



Welcome to Blackburn Baptist Church, on October 1st 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, who welcomes everyone, and shares an

Opening reading, Psalm 42,

As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?
My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long,
'Where is your God?'

These things I remember as I pour out my soul:

how I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Mighty One
with shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng.

Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?

Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God.

My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you

from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon - from Mount Mizar.

Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls;

all your waves and breakers have swept over me.

By day the Lord directs his love, at night his song is with me - a prayer to the God of my life.

I say to God my Rock, Why have you forgotten me?

Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?'

My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long,

'Where is your God?'

Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?

Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God.

then a prayer for Pakistan:

Heavenly Father, look with mercy on your children who suffer oppression and injustice in Pakistan and draw them into closer relationship with you. Protect our brothers and sisters who live under the daily threat of violence or hostility. Encourage women who despair in unloving or abusive relationships. Give them your peace and a loving community outside the home. Comfort believers who have been falsely imprisoned and intervene to secure their freedom. Help your church in Pakistan to be salt and light to their communities. We pray In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and for His sake. Amen.

We are invited to join together in our Opening hymn:

Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon his throne;
Hark! how the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own!
Awake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee
and hail him as your chosen king through all eternity.

Crown him the Lord of life who triumphed o'er the grave,
and rose victorious in the strife for those he came to save:
his glories now we sing who died and reigns on high;
He died eternal life to bring, and lives that death may die.

Crown him the Lord of love, who shows his hands and side
those wounds yet visible above in beauty glorified.
No angel in the sky can fully bear that sight,
but downward bends his burning eye at mysteries so bright.

Crown him the Lord of peace, his kingdom is at hand;
from pole to pole let warfare cease and Christ rule every land!
A city stands on high, his glory it displays,
and there the nations 'Holy' cry in joyful hymns of praise.

Crown him the Lord of years, the potentate of time,
creator of the rolling spheres in majesty sublime:
all hail, Redeemer, hail, for you have died for me;
Thy praise shall never, never fail through all eternity!

Authors: Godfrey Thring, Matthew Bridges CCLI Song # 23938 Copyright: Words and Music Public Domain CCL No 5664
https://youtu.be/s7OCs0d_4vM

Notices for the week are shared by Jane, including Information re the Keswick in E Lancs meetings on October 13th and 14th. Paper copies of The Baptist Union Consultation document are available.

Alec moves to the Communion Table, joined by Janet and Jane, as after a time of silence when we can ask for forgiveness, we lift our voices:

Jesus Christ, I think upon your sacrifice;
you became nothing, poured out to death.
Many times I've wondered at your gift of life,
and I'm in that place once again,
I'm in that place once again.

**And once again I look upon the cross where you died.
I'm humbled by your mercy and I'm broken inside.
Once again I thank you, once again I pour out my life.**

Now you are exalted to the highest place,
King of the heavens, where one day I'll bow.
But for now I marvel at this saving grace,
and I'm full of praise once again,
I'm full of praise once again.

And once again....

**Thank you for the cross, thank you for the cross,
thank you for the cross my friend.
Thank you for the cross, thank you for the cross,
thank you for the cross my friend.**

And once again....

We share together in the bread and wine as Alec takes firstly the bread and then the wine, reminding us that as Jesus took these for the last time with his friends, he said they were his body, his blood, shed for us. Each time they took the bread and wine they were to remember him. Alec then led in a prayer of thanksgiving before Janet and Jane distributed the elements to all who love the Lord. We ate the bread as we received it, showing our individual acceptance of Christ as Saviour, retaining the cup to drink together.

Alec prayed: the body is a unit though it is made up of many parts, so it is with Christ. We belong together to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the head of this body, the church. He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and we praise and worship him, the only living God. Amen

Following Communion, we sing once more:

A pilgrim was I and a-wandering, in the cold night of sin I did roam.
when Jesus the kind shepherd found me, and now I am on my way home.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days, all the days of my life;
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days, all the days of my life;
And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever,
and I shall feast at the table spread for me.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days, all the days of my life;

He restoreth my soul when I'm weary, He giveth me strength day by day;
He leads me beside the still waters, He guards me each step of the way.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me...

When I walk through the dark lonesome valley, my Saviour will walk with me there;
and safely his great hand will lead me to the mansions he's gone to prepare.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me...

