th</sup> September – 6<sup>th</sup> October 2024

In an address to his old school in 1941, Winston Churchill said “...never give in, never give in, ... never give in.....”.

The speech was given as an encouragement during war time, to keep on going.

The idea of never giving up was one of the themes of the writer of the letter to the Hebrews.

These Jewish Christians were under pressure to give up their belief in Jesus and go back to Old Testament beliefs and worship.

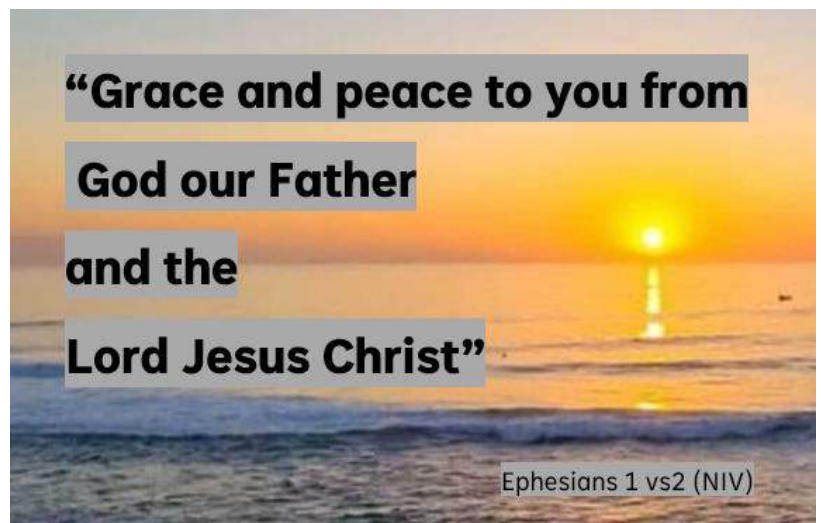
The writer shows how Jesus is greater than all these Jewish Christians used to believe in. This being the case why would you give up on Jesus? He is so much greater than everyone and everything.

So, it is for us today. There are many pressures from the world around us and even from within the Anglican Church that we can be tempted to give up on Jesus and Biblical teaching.

As **Hebrews 12:1-2a** puts it:

*“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witness, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.”*

The race is a marathon, not a sprint! Keep on going!!



Ephesians 1 vs2 (NIV)

**Marlena Smolenski**

## This week:

Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup>	<b>9.30am</b>	Morning Worship at St Saviour's
	<b>11am</b>	Morning Worship at Christ Church <i>with the baptism of Moshen &amp; Akbar</i>
	<b>4pm</b>	Youth Bible Study at Christ Church
	<b>6.30pm</b>	Prayer Gathering at Christ Church
Monday 30 <sup>th</sup>	<b>7.30pm</b>	PCC meeting at St Saviour's
Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> <i>October</i>	<b>2pm</b>	Cake & Chat at Christ Church
Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup>	<b>9am</b>	Men's Breakfast at St Saviour's
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup>	<b>9.30am</b>	All Age Harvest Service & Parade at St Saviour's
	<b>11am</b>	All Age Harvest Service at Christ Church
	<b>6.30pm</b>	Prayer Gathering at St Mary's

## Weekly Prayer Gatherings

Our weekly Prayer Gathering will take place today at Christ Church and on zoom; the details for which are:

Time: Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2024 6.30-7.30pm

Venue: Christ Church, Block Lane, Chadderton OL9 7QB

Zoom details: Meeting ID: 879 1948 4535 Passcode: 161414

## Wednesday and Thursday Bible Study Groups

Our Bible study groups are a great opportunity to grow in our faith and get to know one another better. Why not come along and give it a try? We have a range of daytime and evening groups available, and everyone is welcome, even if you have never studied the Bible before! Details of venues and times are below (*in Regular weekly events*).

## Youth Bible Study

Our Youth Bible Study will meet today, 4pm at Christ Church. A chance to meet to learn more about what the Bible actually says, with people your own age. Anyone aged between 14 and 18 who would like to come along is most welcome. Parents, please contact Ben Wilkinson (see back page for contact details) to register young people or for more information.

