

UNITY, HUMILITY, OBEDIENCE
Following Christ and Trusting God in Every Season

Texts: Matthew 21:23–32; Philippians 2:1–13; Psalm 78:1–4, 12–16; Exodus 17:1–7

27 September 2026

Let's Pray:

Heavenly Father, we thank You for bringing us together today. Help us to walk in unity, humility, and obedience, following Christ and trusting You in every season of life.

Give us humble hearts to listen, courage to obey, and faith to trust Your purpose, even when we cannot see the way ahead.

May Your Spirit guide our reflection and draw us closer to You and to one another. In Jesus' name, Amen.

God calls us to live in unity, humility and obedience, following the selfless example of Christ and trusting His power to lead and sustain us.

Today, I would like us to reflect on four simple but very important words: **Unity, Humility, Obedience, Trust.**

These words come through strongly in our readings.

Matthew 21 challenges us to think about **obedience**.

Philippians 2 calls us to **humility and unity**.

Psalm 78 tells us to **remember God's faithfulness and pass the story on to the next generation**.

And Exodus 17 reminds us what happens when we find ourselves in a place where we do not know where the next provision will come from.

Together, these passages ask us a very personal question:

Are we simply people who know about God, or are we people who trust God and live according to His will?

1. Remember What God Has Done

Let us begin with Psalm 78. The psalmist says:

"We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done."

The message is simple: **Remember what God has done. And tell the next generation.**

Israel had a story to tell. They had seen God's power in Egypt. They had seen the sea divided. They had experienced God's guidance by cloud during the day and fire at night. They had seen God provide water in the wilderness.

Psalm 78 reminds the people: **Do not forget.**

Why is remembering so important? Because when we forget what God has done, we can begin to doubt what God can do.

Sometimes our present circumstances become so loud that they make us forget our past experiences of God's faithfulness.

We face a challenge, and we say: **"Where is God?"** We face uncertainty, and we ask: **"Will God provide?"** We face a difficult season, and we wonder: **"Is God really with us?"**

But Psalm 78 says: **Remember.**

Remember the prayers God answered. Remember the doors He opened. Remember the times He provided when there seemed to be no provision. Remember the people He sent into your life. Remember the times when you thought you could not continue, but somehow God gave you strength.

And importantly, **tell the story.**

Tell our children. Tell our young people. Tell our families. Tell the next generation that God is faithful. Our testimony becomes part of someone else's faith journey.

2. Even When We Are Thirsty, God Is Present

That brings us to Exodus 17.

The Israelites arrive at Rephidim, and there is no water. They are thirsty. They are afraid. And they begin to complain against Moses. Eventually they ask the question: **"Is the LORD among us or not?"**

That is a very honest question. And perhaps some of us have asked the same question - not necessarily with our lips, but in our hearts. **"Lord, are You really with me?"**

When the family is struggling. When finances are difficult. When the future is uncertain. When we are waiting for an answer to prayer. When we are serving but becoming tired. When we are doing our best but cannot see the result.

Sometimes we can feel as though we are standing in the wilderness with no water. But the beautiful thing about Exodus 17 is this: **The absence of visible water did not mean the absence of God.** God was still there. The people could not see the provision, but God already knew what He was going to do.

God instructed Moses to go to the rock, and water came out for the people.

Psalm 78 looks back at this and says that God brought streams from the rock and made water flow like rivers. So, the lesson is not simply that God can provide water. The deeper lesson is: **God remains faithful even when we cannot yet see the provision.**

That is important for us as individuals. It is important for our families. And it is important for us as the Church. We must learn to trust God not only when everything is going well, but also when we are walking through the wilderness.

3. Matthew: Obedience Is More Than Words

Now we come to Matthew 21.

Jesus is teaching in the temple when the chief priests and elders approach Him.

They ask: **"By what authority are you doing these things?"** They are concerned about authority. Who gave Jesus permission? Who gave Him the right? Who recognised His authority?

But Jesus responds by asking them about John the Baptist. And then He tells them a story.

A father asks his first son to go and work in the vineyard. The son says: **"I will not."** But later he changes his mind and goes. The father asks the second son. He says: **"Yes, sir."** But he does not go. Jesus then asks: **Which son did the will of the father?**

The answer is obvious: **The one who actually went.** This is a powerful lesson. God is not simply interested in what we say. **God is interested in what we do.**

We can say: "Lord, I will serve You." But do we serve? We can say: "Lord, I trust You." But do we trust Him when things become difficult? (and recently I grappled with this one) We can say: "I love my brothers and sisters." But are we willing to forgive? We can say: "We are one in Christ." But do we actually live in unity? We can say: "Your will be done." But are we willing to surrender our own plans?

