

This week as a planned exception I have chosen exclusively older songs.



Welcome to Blackburn Baptist Church, on June 4th 2023 at 10:45, meeting at Bethesda Chapel.

Whilst some are able to meet in person, others we know are still at home. We hope and pray that you will find this outline of our service helpful, as we seek to worship God as a Church family, wherever we are.

Our Communion service today is being led by Alec.

Welcome & Introduction

Opening hymn:

Rejoice, the Lord is King! Your Lord and King adore;
mortals give thanks and sing, and triumph evermore;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Jesus, the saviour, reigns, the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our stains he took his seat above;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

His kingdom cannot fail, he rules both earth and heaven,
the keys of death and hell are to our Jesus given;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

He sits at God's right hand till all his foes submit,
and bow to his command, and fall beneath his feet:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Rejoice in glorious hope! Jesus the Judge shall come,
and take his servants up to their eternal home.
We soon shall hear the archangel's voice;
God's trumpet call shall sound, rejoice!

Authors: Charles Wesley, John Darwall, Words and Music Public domain. CCL No 5664

Notices shared by Tony

Communion service

"Behold the Lamb" Stuart Townsend (split before and after)

Behold the Lamb who bears our sins away, slain for us: and we remember:
The promise made that all who come in faith find forgiveness at the cross.
So we share in this Bread of life, and we drink of His sacrifice,
as a sign of our bonds of peace around the table of the King.

The body of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, torn for you: eat and remember
the wounds that heal, the death that brings us life, paid the price to make us one.
So we share in this Bread of Life....

The blood that cleanses every stain of sin, shed for you: drink and remember
he drained death's cup that all may enter in to receive the life of God.
So we share in this Bread of Life...

And so with thankfulness and faith we rise to respond: and to remember
our call to follow in the steps of Christ as His body here on earth.
As we share in His suffering, we proclaim: Christ will come again!
And we'll join in the feast of heaven around the table of the King.

Authors: Keith Getty, Kristyn Getty, Stuart Townend CCLI SONG # 5003372 Copyrights©2007 Thankyou Music (Admin. by Integrity Music Ltd) Stuart Townend, Keith & Kristyn Getty Copyright © 2007 Thankyou Music (Adm. by CapitolCMG Publishing.com excl. UK & Europe, adm. by Integrity Music, part of the David C Cook family, songs@integritymusic.com) CCL No 5664

Praise and worship songs:

Living under the shadow of His wing we find security;
standing in His presence we will bring
our worship, worship, worship to the King.

Bowed in adoration at His feet we dwell in harmony;
voices joined together that repeat
worthy, worthy, worthy is the Lamb.

Heart to heart embracing in His love reveals His purity;
soaring in my Spirit like a dove
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord.

Authors: Bob Silvester, David J. Hadden CCLI SONG # 62243 Copyrights @1983 Restoration Music, Ltd. (Admin. by Restoration Music Ltd.) CCL No 5664

Abba Father, let me be Yours and Yours alone.
May my will forever be ever more Your own.
Never let my heart grow cold, never let me go.
Abba Father, let me be Yours and Yours alone

Author: Dave Billbrough CCLI SONG # 38686 Copyrights @1977 Thankyou Music (Admin. by Integrity Music Ltd) CCL No 5664

All hail, king Jesus! all hail, Immanuel!
King of kings, Lord of lords, bright Morning Star.
And throughout eternity I'll sing your praises,
and I'll reign with you throughout eternity.

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Bible Reading from Jane: Letter of James 4: 1-6

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: 'God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble.'

Message

GRACE TO THE HUMBLE

I hope we have become wiser during the last seven days! For last week we talked about the wisdom that comes from heaven and about what that wisdom is like! How did we get on last week with being pure, peaceful, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere? Challenging isn't it!

