

Talk 5th July 2026 Matthew 11 v16-19 & 25-30 Come as you are, unique and special. Gilly Robinson

1st part after the first reading V16-19

(Discuss **pic** of characters of wind in the willows) JON

This picture shows us The characters from The wind in the willows.

Rev Jons fave book!

The Party loving Toad, the reclusive badger, the doubting mole, or the organised rat.

Which would you say you are most like? Who do you think your spouse/ friend who ever is sitting next to you is?

For context, the beginning of this chapter from Matthew begins with John the Baptist in prison for publicly rebuking Herod for his illegal marriage.

He has heard what Jesus is up to and has doubts about who he is. Was he really the Messiah?

So, John sent his followers to ask Jesus, who reassured him with evidence of his healing acts and thus his sovereignty.

Our passage today tells us how exasperated Jesus was with the cynical and sceptical attitude of the self centred people. They were critical and hypocritical. Judging Jesus' behaviour and actions.

Who he was mixing with. Spending time and caring for those seen as less than.

It's a lesson for us too.

Do we suppose that God primarily, or even exclusively works with those who are like us.?

Dress like us, think like us, behave like us.?

In John and Jesus we see that God is at work in both.

They are very different... different ministries and lifestyles. One so serious and one loving a party.

But God has created us to be different. Unique.

When Jon and I chatted about this, he immediately likened it to the wonderful Charlie Mackesy books The boy, the mole, the fox and the horse. **PIC?**

The lonely boy becomes friends with the mole. The fox is wary and quiet but is saved by the mole from the snare. And the fox rescues the mole from the water. The horse is big and frightening to them but he is the gentlest. They become friends. All different and each with their own weaknesses. Charlie shows us that the most unlikely friendships can be the most fruitful. The more diverse the friendship often allows for confession...like the horse. He can fly!

And it makes them stronger.

The story celebrates diversity. And releases them. Can we be a community that embraces and cherishes the differences?

I believe that the more we celebrate our differences and diversity the more Christlike we become and the more delighted Christ becomes.

Both pics

Two stories with 4 very different characters, who come to need each other and care for each other.

Who do you identify with?

Pause

Reflecting on that, lets stay sitting and sing

I am who you say I am

2nd part after 2nd reading? V25-30

The stories also highlighted that we all have burdens. We often feel less than and yet God created us to be unique, different and he celebrates this.

The second reading has some of the most well known verses. God understands that we have burdens. Heavy yokes that weigh us down and limit us. They may be addictions, responsibilities, worries and judgements and criticisms; or that deep hidden feeling I'm just not good enough.

These chain us up and hold us back.
Let Jesus free you from them. To cut the chains.
Following Jesus, taking his yoke, believe his teaching. To trust him. We become joined with him.
That means we are not alone.
He is with us every step of the way and some of it is difficult but with Christ we do not bear this weight alone.
We focus on him. We live in his presence, listen for his voice.
And learn from him.
He calls us to live in community as part of his body, the church.
Not the building, but the people
To live for one another and care for one another.
Jesus invites us to be yoked with him. We get to choose.

"Let your heart love like mine. Let your mind be filled with the same concerns as mine. Let your feet walk in step with mine. Let your hands touch the world like mine. Let your eyes see the Father like mine. Live and move in tandem with me, as one and you will find rest for your soul."

Sometimes action helps us process and take in what we know.
To help us today, I invite you to come up, choose a pebble/stone, think of that burden as the stone and lay it at the foot of the cross....

Gentle music playing ?

Christ is saying,

Draw near to me, and I will draw near to you.
Exchange your anxiety for the healing power of my presence.
Offer up the fear and worry.
Allow me to go deep to pull out those roots.
Take time to rest with me and heal your heart.
As long as you're willing to let go of any need for control, I can be the Lord of peace that you need me to be.
Put those cares in my hands and leave them there. I offer you peace that goes beyond understanding. I offer you myself.