

ORDER OF SERVICE – Worship at Home 10/10/21
Service prepared by Erica Gassor for use at home

Call to worship based on words from Psalm 90

Satisfy us with your steadfast love that we may rejoice and be glad all our days, and gain a wise heart. Come and meet the Lord who loves us and is all we need.

Come, rejoice and be glad as we worship together.

HYMN: Singing the Faith 55 by Walter Chalmers Smith (1824-1908)

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

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.

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.

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

PRAYERS:

God of all relationships, God of solved problems, You care so much for everyone. Whether my problems feel tiny, and hardly worth bothering You with or huge - just huge – You are always there for me. All things are possible with You most mighty God, You are the God of eternal life, I worship You, O God. Amen

Lord, there are so many things that can get in the way of my relationship with You. I offer them to You now and ask for forgiveness. Please show me new ways always to put You first, whatever that may take. Grant me Your wisdom, Lord. Amen

As I bow my head before You now, my heart is contrite. You call me to yourself and bless me with the assurance that my sins are completely washed away in You. I thank You for Your forgiveness, I bless You, Lord. I know, that all things are possible with You! Amen

Say the Lord's Prayer out loud, knowing you share these words with many others today.

READING: Amos 5: 6-7 and 10-15 ¹

Seek the Lord and live, or he will sweep through the tribes of Joseph like a fire; it will devour them, and Bethel will have no one to quench it. There are those who turn justice into bitterness and cast righteousness to the ground.

There are those who hate the one who upholds justice in court and detest the one who tells the truth. You levy a straw tax on the poor and impose a tax on their grain.

Therefore, though you have built stone mansions, you will not live in them; though you have planted lush vineyards, you will not drink their wine. For I know how many are your offences and how great your sins. There are those who oppress the innocent and take bribes and deprive the poor of justice in the courts. Therefore the prudent keep quiet in such times, for the times are evil. Seek good, not evil, that you may live. Then the Lord God Almighty will be with you, just as you say he is. Hate evil, love good; maintain justice in the courts. Perhaps the Lord God Almighty will have mercy on the remnant of Joseph.

HYMN: Singing the Faith 34 – John Samuel Bewley Monsell (1811-1875)

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
Bow down before Him, His glory proclaim;
With gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
Kneel and adore Him: the Lord is His name.

Low at His feet lay thy burden of carefulness:
High on His heart He will bear it for thee,
Comfort thy sorrows, and answer thy prayerfulness,
Guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.

Fear not to enter His courts in the slenderness
Of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine:
Truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,
These are the offerings to lay on His shrine.

These, though we bring them in trembling and
fearfulness,
He will accept for the name that is dear;
Mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,
Trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
Bow down before Him, His glory proclaim;
With gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
Kneel and adore Him: the Lord is His name.

READING: Mark 10: 17-31 ¹

As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

“Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honour your father and mother.

“Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.”

Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad because he had great wealth. Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!” The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the Kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?” Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.” Then Peter spoke up, “We have left everything to follow you!”

“Truly I tell you,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields – along with persecutions – and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

TALK:

We have just heard in our reading from Mark how the young man asked Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus went through the 10 commandments and then told the man to sell all his possessions, give the money to the poor and follow Him. Being rich, the man found this very difficult and walked away.

The point that always strikes me about this reading is that it was a 'young' man. I am many of us were all guilty when young of wanting lots of lovely things and, perhaps for our first home, we strived to amass furniture, ornaments and other possessions. One of the joys and blessings of being older is the realisation that these things are not important and, as the familiar saying goes 'you can't take it with you' and, as we mature in life, lots of things which seemed important when younger, become less significant when compared to good health, a loving family and friends and basic comfort and warmth.

My step-mum, Peggy, who some of you may well remember, loved nice things and had been used to enjoying the better things in life and yet, as she became older, you would not dare mention that you liked something in her home or you would find it had been slipped into a pocket or handbag for you to take away with you or – if a larger item – there would be a conversation, insisting that you could make better use of it than she could.

It is not that working hard to provide a nice home or other needs is bad and I am sure we all have treasured possessions but Jesus is pointing out that in the long term these are not important – it is more important to ensure an equal provision for those who have very little in our world and to learn from the teachings of God the Father what the real meaning of ‘value’ is. We are better able to differentiate between ‘value’ and real value by growing closer to Father God and learning from the words of Jesus. The closer we become the more we can clearly see the way to live and give ourselves in His service. Reading and learning from Jesus’s teachings, praying and quietly listening for God’s response brings us closer to fully understanding the meaning of following as current day disciples – understanding our calling in whatever area God points us, using whatever abilities we have to undertake His work on Earth, led by the Holy Spirit and surrounded by His love and grace in all we do.

Jesus closes by saying ‘But many who are first will be last, and the last first’. An excellent reminder that we cannot ‘earn’ our place with God. Jesus saw what the young man’s stumbling block was – his wealth and possessions – and God knows all our failings and weaknesses and it is in fact only by His grace and mercy that we can attain eternal life. God truly knows the people we are.

We can often look and form an opinion of a person and the life they lead but we do not know the inner person, only God does and that is why we can never judge and definitely never guess who will be first and who will be last in God's Kingdom.

We do however have an excellent guide as to how we should live our lives in the teachings in the Bible and the words from the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6:19-21 are particularly relevant to the reading from Mark 10 today.

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Amen

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:

Father God, I now turn my thoughts to the world in which I live.

I bring to You those who are living in war torn countries or in fear of their lives from the governing regimes – I pray that they will know Your presence in their lives and that those in power will be brought to justice so that the people can live in peace in Your World.

I pray for those suffering from famine and hardship and pray that You will lead me to do all in my power to ease the suffering of Your children, my brothers and sisters in Christ, through sharing what I have. I pray for those who are suffering from natural disasters, volcano eruptions, flooding and fires. Your world is wonderful and I pray that I can learn how to care for it and work in harmony with nature – give our leaders wisdom as they meet in the COP26 meeting in Glasgow – take away any selfishness and awaken them to the reality of climate change.

I pray for all those who are homeless, suffering from poverty, or from mental or physical health difficulties and for those who are bereaved – be near them Father God, wrap them in Your love, give them peace and provide through us the support they need. I bring all my prayers to You Father God, in and through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

**HYMN: Singing the Faith 287 by Isaac Watts
(1674-1748)**

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God!
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

A PRAYER AND THE BLESSING:

Loving God, who sees us and loves us just as we are, be with me and go with me, guide me and challenge me to draw closer to You and to be and live more like Christ.

And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, this day and forever more. Amen

Acknowledgements

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