I think for all of us this journey through the letter of James is a little like going to the dentist. Maybe one of us here this morning is a dentist so I apologise but you will understand what I mean. We come together in the waiting room wondering whether everything is OK with our teeth and our gums or knowing because of the pain that we are feeling that something definitely is not right but we are not sure what it is and how the dentist is going to sort it and perhaps also we wonder how long it is going to take and how much it is going to cost?

Actually if I end today's message at this point and we all go home and apply these points about going to the dentist to let him or her examine our teeth and gums and mouths, telling us where the pain is coming from and what he or she is going to do about that for us, explaining how long that will take and how much that will cost; if we apply these things to allowing God to open up our hearts and minds to what needs to be done in our lives with Him and with others we might never get round to lunch, Friday's lunch!

In these messages from the letter of James I have been trying with God's leading and encouragement and help to balance carefully the challenges and the encouragements and appealing to you to read the letter for yourselves. It is a personal letter about personal behaviour, about our individual ways of thinking as well as about our life together as the body of Christ, for this letter offers intensely practical help for the people of God.

Humility is a key element in this letter as it should be in our lives as individual believers and as a church. We shouldn't be proud of our humility but we should reflect and model the pattern of the Lord Jesus Christ. As we know from that great passage in Phil. 2: 5-11 our attitude should be the same as

that of Christ Jesus, who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be held on to, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness and being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on a cross.

How was he able to do that? Because he trusted his Father and also because chose willingly to do what his Father told him to do.

The diagnosis which he had been given was the need of the whole of mankind whom he had made and sustains daily to be set free from death caused by their going their own way and making a completely hopeless ongoing mess of their lives. Mankind had ignored the plan; it had ignored the Maker; it had gone its own way on its own self-created, self-orientated, one track cul-de-sac to self- destruction.

The treatment which he recognised, understood and followed was that he himself, our Maker and Creator, should give up holding on to his status and rights, to come to earth as a man to live and die to get the issue sorted once and for all. Through His death on the Cross our sins are forgiven, through his resurrection from the dead we have received new life. Presuming of course we ask his forgiveness, turn away from our wicked ways, give up everything and follow him.

If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation; the old has passed away; all things have become new. The old has gone, the new is here! (2. Cor. 5:17)

Is that what our lives look like?

Do we understand what it means to be humble?

The presence of humility in our lives working itself out on the basis of the wisdom that comes from heaven, the wisdom of God, is something very special.

It is not like what we heard from the beginning of chapter 4 with lives full of unfulfilled desires and restlessness, spewing out quarrels and fights like the ash of an exploding volcano at any time and at any place and at anybody and everybody.

If we are humble we know that God knows best. I often say to you God knows, God cares, trust Him which he does and we can. If we are humble we know our lives on the earth are short and our days are numbered. As James himself says in this fourth chapter, "You do not even know what will happen tomorrow: What is your life? You are a mist that appears here for a little while and then vanishes. "(4:14) We say, "if it is the Lord's Will, we will live and do this or that." (4:15b)

If on the other hand we are proud, we think we are in charge of our destiny, in charge of our lives. We may even from an early age develop a bucket list full and becoming overfull of things we want to do before we cease to exist as we might think we will. We think we will do this and that tomorrow.

In Luke 12: 16-21 Jesus talked about it like this.

He told them this story: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' "This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God."

James is writing to believers who are aiming to follow the Lord but struggling; who perhaps want to love God and love themselves at the same time, who perhaps want to have it both ways, who are as

we frequently say sitting on the fence, choosing that from the Bible which suits them but leaving out or ignoring or watering down the rest.

Solid joys and lasting treasure belong to those who follow the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind and strength. A dissatisfied heart is never at peace with God or with others or with itself with an internal selfish orientation to that which is against God. You cannot sit on the fence for ever. What is within us makes itself clear amongst us.

We are in the world but not of it. We are not to love not the world neither the things that are in the world. James 4:4 1 John 2: 15-17 John's Gospel 17:15-16 John 15:15

Re-read: James 4:1-3

In some instances we don't pray at all.

