Monday 4th May

Romans 12:12-15

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.

Again we see that there is something in God’s Word for everyone in every situation. ‘Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer’ - that’s a great catchphrase for a Christian! Because of Jesus, we have eternal hope, the fact of which brings great joy that cannot be stolen by circumstance. When we are struggling with pain or difficulty, we know that our struggles are not the last word, and that the Lord can bring good out of anything, and that one day, all will be made right. It isn’t always easy to be patient in the midst of that, but it does help us to stick with it! In all of this, we have access to the Father through prayer, boldly approaching the very throne of God and knowing that he always hears us. Prayer is powerful, but we need to persevere - Jesus taught us to pray and not give up. Then there are instructions about shedding this hope and love abroad in generosity and hospitality - both to those that are part of the family of God, and to those that are hostile. A Christian’s life should be marked by blessing - our willingness to bless others. I love the beautiful song, based on the blessing given in Numbers 6: 24, that Churches across the UK have just released, singing blessing over our nation. If you have heard it yet, check out the video posted on our Facebook page and share it with others as a way of releasing His blessing over the people of this land. As we do that, we represent Him well, showing others what kind of a God we serve.

*The Lord bless you and keep you*

*Make His face shine upon you*

*And be gracious to you*

*The Lord turn His face toward you*

*And give you peace.*

*May His favour be upon you*

*And a thousand generations*

*Your family and your children*

*And their children, and their children*

*May His presence go before you*

*And behind you, and beside you*

*All around you, and within you*

*He is with you, He is with you*

*In the morning, in the evening*

*In your coming, and your going*

*In your weeping, and rejoicing*

*He is for you, He is for you*

*Amen*