Authors: Alfred B. Smith, John W. Peterson CCLI SONG # 15032 Copyrights@1954 New Spring (Admin. by / Small Stone Media BV, Holland (Admin. in the UK/Eire by Song Solutions www.songsolutions.org)) CCL No 5664

Our Prayers are led by Brenda

Our Loving Father, following our Communion Service, we come before You again in prayer this morning with continued thanks, as we remember the words of the hymn, based on Psalm 23, that we've just sung. We thank You that You restore us when weary, give us daily strength and that You lead us and guide us as our shepherd.

First, we give You thanks for the work of the North West Baptist Association whose staff support the churches of the area and for the donations collected for them last week at our Harvest. We pray for their continued ability to do this work under the umbrella of the Baptist Union.

Linked to this, we thank You for the Baptist Missionary Society reaching out with physical help and the spread of the Gospel in many countries. In particular this week, we read of much improved solar electricity in the Chad hospital, where our former Link Missionaries were based, leading to better care for the patients. and we thank You for this. Also we pray for the work of the Leprosy Mission and their continued reaching out to heal, care and spread the Gospel.

There is much help given throughout the world by missions and societies, Lord, but we bring before You many Christians who are still persecuted in different countries and cannot openly share their faith or worship You. The Barnabas Aid group, who work for suffering Christians, asks us today to especially lift up to You Afghanistan, where there is hunger and suffering and where the Christian minority face death if they are discovered. We ask for protection and restoration of rights there, as well as in many other places. Please help us to appreciate the freedom to worship that we have here.

Heavenly Father, many are leaving their countries to seek a better life or to escape from abuse and repression. We pray for improved conditions so that the desire to migrate will not be necessary, but also for care and consideration for those who seek asylum wherever it is. We continue to bring before You those still homeless and really struggling following floods, fires, earthquakes and other disasters. We ask You Lord for aid and care where it is needed.

Once more we earnestly pray for an end to the war in Ukraine where so many are suffering. May there be a change of heart, a turning away from evil by the perpetrator and protection for all the innocent men and women facing horror and terror each day.

Our country and its people are in a state of turmoil at present and we ask for Your guidance to wise decisions by our leaders. May they uphold the challenge to help to combat climate change and balance it with supplying needs for the future. We are thankful for our NHS and other workers who serve the public and we pray for an end to strikes and a fair settlement for all. May there be better organisation where it is needed. We pray for young people facing all sorts of challenges and a solution to gang and knife crime. We ask for Your love and comfort to surround the families who tragically lost their young daughters this week.

We now remember those we know who are suffering in various ways. Maybe it is coping with daily life and finance, problems in our families, aches and pains, treatments, tests or operations. Then there is loneliness for those who have lost loved ones and worry about the future. We ask that You will continue to give Your strength and healing to all those in need and we thank You for answers to prayer for some we have brought before You recently. We pray specially for Allan Dewhurst who has been readmitted to hospital asking that you will surround him, Morag and the family with your loving care.

Lord, we thank You for all those who continue to serve You here at BBC and all the effort that is made to keep everything functioning, with services planned, bills paid, repairs done, rotas made, music found, washing up done and all that is needed for the services and activities that are held here. So much goes on in the background that only You know, Lord. Thank You for Alec and the leadership team. Please give them the strength and vision to go on and may we all give our support in a loving way.

We pray for the future of Blackburn Baptist here and continue to pray for more to join us and stay with us, so Your work here can carry on from strength to strength.

Now we think of ourselves and remember all the omissions and mistakes in thought, word and deed that we have made this week, for which we are truly sorry. Heavenly Father please forgive us in the name of Jesus Your Son.

We offer our prayers to You now in His name and ask that You will be with us through the rest of this morning and during the coming week.

Amen

The Bible reading, John 3: 1-21, was read by Jean:

Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.' Jesus replied, 'Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.

'How can someone be born when they are old?' Nicodemus asked. 'Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!'

Jesus answered, 'Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, "You[c] must be born again." The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.'

'How can this be?' Nicodemus asked.

'You are Israel's teacher,' said Jesus, 'and do you not understand these things? Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven - the Son of Man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.'

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

Alec shares his Message "OUR HOPE IS IN THE LORD JESUS ALONE" : HOPE, beginning with a prayer that we will all have open eyes, ears, hearts and minds to hear God's word to us all. He then showed some pictures on the screen, from the Indian Mission, illustrating "the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him."

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble".

"For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

Do you ever get up in the morning somewhat depressed or anxious and without hope?