In other cases our motivation is probably wrong.

Is our prayer a genuine expression of our submission to God and His Word or not? Do our prayers let God be God?

God hears the prayers of those who call upon him in truth, (Psalm 145:18)

Do we say with St. Augustine: "O Lord, make me pure, but not yet!"

Are we asking in the wrong spirit; do we only want to satisfy our own wishes and desires?

"O God fix this please, please, please; but not in a way that challenges me, not in a way that is painful for me, that doesn't suit me and my personal life goals or in a way that is too costly for me."

"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'" (Luke 18:10-12)

"But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' (Luke 10:13)

The Lord hears the cries of those who come to Him admitting they are wrong and seeking God's mercy and forgiveness.

"Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord; Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy. If you, Lord, kept a record of wrongs, Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, so that we can, with reverence, serve you. I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope" (Psalm 130:5)

Let's not pray about something unless we really mean it when we are praying. Let's not pray to God to sort our lives out if we don't really want that and God knows that anyway!

Are we saying prayers as a routine or are we praying from the heart? Shirley talked about fervent prayers last week. Do we know what they are? They are not dry, routine, cold, half-hearted apologies from a stony heart but passionate, warm, intense, and enthusiastic cries from hearts that are on fire with the Lord where the Spirit is leading, guiding, comforting and empowering. Do the feelings of our hearts go with us?

Are we a walking contradiction, partly truth and partly fiction or are we genuine? Are we living authentic lives? God who searches our hearts knows where we are, he knows what we think, he knows

what we feel, he knows what motivates us and what doesn't; and this should be a great encouragement to us.

Do we bring our lives before God because we want him to sort them out?

We may be or may be not official members of a particular local church, in our case of Blackburn Baptist Church. But if we have set Jesus Christ as the Lord of our hearts we are not just usually accepted into formal membership of a local fellowship, which is nevertheless a great thing to do and I would strongly recommend you to seek the Lord as to whether you should apply formally to become a member at BBC, but it is way, way more than that. It is in so to speak a different dimension. Do you know why? Do you know in what way?

Do you know what happens and has happened when we give or gave our lives back to God? We have been and are being and will be organically creatively woven into the embroidery of the Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are part of His Kingdom. Hallelujah! We are being transformed together into the image of the living God in Jesus Christ His Son, through our interactions with one another, through the sharing of our God-given gifts for the establishment of His Kingdom here in Blackburn. Now! We are not parts of an organisation for its own sake but as a demonstration of the power of God in the lives of men and women. We live, grow and mature as a church in God's Name, to His honour and glory and for His sake, showing organic growth served by a flexible and God-designed and approved organisational structure.

GOD IS AT WORK IN US! (Phil. 2:13)

Do we have a heart for God? Yes! But do we have the heart of God? We are His alone; He is passionately jealous for us, He yearns after us, He pursues us, He follows us, He will do all it will take to persevere with us; **BECAUSE HE LOVES US WITH AN EVERLASTING LOVE.** He sometimes allows us to get into a threatening quagmire of a life situation until we cry to Him from our hearts to pull us out. He hears our call; He hears our cries; He rescues us from the miry clay and sets our feet upon a rock.

Do we have the heart of God to share this message with those with whom we are in contact, with those with whom we engage? How they need to hear this message even today and we, all of us, are the messengers. Say yes to sharing the message of forgiveness and new life in Jesus today with at least one other person each day. You will be amazed at how God can enable you to share and at how He has prepared hearts to hear what you say and to see what you do.

There is just one more thing I need to say. It is quite devastating and equally destructive for the human heart to hear only negative things. This applies to pastors and ministers probably as much as anyone else. This letter of James can be so soul-destroying to those who see the dark side of everything, even to those whose half-full cup seems empty rather than full.

