

WORSHIP AT HOME – 12th July 2020

A short act of worship for use in people's homes, provided by Jeff Britt.

Introduction The Spirit sets us free.

Call to worship (Psalm 119: 105-106 and 111-112). Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. I have taken an oath and confirmed it, that I will follow your righteous laws. Your statutes are my heritage for ever; they are the joy of my heart. My heart is set on keeping your decrees to the very end. So come now and worship the Lord. ¹

Hymn: Singing the Faith 507 [To join in click here](#)

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|---|---|
| 1. O for a heart to praise my God,
a heart from sin set free;
a heart that always feels thy blood
so freely shed for me; | 4. A heart in every thought renewed,
and full of love divine;
perfect and right and pure, and good,
a copy, Lord, of thine! |
| 2. A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
my great Redeemer's throne;
where only Christ is heard to speak,
where Jesus reigns alone: | 5. Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart;
come quickly from above;
write thy new name upon my heart,
thy new, best name of love. |
| 3. A humble, lowly, contrite heart,
believing, true, and clean,
which neither life nor death can part
from him that dwells within; | Charles Wesley (1707-1788) |

Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Lord, I bring my praise to you this morning, for who you are and for what you have done in my life; for family and friends and the joy they bring. For all the beauty of your creation; for land, sea and sky and all the creatures that dwell there. And I praise you for the freedom I have to follow your ways. Lord, for all good things I praise and adore you.

But sometimes Lord, I fail to see the beauty of your creation, and make wrong choices and get things wrong. I forget what you went through for me, and cause you hurt. And so I say sorry and ask your forgiveness. And to all who truly repent, the Lord says: "your sins are forgiven." **Amen.**

Now say the Lord's Prayer slowly and thoughtfully

Bible Reading Romans 8:1-11 ¹

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.

Hymn: Singing the Faith 394 ² [To join in click here](#)

*Spirit of God, unseen as the wind,
gentle as a dove,
teach us the truth and help us believe,
show us the Saviour's love.*

1. You spoke to us long, long ago,
gave us the written word;
we read it still, needing its truth,
through it God's voice is heard.
Spirit of God, unseen as the wind,

2. Without your help we fail our Lord,
we cannot live his way; we need your power,
we need your strength,
following Christ each day.
Spirit of God, unseen as the wind,

Reflection

Since mid-March we have had our lives turned upside down by restrictions placed on us by the government because of the coronavirus. We have had to face many difficult times during the last four months but we have not been alone in our sufferings. For Paul, the author of the letter to the Romans, faced many trials and dangers, and went through many dark times. He tells us that he has been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, exposed to death again and again, three times beaten with rods, shipwrecked, in danger from rivers and bandits, in danger in the city and in the country and in danger at sea. (*2 Corinthians 11:16-33*.) These are just a few of the things mentioned. But during these times of trial, the Spirit gave him the strength and guidance to get through.

The reading that we heard from Romans 8 in my Bible is headed 'Life through the Spirit'. The Holy Spirit was living in Paul giving him strength, hope and guidance in his life. The section following today's reading is headed 'Present sufferings and future glory' in which Paul says: "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us." Although Paul was restricted in what he could do, spending a lot of his time in prison, it did not stop him doing what he was called to do.

We have been in lockdown, in a sense imprisoned in our various places, but this has not stopped us doing things. We have just done things in a different way to what we did before lockdown, particularly in our worship. What it has done is to allow us to use our skills and talents to devise new ways of doing things.

Well it's been a long time since we were able to go to places and do all the things that we wanted to do. Now that lockdown is gradually being eased I am beginning to wonder whether going back to what life was like before lockdown will be good for me. In a letter to the church in Corinth, Paul writes this: 'Everything is permissible, but everything is not beneficial' 1 Cor 10:23. Perhaps the things that we were able to do and could do were not the right things for us to do. And since we have been restricted in where we can go and what we can do I particularly have had time to assess such things as where to go and what I shall do.

In a sense, I have had an unfound freedom; a freedom that I had not known before. Perhaps these months of lockdown have been God's way of making us look at our lives afresh. During this time of lockdown we have been able to do things that it has not been possible for us to do previously, and also we could do those things when we wanted to. Not being dictated to by outside forces. So as restrictions are slowly being lifted what are our feelings? Some of us may have feelings of relief, whereas others of us may have feelings of apprehension; or even fear! In 1 Peter chapter 1 it says in verse 6: 'So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you have to endure many trials for a little while.'

Although we are slowly being freed, there are still some difficulties that we may have to overcome, just like the apostle Paul did. But take heart, because the Lord Jesus has sent his Holy Spirit to see us through. Just a few weeks ago was Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples, giving them a strength and courage that they did not know they had. Just like them, we have that same Spirit who will see us through the present difficulties and into a future glory. **Amen.**

Hymn: Singing the Faith 397 ³ [To join in click here](#)

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| 1. The Spirit lives to set us free,
walk, walk in the light;
he binds us all in unity,
walk, walk in the light.
<i>Walk in the light, walk in the light,
Walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.</i> | 4. We know his death was not the end,
walk, walk in the light;
he gave his Spirit to be our friend,
walk, walk in the light.
<i>Walk in the light, walk in the light,
Walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.</i> |
| 2. Jesus promised life to all,
walk, walk in the light;
the dead were wakened by his call,
walk, walk in the light.
<i>Walk in the light, walk in the light,
Walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.</i> | 5. By Jesus' love our wounds are healed,
walk, walk in the light;
the Father's kindness is revealed,
walk, walk in the light.
<i>Walk in the light, walk in the light,
Walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.</i> |
| 3. He died in pain on Calvary,
walk, walk in the light;
to save the lost like you and me,
walk, walk in the light.
<i>Walk in the light, walk in the light,
Walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.</i> | 6. The Spirit lives in you and me,
walk, walk in the light;
his light will shine for all to see,
Walk, walk in the light.
<i>Walk in the light, walk in the light,
Walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.</i> |

Prayers of intercession

Lord, I bring before you prayers for the place where I live, this country and the wider world:

At this time of easing restrictions, I pray for churches and leaders as they plan a return to gathered worship that they will be able to produce a safe return for their congregations. I pray particularly for the churches in the Kennet and Test Valley circuit; for those who will be leading worship which will be limited in numbers and with no singing, not as we have been used to.....

May your Spirit inspire and guide them in their preparation.

I pray for those who have lost their jobs, and those in danger of losing them
that you will give them guidance and hope for the future.

I pray too that you will be with the lonely, the vulnerable, the aged, and their carers.....
May your Spirit encircle them in love.

Be with all who have lost loved ones, especially during the last four months of lockdown
Spirit of God, encircle them with your love and strength and comfort them.

Be with the hungry and the homelessfeed and shelter them.

I give thanks for those who provide for them.

Be with those who are sick in body or mind.....and be with the doctors and nurses
working so hard to bring healing

May the Spirit of God encircle all of them with your healing and keep them safe.

May the Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us all in these uncertain times, encircling us and
protecting us in their power. **Amen**

Blessing: May the blessing of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit be with you
and those you love, this day, and always. **Amen.**

Acknowledgements

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