"My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

"All my hope on God is founded."

Where is your hope this morning? On what, or rather on whom is your hope based? Where does your hope come from? Do you have any hope at all?

I cannot see very far inside your heart this morning but God can. He made you and sustains you and he knows you through and through. Read Psalm 139 and be encouraged and challenged, helped and reassured.

“You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely. You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.” (Psalm 139:1-6)

Maybe from deep in your heart you have come in desperate need this morning seeking God to hear the answers to the problems you are facing in your life-in your relationships, with your health, in your family, in your neighbourhood?

Of course some of us sometimes like to think and to say that we don't have any problems thank you very much. But then I think we realise that that is just a smokescreen, a conversation stopper, a statement of self-sufficiency, a real pretence.

We all need help. We are all broken people at heart. We all need hope. We are all sinners in need of a Saviour.

Jesus doesn't say just hit this button and then everything will be OK at least the things that are important to you or the thing where you yourself think you need help and want change.

God in Jesus Christ says to you this morning “Look at me” and points to the Cross and to the empty tomb. It is a blanket appeal. It covers everything.

The Sovereign Lord says, “For every living soul belongs to me; the soul who sins is the one who will die.” “The man who follows my decrees and faithfully keeps my laws, that man is righteous, he will surely live, declares the Sovereign Lord.” (Ezekiel 18: 4b and 9)

At Pleasington and Accrington I have had the experience many times even in this year alone of sharing in the loss of many loved ones from this fellowship and outside.

Paul writes, “The last enemy to be destroyed is death.” (1 Cor. 15:26)

I am deeply grateful to the living God that on those occasions we can share together in the living hope that we can have in Christ.

But you see we need to make a choice. He came to the earth that He Himself had made, He died, He was raised from the dead and He lives. But does He live in you?

We are not all children of God. Some groups might try and convince you and reassure you that we all are-but we aren't.

“The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognise him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.” (John 1: 9-13)

“To all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”

Maybe our father and/or mother or our grandparents or great-grandparents were believers in Jesus. But God's Word teaches us that we are not children of God through natural descent.

Maybe at some time your country voted or in some other way decided to become a Christian country with the head of State as the head of the official church or some kind of similar arrangement. But that doesn't make you a child of God either. Maybe you decided to be confirmed or baptised or become a church member because you thought that is what was needed to become a child of God. But that doesn't work either because God's way is different.

Maybe you married a Christian man and thought that would make you a child of God-but it doesn't.

That might sound all very sombre and sad and negative, even destructive. But it is the truth which we share here this morning in love; the truth which leads us to turn our eyes to Jesus, to open our minds and hearts to Jesus; to give our lives back to Jesus. The real hope is in Jesus himself. To all who receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gives the right to become children of God.

(Romans 8: 13-17 For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live. For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.)

Who are the children of God? They are those who are led by the Spirit of God. They are those who speak to God as their Father-the word "Abba" is best translated, "Daddy". They are those who are heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ; if we share in His sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

So how do we become children of God? How do we receive this new life? How do we receive Jesus? Do we do it in secret places of our heart and life?

We heard from Jean in the reading that Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council, had picked up that Jesus was somebody special; but he wasn't probably quite sure why. What Nicodemus chose to do is maybe what we choose to do. We keep quiet about it. We don't want anyone to know that we have a relationship with Jesus, that we talk with Jesus. So Nicodemus went to Jesus at night.

Well like Jesus didn't say, "Nicodemus. Don't you know what time it is? Don't you know this is my day off? Nicodemus my job description doesn't include answering questions for religious people; I am supposed to reach others with the Gospel and fill my Father's house." But what Jesus definitely didn't do is answer his question! He didn't answer the question at all; because he knew in his heart what Nicodemus really needed.

So he tells him the truth. You know sometimes I would prefer not to have to do that. I might sometimes dream of wrapping up God's Word in soft cream cakes and chocolate sauce, in really nice desserts and in acceptable sizes; in tasty pieces of whatever you might like to eat.

But that is not what disciples of Jesus do. They don't fit the message to suit the ears of the hearers but to honour the living God and build up his Kingdom for the sake of His Name and His Glory.

