



AT HOME SERVICE

Sunday 28th September 2025

compiled by Rev. Chris Jackson

Call to Worship from Psalm 146

Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord, O my soul!

I will praise the Lord as long as I live;

I will sing praises to my God all my life long

HYMN - StF 55

1] Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessèd, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

2] Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;
Thy justice like mountains high soaring above
Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

3] To all life Thou givest, to both great and small;
In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish; but naught changeth Thee.

4] Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
All laud we would render: O help us to see
'Tis only the splendour of light hideth Thee.

5] Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessèd, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

Walter Charmers Smith (1824-1908)

PRAYER – from St Boniface (672-754)

Eternal God, the refuge and help of all your children,
we praise you for all you have given us,
for all you have done for us,
for all that you are to us.
In our weakness, you are strength,
in our darkness, you are light,
in our sorrow, you are comfort and peace.
We cannot number your blessings,
we cannot declare your love:
For all your blessings, we bless you.
May we live as in your presence,
and love the things that you love,
and serve you in our daily lives;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN

LET US JOIN IN THE LORD'S PRAYER TOGETHER

READING - 1 Timothy 6:6-19

Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it, but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains. But as for you, man of God, shun all this; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. In the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you to keep the commandment without spot or blame until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he will bring about at the right time - he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords. It is he alone who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see; to him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen. As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches but rather on God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

HYMN - StF 355

1] Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high;
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last.

2] Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave, ah, leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me.
All my trust on Thee is stayed,
All my help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.

3] Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
More than all in Thee I find;
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind.
Just and holy is Thy name,
I am all unrighteousness;
False and full of sin I am,
Thou art full of truth and grace.

4] Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
Grace to cover all my sin;
Let the healing streams abound,
Make and keep me pure within.
Thou of life the fountain art;
Freely let me take of Thee;
Spring Thou up within my heart,
Rise to all eternity.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Reflection

A couple of weeks ago I shared some thoughts from the beginning of the first book of Timothy. So this week I would like to jump to the end of the book as Paul concludes his advice to the young church leader Timothy.

When I was at school (a very long time ago) we only sang about three hymns in assembly unless it was Christmas!!! Well, that's the way I remember it anyway...being in Bedford, of course we had John Bunyan's, 'He who would true valour see' (the original words of course with goblins and foul fiends), secondly we had, 'When a knight won his spurs' and to be honest I never really understand the point of that one as a hymn...and thirdly there was, 'Fight the Good Fight'...not a favourite (and therefore we will not have this at the end today)...but lo and behold, reading our passage today we have Paul urging Timothy to "Fight the Good Fight"...as a young six year old I would have had no idea that this was from the Bible and suspected it was about defending myself in the playground...obviously akin to a knight winning his spurs!!!

I've never really liked hymns or passages that use military terms as metaphors (the pacifist in me recoils in horror). But in our passage Paul qualifies quite clearly his advice to Timothy. Before Timothy is urged to, 'fight the good fight', Paul tells him how to do this. Not with weapons or anger or judgement...but like this: *pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness*. Not very "fighty" words. A couple of weeks ago I wrote that sharing the love of God is not simply about being nice to people, that it is so much more, and so much harder than we think. Others in this world put their trust in power and wealth and a strong sense of self will (essentially having a big ego), and the world seems to idolize those that do this but Christ's way is quite the opposite. Timothy is charged by Paul (as all Christians are by Jesus) to be obedient to the commands of Christ. That is our way, that should be our desire.

Those that do have wealth and power would heed well Paul's words at the end of this passage in verses 17-19. If you have been blessed it is not simply for your own consumption. With it comes with a great responsibility, to "do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share". For many with wealth there is the tendency to give God what is left after sorting out their own affairs...but God requires those with wealth to give first to others.

We live in a world that has a few "haves" and a multitude of "have nots"...this is not God's way. The reason is essentially, those with wealth have not heeded Paul's and Jesus' words and they have stored up wealth for themselves and their families...at the end of our reading Paul echoes Jesus' own words about storing up treasures in heaven.

Live generously in time, money, possessions, care...being obedient to the great commandment of God...

"...you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Paul mentors the young Timothy in the Way of Jesus, that as a leader he is to set a Godly example...and an example for us all to follow.

Despite my comment earlier about songs using military terms. We will finish after our prayers with John Wesley's *Soldiers of Christ arise*. Reading the words they are teaching the opposite of all that is aggressive, and to put our trust in the power of God rather than in anything else...so let's all 'Fight the good fight' let us all pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. AMEN

Prayers

O God, still our hearts and souls
As we focus upon you.

Let your words fill us and your thoughts be our thoughts.

Show us the places and situations and people in our world
That you would have us pray for.

Stir our hearts to intercede for those in need.

KEEP A TIME OF SILENCE WHERE WE LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF GOD

Share aloud those situations God has revealed to you to intercede on behalf of.

KEEP SILENCE ONCE MORE

O God of all creation, you love all peoples and places.
Receive our prayers on behalf of your church
We beseech you to act, knowing the certainty that you have heard.

In Jesus' name AMEN

Hymn - StF 637

1] Soldiers of Christ, arise,
And put your armour on;
Strong in the strength which God supplies,
Through His eternal Son;

2] Strong in the Lord of hosts,
And in His mighty power;
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
Is more than conqueror.

3] Stand, then, in His great might,
With all His strength endued;
And take, to arm you for the fight,
The panoply of God.

4] Leave no unguarded place,
No weakness of the soul;
Take every virtue, every grace,
And fortify the whole.

5] From strength to strength go on,
Wrestle and fight and pray;
Tread all the powers of darkness down,
And win the well-fought day.

6] That having all things done,
And all your conflicts past,
Ye may o'ercome, through Christ alone,
And stand complete at last.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Blessing from Ephesians 6:23

Peace be to you brothers and sisters and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
Grace be with all who have an undying love for our Lord Jesus Christ. AMEN