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Weekly Letter – 30 August 2026

Matthew 16.21-28

Peter is rightly seen as a man who reveals a wonderful impulsive generosity, but like us all he is a fragile person, and therefore struggles to understand what Christ is saying. Saint Peter is also audacious in what he promises, for he assures absolute fidelity, and then experiences the bitterness of betrayal. He like us all, must learn that we are weak and will need God's forgiveness. In a word, Peter like you and I, must experience our own fragility in order to carry out the work God has given us.

Christ called Peter, as he has with you, to reveal the talents you have been given and take responsibility for the ups and downs, so that together we build a civilisation of love which will serve the common good.

Jesus makes it abundantly clear the 'He will reward each one according to his behaviour' v.27. As I have frequently written before, this is not some old fashioned headmaster talking to the whole school! This comes from the One who judges, and is also our Saviour. This means, the One who judges is the same Jesus who died for us. Judgement reveals the truth of our lives in the light of God's love. So our actions and therefore our choices matter, because God's judgement is the moment when all our illusions must fall away. That is, truth matters, and we will finally see ourselves as we truly are and perhaps more importantly, just as God sees us.

Furthermore, and perhaps this is more down to earth, Christianity is clearly not about passing various tests, rather it is about being transformed into people with greater love. So, Jesus words, "you will be rewarded for what you have done", also means, are you aware that your actions have resulted in you becoming who you are?

So, Jesus words are once again, not a simple warning, but a gracious invitation to live in the light of eternity. Perhaps you will take the time to think what that sentence means? To me it means, Jesus is reminding us that every act of love has eternal value, and that the choices we make each day (to protect ourselves, or to live courageously and generously?) will shape the person we have become, and therefore the future is still waiting for us to respond to his call.

Stephen

**Sunday Morning Worship in Christ Well, and on Zoom at 10.30 am will be led by Rev Simon Walkling.
Bible Reading: Exodus 3.1-15: Romans 12.19-21**

Cycle of Prayer in the Region – we will pray for Temple, Gowerton

Prayers for every household – we will pray for Cecil Street, nos. 65-99

Tuesday – 1st September – Tea and chat – 2-4pm

Thursday – 3rd September – Thursday Club will re-commence

MY GOD, ALWAYS WITH ME

(lectionary Readings: Exodus 3.1-15: Jeremiah 15.15-21: Romans 12.9-21: Matthew 16.23-28)

As the last shadows of night recede
and the day begins with a blush of pink,
you, my God, are near.
When the sun touches the trees
with a blaze of deepest colour you,
my God are near.
As clouds shade the world around me,
and the winds are fierce,
you, my God are near.
When the sky is light with
the fire of a sunset,
you, my God are near.
As the dark of night is lifted
by the silver of moon and stars,
you, my God, are near. From my day's beginning to the end,
you are with me,
my light and my joy. **Amen.**

Doreen Dawe

(URC Prayer Handbook 2026)