So Jesus replies to Nicodemus by declaring, as Jean read for us, "I tell you the truth, unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

That is what counts. We need to be born again. And Jesus tells us how that comes about, how it works, how it functions. Nicodemus didn't grasp it all at first. He doesn't see it. He doesn't understand it. Like so many religious people he is stuck in his possibly rectangular-boxed thought system and he can't see out. Eyes are closed, hearts not open, ears and eyes often filled with anything except the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are sinners, we need a Saviour to forgive us, we need new life, and we need to be born again.

Religious people often don't see it. They see their teachings and their often denominationally-based traditions, their power base and their comfort zones melting in the warmth of the love and forgiveness of Jesus. It is the Word of God that counts. Jesus is the Word. He is the Lord of the church-it is His body on His earth. Hallelujah!

Jesus continues speaking compassionately to Nicodemus. 3:9-17.

You see this is the dinosaur question, the key to your survival; the key to your having a living hope. The question is not "Are you a religious person? Are you a Sunday school teacher? Are you a helper in the ladies group? Are you a church member? The question is, "are you born again?"

Without being born again we have no hope. We are dead in our sins. Thanks be to God that He opens our eyes and ears and hearts and minds and gives us the grace to respond.

If we make a decision to follow Jesus, if we are born again in repentance and faith, is it a private matter between us and God or should we share it, should we make it public?

Do we see daily on Facebook, on X and on WhatsApp postings and messages from people who have just given their lives to the Lord and been born again and want everyone to share their joy?

After all, as it says in Paul's letter which he wrote from Corinth to the church in Rome, "If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame." But just a minute-wasn't it a dangerous thing in the Roman Empire to become a new-born believer in Jesus? Wouldn't it have been better to keep it quiet? After all it is a personal and a private decision isn't it?

Repent, believe and be baptised is the pattern we are to follow if we live according to the living Word of God.

"We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him, and he in God. We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who remains in love remains in God, and God remains in him." (1 John 4: 14-16, NASB)

Or then again in Matthew 10:32-33 this time from the New King James Version (NKJV) "Therefore whoever confesses me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven."

But maybe, just maybe we are or feel happy as we are. We are living as best as we can. We may think or say that whether God or a supernatural power exists or not makes no difference to us. We will go our own way as we have always done. Maybe you say there is no life outside of this. I am comfortable enough. There is no life outside my box. I will stay where I am. But then I am in my box and they close it firmly and permanently from the outside.

14 times at least I have made a journey beginning at Blackburn station to the airport. Going to Manchester Airport from Blackburn I join a train going to Rochdale. Now you may prefer to travel over Preston but this is a parable and I want you to see the main points and not argue unprofitably over the details.

So I will change at Bolton. Now not everybody knows this so it is good if someone tells them but if you don't change at Bolton on to the airport train you will arrive at the wrong destination. You will arrive somewhere else and probably miss your connection at the airport. Of course there are other places at which you can change, but when you see the signs, the destination boards and perhaps hear the train and station announcements you need to decide usually rather quickly to change your direction.

That is true this morning if you are allowing God to speak to your heart and mind. Turn around; turn away from your way that leads only to death. Come humbly to the Lord, ask Him to forgive you and come into your heart; and He will.

If we have done that already and are walking with the Lord we need to make others aware of the need to change, of the need to come to Jesus for forgiveness and to receive new life. Otherwise they might not make it to the right destination.

Of course sometimes not even the train drivers or station personnel know where the trains are likely to end up. Some might say just get on a train and see where it takes you. Just enjoy the journey and when you get to the terminus that is it. Journey over.

A decision to follow Jesus on the other hand sets you free to be forgiven and to forgive. These are the two most central characteristics of our life together as believers. Even if in some places professional church drivers and personnel don't follow that and adopt another gospel which is as the Apostle Paul would say no gospel at all.

It is an attitude of our hearts.

It is a covenant with our God.

It is a commitment to His people.

Our hope is a living hope. We will never ever die.

"My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand: all other ground is sinking sand."

Our Closing (offertory) hymn, as with all the music today, was played by Trevor, Kate and Judith:

How great the chasm that lay between us, how high the mountain I could not climb.
In desperation, I turned to heaven and spoke your name into the night.
Then through the darkness your loving kindness tore through the shadows of my soul,
the work is finished, the end is written: Jesus Christ, my living hope.

Who could imagine so great a mercy? What heart could fathom such boundless grace?
The God of ages stepped down from glory to wear my sin and bear my shame.
The cross has spoken, I am forgiven, the king of kings calls me His own:
beautiful saviour, I'm yours forever: Jesus Christ, my living hope.