## SOUND Youth Event "God with us" for 14s-18s

Psalm 23 is a promise from God to be with you through all of life. And not just be with you, but be your shepherd, defender and friend. Come and hear about the God who won't abandon you and will provide more fully for you than you could ever even know that you need.

Food, meeting up with other people aged 14-18 years old and a short talk helping us keep focused on Jesus during the winter

Saturday 9th November 2024 (10.30 am -4.15 pm) - meet at Christ Church at 9.30 am and return by 5.00 pm. Cost £4.

Consent forms to be returned asap but by Sunday 20th October at the latest.



**Readings:** Today: Ephesians 2. 1-10      Next Week: Psalm 65

*Please read ahead*

### ***PCC Meeting***

The next PCC meeting will take place on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024, 7.30pm in the lounge at St Saviour's. Agendas should now have been circulated.

### ***Cake & Chat***

We will be meeting for our regular monthly get together on Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2pm at Christ Church. All ladies welcome to join us for tea (or coffee) and home-made cakes.

### ***Men's Breakfast – Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October***

There will be a Men's Breakfast on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October at St Saviour's starting at 9am. FREE cooked breakfast and a short Bible talk. All men welcome.

### ***Thank You!***

Louise Crosby would like to thank the church family for all the loving wishes, gifts and cards received on the occasion of her birthday.

### ***Parish Gift Day***

The total raised by this year's Parish Gift Day was circa £6,190 including Gift Aid. We thank God for many generous gifts and pray for God to raise up a gospel worker for our children and youth ministry.

### ***Confirmation Service on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at St Mary's in Rochdale***

Bishop Rob Munro is coming to lead a confirmation service at our sister church, St Mary's Balderstone in Rochdale, in the evening on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> May. If you are interested in being confirmed, please speak to Ben or James.

### ***Northern Women's Convention 2024 – Jesus in an Upside-Down World***

Early warning – bookings are now open for this excellent conference taking place on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November in Manchester. Cost £20. Bookings online at [northernwomensconvention.org.uk](http://northernwomensconvention.org.uk) More information available from the leaflets at the back of church.

### ***Income Survey 2024 - Starts on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October.***

To calculate our level of Parish Share to pay, the Diocese requests that we participate in the annual income survey. Forms should be completed by all members of the congregation who are aged 16 or above; and have attended church at least 12 times in the past 12 months and/or consider this church their home. The survey is completely **confidential** and **anonymous**. The forms are individual – so for example, a husband and wife should each complete their own form. It is also important that everyone who is eligible completes a form, even (indeed especially) if you have little or no personal income.

### ***Safeguarding***

We want our churches to be a safe and welcoming environment where everyone is respected and valued. If you see or hear something that doesn't feel right, please don't ignore it. If you are concerned that someone you know is at risk or is being abused, or presents a risk to others, please contact either our vicar or our Safeguarding Officer, Anne Elliott (*contact details on the back page*). If you would prefer to speak to someone outside the church, you can contact the Manchester Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser; Abbey Clephane-Wilson on 0161 828 1451 or email: [AbbeyClephane-Wilson@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:AbbeyClephane-Wilson@manchester.anglican.org)

## Regular Mid-Week events:

Monday	<b>9.45am</b>	Noah's Ark Toddler's Group at St Saviour's
	<b>10am</b>	English Language Class at Christ Church
	<b>1pm</b>	King's Kitchen at Christ Church
	<b>1.30pm</b>	Small group Bible study at St Saviour's
Tuesday	<b>10am</b>	Small group Bible study at St Saviour's
Wednesday	<b>6pm</b>	Rainbows at St Saviour's
	<b>6.30pm</b>	Brownies at St Saviour's
	<b>7pm</b>	Guides and Rangers at St Saviour's
	<b>7.20pm</b>	Bible Study at Christ Church
	<b>7.20pm</b>	Bible Study on zoom
Thursday	<b>10.30am</b>	Small group Bible study at Norma Howe's
	<b>2pm</b>	Small group Bible study at Margaret Clow's
	<b>7.20pm</b>	Bible Study at Tim & Lindsey Norman's

## How to give to God's work in your church

To give regularly to your church you can do so:

