



AT HOME SERVICE

Sunday 21st June 2026

compiled by Rev. Melvyn Cooke

Call to Worship

Psalm 136: 1-3

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

Give thanks to the God of gods,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

Give thanks to the Lord of lords,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

Hymn - 13 StF

1] Sing of a God in majestic divinity,
seeding the heavens with numberless stars,
forming our dust and our dreams of infinity,
God of our lives and the judge of our wars.

2] Sing of a Child who was cradled so tenderly,
Sing of a boyhood by Galilee's lake;
Sing of a cross and a Saviour who wondrously
suffered and died for humanity's sake.

3] Sing of a Spirit who daily addressing us,
lives in our sciences, nature, and arts;
moving through all of creation and blessing us,
guiding our minds and engaging our hearts.

4] Sing of this God who in glory and mystery
Choose to lie in humanity's womb.
Enter the prison and pain of our history,
Rises triumphant and opens the tomb.

Herbert O'Driscoll (1928-2024)

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, I desire to learn how to worship You as You deserve. Help me Lord, to grow into the sort of worshipper that You are seeking, one who worships You in spirit and truth.

I pray that my life may be one that honours You in all I say and all I do, in all the circumstances of life, throughout the day and as I drift into sleep at night.

Lord, I pray that I may learn to walk in all of Your ways, to serve with all of my being and to learn to love You as You have loved me. Teach me Lord, how to worship You in the beauty of holiness so that I may be one that bows my heart before You in spirit and truth, to Your honour and glory. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

Reading James 5: 7 – 12

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Indeed we call blessed those who showed endurance. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful. Above all, my beloved, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your 'Yes' be yes and your 'No' be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.

Hymn - 161 StF

1] Speak, O Lord, as we come to You
To receive the food of Your holy Word.
Take Your truth, plant it deep in us;
Shape and fashion us in Your likeness,
That the light of Christ might be seen today
In our acts of love and our deeds of faith.
Speak, O Lord, and fulfill in us,
All Your purposes for Your glory.

2] Teach us, Lord, full obedience,
Holy reverence, true humility.
Test our thoughts and our attitudes
In the radiance of Your purity.
Cause our faith to rise; cause our eyes to see
Your majestic love and authority.
Words of pow'r that can never fail,
Let their truth prevail over unbelief.

3] Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds;
Help us grasp the heights of Your plans for us.
Truths unchanged from the dawn of time
That will echo down through eternity.
And by grace, we'll stand on Your promises,
And by faith, we'll walk as You walk with us.
Speak, O Lord, 'til Your church is built
And the earth is filled with Your glory.

Keith Getty (b. 1974) & Stuart Townend (b. 1963)

Reflection

So, what's the longest and most boring sermon you have ever listened to? Strangely enough I could tell you where I heard it and who preached it, but that would be telling tales! Strange then that something so forgettable is indeed indelibly imprinted in my mind. The sermon was taken from the reading in James and the subject was, "let your yes be yes and your no be no"..... and the preacher regaled us for the next 50 minutes on that text. This was some 35 years ago, and in truth I could not tell you what he said, but the text has stuck in my mind.

Whenever we listen to the news or open a newspaper it seems we are confronted by so many areas of public service, or indeed private areas of lives that have been made public, where a lack of integrity and honesty abound. How many times have you heard it said, or even think it yourself perhaps, that we wish our politicians would tell the truth as it is, rather than regurgitate the latest lines of communication from the spin doctors of central headquarters.

To tell the truth, without causing offence or alienating oneself from others can indeed be hard, and we must all confess to the damage and hurt that has been caused over the years because what we can perceive as being truth, can be so easily interpreted by others as being judgmental.

The words of James are a repetition of the words of Jesus, spoken during the deliverance of what we know as the 'Sermon on the Mount'. We often preach about the beatitudes, the happiness of one who seeks to live the rhythm of life as a follower of Jesus, but we pass over some of the more weightier consequences of the later teaching in Matthew. Right in the middle of these verses Jesus when expounds on the significance of keeping the law we find Jesus appealing to his followers to be people of integrity, and more significantly people of consistency, he simply says that when making an oath, or promise be people of your word, "let your yes, be yes, and your no be no".

This theme of honesty and integrity runs throughout the book of James, in his opening remarks he speaks of us needing to be not just hearers of the word but doers also (James 1: 22) James recognizes throughout his letter that being a follower of Jesus requires a fortitude of life in the face of great adversity, and that in spite of the trials and tribulations we should remain consistent in what we say, and that what we say should be backed up by the lives we lead. He contends that we can only live this life if we submit ourselves to God, "Come near to God, and he will come near to you." (James 4:8)

A boring, long and tedious sermon has reminded me of a profound truth, and challenging task, that I should mean what I say, and say what I mean, and that all may be seasoned with grace.

Prayers – *Please take time to pause and pray following each phrase of this song*

Father I place into Your hands

The things that I can't do

Father I place into Your hands

The times that I've been through

Father I place into Your hands

The way that I should go

Father I place into Your hands

My friends and family

Father I place into Your hands

The things that trouble me

Father I place into Your hands

The person I would be

For I know I always can trust You

Amen

Jenny Hewer (b. 1945)

We say together the Lord's Prayer in the version and language you are most comfortable using.

Hymn - 613 StF

1] God, how can we forgive
when bonds of love are torn?
How can we rise and start anew,
our trust reborn?
When human loving fails
and every hope is gone,
your love give strength beyond our own
to face the dawn.

2] When we have missed the mark,
and tears of anguish flow,
how can you still release our guilt,
the debt we owe?
The ocean depth of grace
surpasses all our needs.
A priest who shares our human pain,
Christ intercedes.

3] Who dares to throw the stone
to damn another's sin,
when you, while knowing all our past,
forgive again?
No more we play the judge,
for by your grace we live.
As you, O God, forgive our sin,
may we forgive.

Ruth C Duck 1947-2024)

Blessing

May the warmth of Christ heal you,
The eyes of Christ gaze on you,
And the peace of Christ shine through you
Today and evermore.

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