Hallelujah, praise the one who set me free!

Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me!

You have broken every chain - there's salvation in your name,

Jesus Christ, my living hope.

Then came the morning that sealed the promise, your buried body began to breathe:
out of the silence, the roaring lion declared the grave has no claim on me.

Then came the morning that sealed the promise your buried body began to breathe -
out of the silence, the roaring lion declared the grave has no claim on me -
Jesus, yours is the victory, whoa!

Hallelujah, praise the one who set me free

Authors: Brian Johnson, Phil Wickham CCLI SONG # 7106807 Copyrights ©2017 Phil Wickham Music (Admin. by / Small Stone Media BV, Holland (Admin. in the UK/Eire by Song Solutions www.songsolutions.org)), Simply Global Songs (Admin. by / Small Stone Media BV, Holland

Finally, Alec shared a **Closing prayer**:

Loving Heavenly Father, we thank you once again for the gift of your son. You have given us living hope, we will never die. On this earth You are with us, we do not fear, we do not need to worry, we move forward in faith according to what we know from you. not what we can see on the earth. You are more real to us than the evil around us. Evil powers have no chance of being victorious over us. You have already won Help us to live each day in the power of your name, as you try to change and transform our lives into the image of your son, and may he come soon. Come Lord Jesus. We pray that you will use these gifts for the extension of your kingdom for the glory of your name, Uphold your honour we pray in this place. Amen.

We said the grace together,

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, evermore, Amen.

looking at a picture of the cross on the screen.

The Order of Service for Sunday October 8th, led by Alec, (which was not recorded) was:

Welcome

Opening reading/prayer

Opening hymn, [Modernised Version] with Trevor, Kate and Paul W playing:

Immortal, invisible, God only wise, in light inaccessible hid from our eyes;
most holy, most glorious, the ancient of days, almighty, victorious, your great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light, nor wanting nor wasting, you rule us in might;
your justice like mountains high soaring above,
your clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all you are giving, to both great and small, in all you are living, the true life of all:
we blossom and flourish, uncertain and frail; we wither and perish, but you never fail.

We worship before you, great Father of light, while angels adore you, all veiling their sight;
our praises we render, O Father, to you whom only the splendour of light hides from view.

Author: Walter C Smith (1824 - 1908) CCL song # 1590109 Copyright © Jubilate Hymns Ltd, CCL No 5664

Notices

Worship songs:

Our God is an awesome God, He reigns from heaven above
with wisdom pow'r and love, our God is an awesome God.

Author: Rich Mullins CCLI SONG # 41099 Copyrights@1988 Universal Music - Brentwood Benson Publishing (Admin. by Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Inc.) CCL No 5664

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never changing,
our helper he, amid the flood of moral ills prevailing.
for still our ancient foe does seek to work us woe;
his craft and power are great, and armed with cruel hate,
on earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing,
were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choosing.
You ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord Sabaoth his name, from age to age the same;
and he must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God has willed his truth to triumph through us.
The prince of darkness grim, we tremble not for him;
his rage we can endure, for lo! his doom is sure;
one little word shall fell him.

That Word above all earthly powers no thanks to them abideth;
the Spirit and the gifts are ours through him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;
the body they may kill: God's truth abideth still;
his kingdom is forever!

Authors: Frederick Henry Hedge, Martin Luther CCLI SONG # 3578816 Public Domain CCL No 5664

Light of the world, You stepped down into darkness, opened my eyes, let me see
beauty that made this heart adore you, hope of a life spent with you.
**Here I am to worship, here I am to bow down, here I am to say that you're my God.
You're altogether lovely, altogether worthy, altogether wonderful to me.**

King of all days, so highly exalted, glorious in heaven above;
humbly you came to the earth you created, all for love's sake became poor.
Here I am to worship....

I'll never know how much it cost to see my sin upon that cross...
I'll never know how much it cost to see my sin upon that cross...
Here I am to worship...

Authors: Tim Hughes, Chris Tomlin CCL Song CCLI SONG # 3266032 Copyright@2000 Kingsway Music CCL no 5664

Prayers, Jean:(including a prayer for the war situation between Israel and Palestine)

Dear God, thank you for this new day. Please help us to make the most of it, and to use it
for your glory. May we be filled with your peace and joy, and may we be a blessing to those
around us.