- By Standing Order to Account name: Christ Church Chadderton  
Account number: 22384340      Sort Code: 05 06 46  
Please pick up a Standing Order Instruction (back of church) or create one online
- Through Stewardship – Find our giving page online at:  
<https://www.stewardship.org.uk/partners/20090018>
- By giving weekly through our Planned Giving Envelope Scheme (see Margaret Parrett at Christ Church or Richard McPhail at St Saviour's)
- Weekly offering box

And, of course, if you are a UK taxpayer please complete a Gift Aid declaration form enabling the church to reclaim 25p of tax for every £1 given. Forms available from the back of church. For more information, please see Eric Mee at Christ Church or Richard McPhail at St Saviour's.

### Christ Church and St Saviour's:

**Vicar:** Rev Ben Wilkinson  
**Telephone:** 07878 806174  
0161 633 6166

**Email:** [vicar@christchurchchadderton.co.uk](mailto:vicar@christchurchchadderton.co.uk)

**Curate:** Rev James Greenfield  
**Telephone:** 07547 619436

**Email:** [james@christchurchchadderton.co.uk](mailto:james@christchurchchadderton.co.uk)

**Website:** [www.christchurchchadderton.co.uk](http://www.christchurchchadderton.co.uk)

**Parish office:** Cathy Flint  
**Telephone:** 0161 624 2326      **Email:** [office@christchurchchadderton.co.uk](mailto:office@christchurchchadderton.co.uk)

### Safeguarding Officer:

**Christ Church:** Anne Elliott    **Telephone:** 07952 117050  
**St Saviour's:** Sue Smithies    **Telephone:** 0161 653 0618  
**email:** [safeguarding@christchurchchadderton.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@christchurchchadderton.co.uk)



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## Sermon Sheet

**29<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

**Preacher: Phil Rawlings**

*“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*

John 3.16 (NIV)

### **Opening prayer**

Help us this day, O Lord, to hear your words and know your voice so that we may live our lives for you.

### **Reading: Ephesians 2 vs1-10(NIV)**

#### **Made alive in Christ**

**2** As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. <sup>3</sup> All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. <sup>4</sup> But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, <sup>5</sup> made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved. <sup>6</sup> And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – <sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

## Talk

Great to be here with you. I always enjoy sharing God's word with you – you are a lovely church to share with. Just in case you don't know me from Adam – I'm Phil Rawlings and I'm a recycled vicar, who is living in Middleton, having spent over 40 years in Manchester, in various places, including Oldham as Interfaith officer, encouraging Christians to share Jesus with your Muslim neighbours. And today we have a fantastic passage, in fact one of my favourite passages, which provides some of the foundational Christian beliefs, ones that historically people have died to defend.

So, let's have a look at this great passage. If you have your bibles open, please keep your finger in Ephesians 2, or on your phones. I do encourage you to bring Bibles to church, for while I know you have them in church, there is nothing like your own familiar bible which you know your way around.

So let me start by giving a little background. The Ephesian church was very special to Paul, for as you can read in Acts 19 Paul had introduced the small church in the city to the Holy Spirit, and then demonstrated the work of the Spirit – healing and casting out evil spirits. As Acts 19:10 tells us Paul continued ministry in Ephesus for two years, so 'that all Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.' He had put his heart and soul into the successful work in Ephesus, and now he writes a letter because he'd heard that some false teaching had developed in the church, and he's keen to correct this. Essentially, they were being told that to be saved you had to do certain religious things – effectively become Jews first – it was a common heresy in the first century and Paul opposed it with passion – and actually it is a significant gospel issue.

Every era has its own Christian heresies – today I immediately can think of two that are going around the church at present – The so-called 'prosperity gospel', which says come to Jesus and He will make you rich – it is a perversion of half-truths – Yes your life will be immensely richer, but probably not financially. And anyway, that is no motive for turning to Christ. And secondly, the blind following of our secular society and the so-called sexual revolution. It is absolutely right to stand in opposition to the call for gay marriage, as my friend Irfan Jamil, retired bishop of Lahore says 'God called Adam and Eve to marriage, not Adam and Steve!!'

