

THE FIRST READING IS FROM THE ACTS OF THE
APOSTLES

In those days: Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ. And the crowds with one accord paid attention to what was being said by Philip, when they heard him and saw the signs that he did. For unclean spirits, crying out with a loud voice, came out of many who had them, and many who were paralysed or lame were healed. So there was much joy in that city.

Now when the Apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord

THE RESPONSE TO THE PSALM IS

Cry out with joy to God, all the earth.

.Cry out with joy to God, all the earth;

O sing to the glory of his name.

O render him glorious praise.

Say to God, 'How wondrous your deeds!'

Cry out with joy to God, all the earth.

'Before you all the earth shall bow down,

shall sing to you, sing to your name!'

Come and see the works of God:

his wondrous deeds among the children of Adam.

Cry out with joy to God, all the earth.

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He turned the sea into dry land;

they passed through the river on foot.

Let our joy, then, be in him;

he rules for ever by his might.

Cry out with joy to God, all the earth.

Come and hear, all who fear God;

I will tell what he did for my soul.

Blest be God, who did not reject my prayer,

nor withhold from me his merciful love.

Cry out with joy to God, all the earth.

THE SECOND READING IS FROM THE FIRST LETTER
OF PETER

Beloved: In your hearts honour Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defence to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behaviour in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil. For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit.

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia.

If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, says the Lord,
and my Father will love him, and we will come to him.

Alleluia.

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING
TO JOHN

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, 'If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

'I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me.

Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.'

THE REFLECTION

When I was younger, I did much more drinking in pubs, The Dog and Fox, the King of Denmark and the Fox and Grapes. Like CS Lewis and Tolkien, pubs are a good place to talk through ideas, heal the world as well as discuss what was wrong in our lives.

I appreciated reading CS Lewis' book the "Four Loves" he describes romantic love as the desire to be together, the joy this brings and how it can last, with a little fluctuation throughout a married couples' life together. Affection is not so deep but can be lasting - friends from school, uni or work can last but mostly will be tied to the time you were together.

Philia is friendship at a longer lasting level, founded on a shared interest leading to a similarity in thoughts and feelings about something. CS Lewis was friends with Tolkien, they wrote The Lord of the rings and the Narnia stories at the same time, meeting in the same pub in Oxford, every week.

Jesus used the word Agape, to define love, a self-giving love which gives to another more than what is needed. He told the rich young man he was right to keep the 10 commandments Moses brought down the mountain, but he had to add more, to feed the hungry to be reconciled rather than self-righteous, to be a peacemaker. In short to love as he did, meeting needs, being courageous and willing to sacrifice himself. He knew it would be hard for everyone to do, going beyond what we might think and feel was right. The promise of the Holy Spirit was to make us capable of overcoming our desire to hold back.

Jesus perfected the commandments given to Moses, adding love, respect and reconciliation as his own, shared with the will of the Father and Spirit to bring about a transformation leading to the kingdom where Gods commandments are lived out in their fullness.