

Lectionary readings: Jeremiah 8: 18- 9: 1; Psalm 79: 1-9; 1 Timothy 2: 1-7; Luke 16: 1-13

For reflection and prayer

- **Jeremiah 8:** Jeremiah's heart was breaking for the people of Judah who had wandered away from God and gone after other gods. How we need to weep today for our own country and for ourselves. We don't worship carved idols today, but there are plenty of worthless 'gods' around that we are worshipping. This may be a good area for reflection this week, asking ourselves what is controlling our lives and what we are trusting in rather than God. What is drawing us closer to God and what is drawing us away from God?
- **Psalm 79:** Pagan nations had defiled the Temple in Jerusalem. God's holy temple today is the human heart; that's His dwelling place. We might ask ourselves how we are defiling God's dwelling place and how we are allowing others to separate us from God? Are we 'mocked by our neighbours, an object of scorn and derision to those around us'? (v4) 'Pour out your Love ... open the hearts of all people. We await a new birth of consciousness.' (v6 Psalms for Praying) When are we going to wake up from our spiritual sleep? When are we going to move into a new way of seeing, a new way of being? Loving God, You have the power and the will to re-create what we have messed up, but You need our co-operation. Re-create Your loving image in us that we might work together with You to heal and preserve our world and make all things new.

- **1 Timothy 2:** As Christians, we are called to pray for everyone we know and for rulers and governments. What part does prayer play in our lives? God wants us to live quietly, 'simply in humble contemplation'. (The Message) I wonder how many of us take time each day to live in quiet contemplation, to live prayerfully? Paul speaks of how God wants to bring salvation - healing and wholeness - to us all and set us free from whatever bondage we are in. We might like to reflect on whether we are allowing God to heal us of our neuroses, guilt, fear, anxiety, bitterness, unbelief etc. so that we become all that God wants us to be.
- **Luke 16:** The servant in the parable was astute, diligent and conscientious in the way he went about dealing with the crisis he found himself in. How diligent and conscientious are we about developing our spiritual life and deepening our friendship with God? Jesus says that we can't serve God and money. What is our heart set on? Does God come first, or are we more concerned about our material wealth? Do we pray about our use of money? How much do we set aside each week for the work of God? Is it a fair proportion of our income? Some people tithe their incomes i.e. give one tenth to the work of God. Is that some thing we have considered doing? How does that challenge us?

A prayer

Disturbing God, unlock the door of my heart and stir me to desire to become all You created me to be so that I may become more and more a co-creator with You to bring about Your Kingdom here on earth. Amen.