Matthew reminds us that **obedience is not just a statement; obedience is a response.** And there is another beautiful point here. The first son initially said no. But he changed his mind. He turned around. He went.

That means there is hope for us. Maybe we have not always got it right. Maybe there have been times when we resisted God. Maybe there have been times when we said no. But our story does not have to end there.

We can turn around. We can repent. We can begin again. We can say: **"Lord, I am ready now. Send me."**

4. Philippians: The Way of Christ Is the Way of Humility

And then Paul brings us to Philippians 2.

Paul says: **"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves."** This is where Matthew and Philippians come together beautifully.

Matthew asks: **Will we obey?** Philippians asks: **How will we live with one another while we obey?** And Paul's answer is: **With humility.**

Christian unity does not mean that we will always agree on everything. It means that **Christ is greater than our differences:** Unity means we learn to listen. Unity means we make room for one another. Unity means we do not always have to be right. Unity means we are willing to forgive. Unity means we care about the interests of others.

Paul says: **"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit."** That speaks directly to the human heart. Because sometimes the biggest obstacle to unity is not the problem itself. It is **our pride.**

We want to be recognised. We want our opinion to win. We want people to acknowledge what we have contributed. We want to be heard. But Paul says: **Look to Christ.** And Christ gives us the ultimate example - Jesus had every right to glory, yet He chose the way of service. He humbled Himself. He became obedient. He gave Himself for others.

That is the heart of the Gospel: **The One who had the highest position chose the lowest place in service.** And that is the model for us.

5. What Does This Mean for Us?

So, what are these passages saying to us today? I believe they give us **four simple invitations**.

The First Invitation: Remember: Remember what God has done. Do not allow today's difficulties to erase yesterday's testimony. Tell your children. Tell your grandchildren. Tell the next generation. **"This is what God has done for us."**

Second: Trust: When you find yourself in the wilderness, remember Exodus 17. You may not see the water yet. But God is still present. You may not know the answer yet. But God is still faithful. You may not understand the journey. But God has not abandoned you. **Trust Him.**

Third Invitation: Obey: Matthew 21 reminds us that God is looking for more than words. He is looking for lives that respond to His will. So, let us ask ourselves: **What is God asking me to do?** And once we know, let us not only say yes. **Let us go.** Let our obedience become visible in our actions.

The Fourth Invitation: Walk in humility and unity.

Philippians reminds us that we do not walk this journey alone. We belong to one body. We need one another. And Christ calls us to put aside selfish ambition and pride. So perhaps the prayer we need to pray is: **"Lord, help me to put Christ before myself."** Help me to listen. Help me to forgive. Help me to serve. Help me to encourage. Help me to value others. Help me to become less concerned about being recognised and more concerned about being faithful.

Conclusion: Let Us Live Our "Yes"

So, church, these passages bring us to one central message: **Remember God's faithfulness. Trust His presence. Obey His Word. Follow Christ in humility. And live in unity with one another.** The world does not need another Church that only talks about love - It needs a Church that **lives love.** The world does not need people who only speak about humility - It needs people who **serve humbly.** The world does not need people who simply say they believe - It needs people whose **lives demonstrate their faith.**

Matthew gives us the picture of the vineyard. Philippians gives us the picture of Christ the servant. Psalm 78 gives us the responsibility to remember and tell the story. Exodus 17 gives us the assurance that God provides even in the wilderness. And so, perhaps the question for each of us today is very simple: **What will my "yes" to God look like this week?** Will it look like forgiveness? Will it look like service? Will it look like reconciliation? Will it look like encouragement? Will it look like caring for someone who is struggling? Will it look like stepping forward when God calls? Whatever it is, let us not only say **yes.** **Let us live our yes.**

And when we become tired, let us remember: **God is faithful.** When we become afraid, let us remember: **God is with us.** When we become divided, let us remember: **We belong to Christ and to one another.** And when we are tempted to put ourselves first, let us **look again to Jesus.** Because the One who had all authority chose humility. The One who had every right to glory chose service. The One who could have demanded everything gave everything.

That is our Christ.

So let us walk together. Let us walk humbly. Let us walk obediently. Let us walk in unity. And let us trust the God who has brought us this far - and who will continue to lead us.

In the name of The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit, Amen