And in standing against those who would trap the Ephesians in false beliefs, in our passage today Paul gives a number of contrasts – of opposites:

Death - Life

The Kingdom of this world - the heavenly realms – the Kingdom of God

God's Grace – human works



## 1. Death and life

This contrast – you were dead! That’s shocking. Spiritual death – a terrible place to be!! It’s how you used to live before you came to Christ:

- Following the ways of this world and of the ruler of the Kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient’.

We were all like that once – but not now!!

- He goes on ‘Gratifying the cravings of the flesh and following its desires and thoughts’. This is important because our world says that if you feel something then it must be good. If you desire something, then do it. It’s the direction of a godless society. Paul says – that’s where we all were once – Hands up. And Paul says, ‘we were by nature deserving of God’s wrath’. Do you hear that?!! Tell it as it is.

Now the contrast – v4

*‘But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in trespasses.’*

I just want to say a loud and clear – alleluia!! God has done what we could not do – out of his love and mercy he has rescued us – in Christ!! Again alleluia!!

## 2. The second opposite:

We’ve already referred to it. The two Kingdoms – The Kingdom of this world and the Kingdom of God. As we’ve already seen one is dominated by death and the fear of death and the other is dominated by Life, being, living an alternative life – Alive, seated with Christ in the heavenly realms (v.6).

We see *‘the ways of this world and of the ruler of the Kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient’*. Indeed, friends we see this starkly in our world today – disobedience to God’s law everywhere, in our own land, as well as elsewhere.

And to some degree we live in these two worlds – we have one foot in this world – death, and another foot in the Kingdom of God – with Christ seated in the Heavenly realms. Of course we have the choice, all the time, to look down and to think that this world is all there is – fear, hopelessness, despair lies this way, and ultimate death. Or by contrast to look up and fix our eyes on Jesus, to know ourselves to be part of the Kingdom of God, to recognise ourselves as raised with the risen Jesus and seated with Him in the heavenly realms’. Paul speaks of followers of Jesus as being ‘in Christ Jesus’. Time and again his letters let his reads understand that they are ‘in Christ’. There is Life – the life of the risen Jesus if we are in Christ.

And the third opposite: Grace or Works is just so important. We humans have a natural tendency to try to justify ourselves. We think we’re not too bad, so

perhaps a loving God might overlook the things we've done. Taking funerals as I've done for the last 40 years, I can't tell you the number of times that families of the deceased have said something like, 'He never did anybody any harm, so God must accept him' or 'he always went to church – that makes him a good person'. We want to do things to hopefully go to heaven. In the end who gets into heaven is God's decision, not mine or yours, but our scriptures are absolutely clear that we cannot save ourselves v.8 'For it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith – that is not from yourselves, it is a gift of God, so that no one can boast.' It is so important that we understand this. It does at least two things:

1. It takes the pressure off us. We can't earn our way to heaven even if we try. All we can do is trust what God has done for us in Christ – his death and resurrection.
2. It means that we can't boast. We can't think I'm a better Christian than him or her. I deserve to go to heaven more than them, or even I'm a good person. We are not, in ourselves – because we remain part of the kingdom of this world, by nature deserving death, but Jesus has rescued us from that Kingdom and made us to be 'in Christ'. God's done in it, it is His gift, and we have merely accepted His gift to us.

So friends, there may be some people here who don't know themselves to be in Christ – who are depending on their works, hoping God might overlook the bad in their lives. Would you like to know Christ today – to know yourselves to be in Christ, seated with Him in the heavenly realms. You see in Christ, rescued by God's gift, His grace, to us, who don't deserve it, and can't earn it, we can know with an assurance that Christ is in us – the assurance of glory – our place with Jesus in the heavenly realms.

If that is you, please come and talk with me, or James, at the end of the service.

And Paul ends this section with a wonderful and encouraging promise for those who are saved by God's grace, who know that they are in Christ, when he says:

*'For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do'.*

It's that wonderful – you, and even me, we are God's handiwork – he has made us in Christ to do good things.

Just stop and think – we really are God's handiwork.

So, turn to your neighbour and tell them, 'You are God's handiwork in Christ'.