We ask that You would open our ears so that we may hear your voice. Open our minds so that
we may receive Your wisdom. Open our spirits so that we may know Your leading and guidance.
And open our hearts so that we may receive Your wonderful love.

Grant us courage as we go through this day. When we are tempted to give up, help us to keep
going. Grant us a cheerful spirit when things don't go our way. And give us the courage to do
whatever needs to be done.

Help us to love the life we live right now. Show us the good things we often overlook and help

us be content with what we have. Forgive us when we compare ourselves to others, forgive us for longing for things outside of You and Your kingdom. But thank You for loving us right where we are, as we are and please help us to keep our eyes on You.

You see where no one else is able to fully see or understand, you know our pains, our worries our burdens. Thank you that you are able to do far more than we can ever imagine.

Lord we are making such a mess of your world. There are wars, with innocent people being killed, injured and maimed. Youngsters who feel they have to carry knives to protect themselves but then they use them on anyone who they feel have slighted them. Why is it that life is so cheap and dispensable for them? Those who feel the need to take drugs as the only way to escape the world they inhabit. Then there is the social problems and the energy crisis the high food prices as well, all causing some areas of our communities to really struggle. Then there are the natural disasters of earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis. Father if only people would turn to you and learn to love you and each other wow what a wonderful world it could be!

Please be with the government, they have many difficult decisions to make Lord please give them wisdom to make the decisions that will best serve the people for the right reasons and not just as an election bid and please let them remember all the people they were elected to lead, not just those in the south!

Our local council also need your guidance too Lord. Please give them a will to make the right decisions for the people they serve.

Please be with the church family. Especially those waiting for hospital tests and appointments. Be with those in hospital. We bring Allan Dewhurst to you Lord. You know his many problems, please let the Drs and nurses caring for him do so in the best way, to try and get to the bottom of his problems and get him the right treatment, and be with Morag too. Let them feel your love surrounding them and your healing over Allan. We bring those who are having family difficulties, give them the right words to help diffuse problems and let them feel your strength and courage. We thank you for the new people who are joining us and we ask that you would let the people of the surrounding area know that they are welcome to join us. Be with the leadership team help them with all they need to do to keep things in church running smoothly.

Heavenly Father we ask so much of you, but we know that with you and through you all things are possible. Amen

Bible reading Acts of the Apostles 1: 1-8

In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: 'Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptised with water, but in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.'

Then they gathered round him and asked him, 'Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?'

He said to them: 'It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.'

Message: Anne Lincoln (Pastor of Clayton-le-Moors Baptist Church) shared an impassioned plea for the Holy Spirit to be allowed into our hearts and lives. (She was asked if she had any sermon notes she could share, but does not use any notes, speaking from the heart)

Closing (offertory) hymn:

What gift of grace is Jesus my redeemer; there is no more for heaven now to give;
He is my joy, my righteousness, and freedom,
my steadfast love, my deep and boundless peace.

To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus, for my life is wholly bound to His;
Oh how strange and divine, I can sing: all is mine, yet not I, but through Christ in me.

The night is dark but I am not forsaken, for by my side, the Saviour He will stay;
I labour on in weakness and rejoicing, for in my need, His power is displayed.

To this I hold, my Shepherd will defend me, through the deepest valley He will lead;
oh the night has been won, and I shall overcome, yet not I, but through Christ in me.

No fate I dread, I know I am forgiven, the future sure, the price it has been paid,
for Jesus bled and suffered for my pardon, and He was raised to overthrow the grave.

To this I hold, my sin has been defeated, Jesus now and ever is my plea;
oh the chains are released, I can sing: I am free, yet not I, but through Christ in me.

With every breath I long to follow Jesus for He has said that He will bring me home,
and day by day I know He will renew me until I stand with joy before the throne.

To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus, all the glory evermore to Him;
when the race is complete, still my lips shall repeat yet not I, but through Christ in me.

To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus, all the glory evermore to Him,
when the race is complete, still my lips shall repeat yet not I, but through Christ in me.
yet not I, but through Christ in me; yet not I, but through Christ in me.

Authors Jonny Robinson, Michael Farren, Rich Thompson CCLI SONG # 7121852 Copyrights ©2018 CityAlight Music (Admin. by Integrity Music Ltd) Farren Love And War Publishing (Admin. by Integrity Music Ltd) Integrity's Alleluia! Music (Admin. by Integrity Music Ltd) Words Jonny Robinson, Rich Thompson, Michael Warren CCL no 5664

Closing prayer