So, and you might think this is a kind of protest vote on my part, which it may be, but in what I think is more a tactical vote in support of those who are frequently depressed and anxious by bad news, negative headlines and the like, I close with the following words from Phil. 4:8: "Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."

God gives grace to the humble.

Prayers Brenda Seed

Please join with me now as we pray sincerely together.

Heavenly Father, as we come before You again this morning, we bring our thanks and praise to You for all You have given us, and for Your guidance and comfort in our lives. Thank you for our worship and time of Communion this morning and Your message that Alec has given us. Thank you that You sent Jesus into the world to be our Saviour and example, and for the Bible where we can read all that He said and did and much more beside.

Lord God, we marvel again as summer unfolds and we continue to see the amazing colours in the sunshine and the beauty and design of each living thing and we thank You for this wonder.

Lord, we all have many concerns to bring to You today.

First, we pray for our country where life can be a struggle and challenge with all the rising prices, causing worry and unhappiness. Also, people are in pain, and needing care. We thank You for our NHS and all that it does, but are aware of needed improvement and so we ask for Your guidance for those responsible for finding a way to change many things for the better.

We pray for our town and its inhabitants, asking that all may live in harmony together and that Christians can take any opportunity to share their faith.

Now, Heavenly Father, we remember many other countries in the world where the situation is much worse than here. We bring Ukraine before You again and ask and ask that there can be an end to the hostilities which are causing terrible suffering. Lord, may there be protection as people shelter from attack and comfort for the bereaved injured and distressed. We also bring before You other countries suffering because of war and its repercussions. Not only is there fighting but there's homelessness, refugees travelling, and lack of medical help, food and money. Heavenly Father, may there be an end to war and help for the ones in great need.

We bring before You the many affected by the recent terrible train crash in India, asking for comfort for the bereaved and those suffering from trauma and healing for the injured. Other major disasters have destroyed everything and there is persecution, abuse of rights and horror beyond belief. Almighty God, we put all these things into Your hands, as we feel so helpless.

As we continue in prayer, we remember Brian and Jackie Chilvers, our Link Missionaries, as we look forward to their upcoming visit. We pray for safety for them while travelling and thank You for the work they have been doing in Chad.

Almighty God, our thoughts now turn to ourselves and those we know who have problems at this time. We are all confronted with challenges of different types. Some of our friends are in hospital or in care homes and we ask for Your loving care for them. We ask for continued comfort for those recently bereaved, peace in the hearts of those mentally distressed, help for those with domestic issues and healing and access to appointments for the ones with health problems. Young ones too have difficulties and much to face up to in this changing world. In a quiet moment we mention our concerns before You now.----

Lord, please hear our prayers for those for whom we have prayed.

We thank You for our church here at Blackburn Baptist and our fellowship with one another and for new friends who have come to share in Your love with us. We ask for Your guidance as we sort out finance and quotes to improve the building and thank You for what has been done to improve things.

We continue to put our future ministry in Your hands and pray for our ability to reach out to the community as we also seek help and advice and partnership with other churches.. We ask

that You will be close to our pastor Alec and the leadership team giving them the strength they need and guiding them on as they trust in You.

Once more we thank You for all You give us and ask that You will care for us in the coming days and inspire us to serve You in whatever way You lead us, as we put our trust in You.

We offer all our prayers to You in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Closing (offertory) hymn "I will sing the wondrous story" 4 verses

I will sing the wondrous story of the Christ who died for me,
how He left the realms of glory for the cross of Calvary.

**Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story of the Christ who died for me,
sing it with the saints in glory gathered by the crystal sea.**

I was lost, but Jesus found me, found the sheep that went astray;
raised me up and gently led me back into the narrow way.

Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story....

Days of darkness still come o'er me, sorrow's path I often tread,
but His presence still is with me; by His guiding hand I'm led.

Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story....

He will keep me 'til the river rolls its waters at my feet;
then He'll bear me safely over, where the loved ones I shall meet.

Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story...

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Prayer and blessing;

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. Amen