Let's pray.



## Prayers

Take time to pray for:

### **Our world:**

*Conflicts around the world; for Israel, Palestine & Lebanon. Tensions in the Middle East including, Yemen, Iran & Sudan, the Ukrainian crisis & Russia, Afghanistan, Nigeria and Syria and for all areas facing unrest, injustice and war. Strengthen and comfort your people in these places. Be with those who are displaced, injured or who mourn. Bring justice and peace. Give wisdom to all leaders on how to respond.*

*For all the elections taking place around the world this year. That God will raise up good leaders who will be open to his guidance and seek justice and peace for those they serve.*

*Climate change & stewardship of the world as we see the effects on our planet. For all those struggling especially the vulnerable and poor. For wisdom on how we should change and the courage to act as good stewards in this world.*

*All our persecuted brothers and sisters around the world and our mission partners Mark & Rebekah in Southeast Asia and Bishop Abelino and Patti in Chile.*

### **Our country:** *That God's word will go out to all communities and people.*

*For wisdom and knowledge for our leaders both political and in the community.*

*For King Charles III. Draw close to him and strengthen him.*

*For our Prime Minister Kier Starmer and his government. That God will give him wisdom as he seeks to lead and guide our country. That those in government will have humble hearts and seek justice, peace and truth. That all will be surrounded by godly advisors and that they will listen to them.*

*The Church of England: For all our Bishops, clergy and lay representatives of General Synod. That the Lord will guide us through the coming days and show us his way forward. Strengthen the resolve of those who are standing firm on the promises of God's Word and let them be wise and effective for God's glory. For unity within God's church.*

*All affected by the current economic climate and the squeeze on living standards. That organisations trying to help and support those in need will do so with compassion and wisdom.*

*For those heading off to university or college for the first time. That God will bless and protect them. That they will find opportunities for Christian fellowship and to hear God's Word as they take the next steps in their journey.*

*For our mission partners, Audrey & Derek Newton now based in the UK.*

***Our church and community:*** *our parish family,*

*For outreach and support to our local community and those in need; that we are light in the darkness.*

*Giving thanks for everyone who is standing up for the Bible's teaching in this area*

*The upcoming planned events: Cake & Chat and the Men's Breakfast that they will be welcoming, accessible and always point to Jesus and his good news*

*For Daniel & Mei Whetham and the English class. That we will find ways to point those who attend to Jesus.*

*For God to raise up workers for his harvest here.*

*For wisdom and discernment for our PCC*

*Ben Wilkinson and his family (Hannah, Esther & David)*

*James, Helen and William*

*Our working together with St Mary's*

***Ourselves:*** *to grow in understanding of Jesus' love and grace*

*To put our trust in our Lord and Saviour*

*For humility, to be gentle and patient, sacrificial and generous and to bear with each other in love.*

*You may end each time with:*

***Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.***

Prayer requests:

- Paul & Shiela Linguard
- Eric & Chris Mee's son-in-law Spencer. Please pray that the brain tumor continues to remain stable and that they would come to understand God's love and grace through this ongoing difficult time
- Karin Whetham
- Val Harley
- Alan and Isabelle Dean
- Derek & Audrey Newton: for the ongoing health problems within the family
- John Williams
- Chris Pearce (Cath's brother)
- Dave Wright

## **The Lord's prayer**

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon us and remain with us always. Amen.

### **Christ Church and St Saviour's:**

**Vicar:** Rev Ben Wilkinson

Telephone: 07878 806174

Email: [vicar@christchurchchadderton.co.uk](mailto:vicar@christchurchchadderton.co.uk)

**Curate:** Rev James Greenfield

Telephone: 07547 619436

Email: [james@christchurchchadderton.co.uk](mailto:james@christchurchchadderton.co.uk)

Website: [www.christchurchchadderton.co.uk](http://www.christchurchchadderton.co.uk)

**Parish office:** Cathy Flint

Telephone: 0161 624 2326

Email: [office@christchurchchadderton.co.uk](mailto:office@christchurchchadderton.co.uk)

*The office will be open on weekdays between 9.30am and 1pm.*