

**SERMON SUNDAY 14 JUNE 2020: ST GEORGE'S PARKTOWN
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**WHAT SEEMS TO BE IMPOSSIBLE MAY NOT BE SO DIFFICULT AFTER
ALL**

Genesis 18: 1-15 (21: 1-7) Sarah laughed

Psalm 116: 1-2; 11-18 The Lord delivers us from our woes

**Romans 5: 1-8 God's love has been poured into our hearts through the
Holy Spirit**

**Matthew 9: 35-10:8; (9-23) The harvest is plentiful but the labourers are
few**

[1] Today, in the gospel reading, we have the prelude to Jesus great discourse in Matthew 10. That great discourse is about the rewards of heaven, about how all that we do matters, is counted by God. Even little things matter.

[2] But in this morning's gospel reading we are told something that we do not often hear. Economics has been called the dismal science - the science of the application and distribution of limited resources to meet an infinite number of needs. We have beggars on our streets. We have unemployment. We worry about how we are going to cope.

[3] And yet, here Jesus comes along and says, 'The harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few.' There are rich pickings to be had and too few labourers to pluck these fruits.

[4] We also have that great reading from the OT: ‘Sarah laughed!’ It is a good thing to laugh but Sarah becomes embarrassed by it. She laughs because she is told that, in her old age she will bear a child, a son. And God reproaches her for laughing.

[5] In the psalm we rejoice in the fact that God will deliver us from our hardships, from our woes and foes.

[6] In *Alice Through the Looking-Glass*, Lewis Carroll made the following expression famous:

‘Sometimes, I have believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast!’

There is a theory that, in this expression, Carroll was having a sly dig at the Anglican service of Holy Communion, which every good little boy and girl knew should precede breakfast.

[7] Be that as it may, Christianity certainly calls upon us to believe in the seemingly impossible, to understand that the seemingly impossible may be achieved. In the collect this morning we pray that we may spread this good news.

[8] In Paul’s letter to the Romans he says what we also pray in this morning’s collect – that it is the Holy Spirit that will equip us to face all that lies ahead. Paul proclaims:

‘Suffering produces endurance and endurance produces character and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.’

[9] It is a powerful and true message. In our personal and private lives, we may be equipped to do impossible things like becoming reconciled with others, forgiving them, finding new ways of dealing with old problems and so on.

[10] But the message operates on the social and political fronts as well. This past week we have seen the impetus given to the world-wide *Black Lives Matter* campaign as a result of the killing in the United States of George Floyd. Who would have thought that American hegemony would fade so quickly in the world? Who would have thought that white, male swank and swagger – arrogance – would so quickly be cowed? And, of course, the next big question is this: what follows?

[11] In *The Economist* this week it was argued that the huge crowds protesting in the *Black Lives Matter* campaign, were sending out a subtle message as well. It was to governments all around the world ‘Watch out! Watch out! Watch out! Don’t think you can push us around as you please!’ Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! The seemingly impossible can indeed become possible.

[12] Right here at home, at St George’s, we have a financial crisis, as a result of the covid-19 lockdown. Our income is down and the rest of the year

looks bleak. But a little more generosity from those who have the resources may enable us not only to 'pull through' but to set St George's on a new and better road. Let us make the harvest plentiful!

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