



Sullington & Thakeham with Warminghurst
Same family, Two parishes, Working together.

A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING ON GOD'S GRACE FOR YOU!



Dear Church Family,

On Sunday we looked at 1 John 2:18-3:10 which contains a number of challenging verses, and in many ways can seem rather foreign to us with its talk of anti-Christ. We discussed how we need to understand the mention of anti-Christ in the context within which John uses it. Modern pop culture has made the anti-Christ into a figure of demonic power, but that is not how John is using the term in 1 John. It is clear from his epistle that some in the church had started to teach things about Christ which simply weren't true. It seems likely that some were teaching that Jesus wasn't really human, and it is in that context that John refers to them as anti-Christ, as they were denying who Christ revealed himself to be; it picks up on John's earlier argument that we are either of light or darkness. John is saying there are two camps, and we need to pick a side.

One of the other things that John writes in these verses, which might make us pause, is found in verse 3:6 where John writes: "No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him." When we read these words there is a danger that we might consider ourselves as not truly Christian. I'm sure we are all aware of times when we have sinned since considering ourselves Christian.

But again, it's important to put this in context: in 1:8 John writes that anyone who claims to be sinless deceives themselves. In the context of the epistle, it is clear that what John is saying is that if there are continued patterns of sin in our life, and we are unbothered by them, then we need to honestly ask whether we have really been reborn in Christ.

This has become something John must write, as some who have left the church have been saying that if Jesus takes away our sin then we are free to behave however we like. This has been a challenge that has reappeared throughout history, and it is easy to see how in today's worldview we could easily slip into that mindset; after all, our culture tells us 'we must be true to ourselves' and not deny ourselves anything we think is good. John, however, argues that God gives us laws and commands in order to allow us to thrive, not because he's a killjoy. If we have truly appreciated the magnitude of what Christ has done for us on the cross, we will want to live lives which respond in gratitude and obedience to him, seeking a life of discipleship and rejecting the idea that the Gospel makes no demands on us.

We have been given grace, but it is anything but cheap grace.

I'll end with some words from one of my favourite theologians, Dietrich Bonhoeffer: "Cheap grace is grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate." (Cost of Discipleship Part 1 Chapter 1).

Congratulations to Beth who was officially granted PTO this morning.

Reminder tonight we have Hymns and Pimms at Sullington Church at 6pm. Hope you can make it!

By Revd Joel Willmer

SUNDAY SERVICES

Sunday 9th August 2026

We look forward to
welcoming you!**SULLINGTON CHURCH**

10:30am

Holy Communion

THAKEHAM CHURCH

10:30am

Holy Communion

**Lectionary Bible Reading**

“Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always.

Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced, you his servants, the descendants of Abraham, his chosen ones, the children of Jacob.
Psalm 105-1-6

**Notices:**

Please note Thakeham church now has a number of combination locks. If you are using one of these, please ensure that you shut the lock and randomise the numbers after use. Thank you.

Events: