

Worship at Home 8 November 2020

A short act of worship for use in people's homes, provided by Erica Gassor

The theme for today is from Matthew 11: 28-31 ¹

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Hymn – STF 693 ² To sing along [click here](#)

1. Beauty for brokenness,
hope for despair,
Lord, in your suffering world
this is our prayer.
Bread for the children,
justice, joy, peace,
sunrise to sunset,
Your kingdom increase!
2. Shelter for fragile lives,
cures for their ills,
work for the craftsman
trade for their skills;
land for the dispossessed,
rights for the weak,
voices to plead the cause
of those who can't speak.
*God of the poor, friend of the weak,
give us compassion we pray:
melt our cold hearts, let tears fall like rain;
come, change our love from a spark to a flame.*
3. Refuge from cruel wars,
havens from fear,
cities for sanctuary,
freedoms to share.
Peace to the killing-fields,
scorched earth to green,
Christ for the bitterness,
His cross for the pain.
4. Rest for the ravaged earth,
oceans and streams
plundered and poisoned -
our future, our dreams.
Lord, end our madness,
carelessness, greed;
make us content with
the things that we need.
God of the poor,
5. Lighten our darkness,
breathe on this flame
until your justice burns
brightly again;
until the nations
learn of your ways,
seek Your salvation
And bring You their praise.
God of the poor,

Prayers of adoration and confession

Father God I know I can always turn to you when I am burdened and heavy laden. I am in awe of your constant love. You are always there but sometimes I am too busy with life and don't realise that you are there watching and guiding. Sometimes I pray and ask and wait and don't always get an instant reply and think you have forgotten but, no, the answer is there, I just have to be patient and watch and know that you are always with me.

Father God I thank you for your amazing love for this world and all things in it and pray for your forgiveness for the times I do not take care of the world and abuse what you have provided - forgive me Lord for my lack of care and lack of love for your creation. Wonderful all-encompassing love flows from you Father God and it is such a gift - help me always to recognise that love and to thank you - never taking it for granted. Amen

Now say the Lord's Prayer.

Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 ¹

Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Reflection part 1

Today is of course very special - it is Remembrance Sunday. Every year this Sunday stops me in my tracks as I think back to the two world wars - I just cannot imagine the horror and fear that the soldiers, sailors and airmen must have felt - and also those who were at home and subject to regular air raids and invasions.

My father was a despatch rider in the war and even in his sixties he still had nightmares about the war and would wake shouting and lashing out - my mother told us about when she went to work at Boots the chemist in the middle of Hull one morning, after an air raid, and nothing was still standing - everything was flattened. Such horrors are impossible to imagine.

In our opening reading from Matthew 11 - the words are so important and soothing and they must have resonated with all those in the horror of war.....Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. It is so important that we never forget the immense sacrifice that our parents and grandparents made for us in the world wars and also those who are still defending us and endeavouring to bring peace to this world today.

Also the words in our reading from Thessalonians must have brought comfort to those who had lost loved ones, and still do so today, knowing that those they had lost were with our Father God in Heaven and that one day we would all be re united.

It is difficult to imagine the pain and suffering that conflict brings and man's inhumanity to man. But even in our more settled lives today we too can feel stress and distress, loss and desolation and need the peace and rest which can only come from Father God. In my voluntary work I meet people every day who are suffering from anxiety and depression and who so desperately need to find that inner peace which comes from knowing God and being able to turn to him in prayer, put your worries and troubles before Him and feel the warmth of His love surround you. As it says in Matthew 7 v 7-8 'Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.'

These readings from Matthew and Thessalonians are just as relevant today as they were when they were first spoken - a message and reassurance that we all need as we face challenges and difficulties in our daily lives.

I have lots of friends who do not yet know the Father. They do not know the peace and comfort that His love can bring – they do not have that hope for the future nor the knowledge that they will be in the love of God for Eternity. What wonderful joy they are missing!

Hymn – STF 248 (words by Horatius Bonar 1808-1889) To sing along [click here](#)

1. I heard the voice of Jesus say:
‘Come unto me and rest;
lay down, thou weary one, lay down
thy head upon my breast.’
I came to Jesus as I was,
weary and worn and sad,
I found in him a resting-place,
and He has made me glad.

2. I heard the voice of Jesus say,
‘Behold, I freely give
the living water; thirsty one,
stoop down and drink and live.’
I came to Jesus, and I drank
of that life-giving stream;
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
and now I live in Him.

3. I heard the voice of Jesus say,
‘I am this dark world’s light;
look unto me, thy morn shall rise,
and all thy day be bright.’
I looked to Jesus, and I found
in Him my star, my sun;
and in that light of life I’ll walk,
till travelling days are done.

Reading 2: Amos 5: 14-15 ¹

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.

Prayers of intercession

Father God I think on this day of all those who were so brave during the two world wars and those who continue to fight to defend our freedom and the freedom of others. I think of all those who lost their lives at such a young age and the heartbreak and sorrow that it brought to their families. I commend each person to you and know they are in your loving arms.

Father the world is still full of hate and war and I pray that you will change the hearts of the leaders of this world to turn away from greed and learn to care for their countries and the people who live within them, that they may come to know your love and your peace and they will work to bring suffering to an end.

I pray for all those who are suffering loss and sorrow or pain due to disease and infection and pray that your power will come to the doctors and nurses who treat these people - that they may be able to find cures and a better way of life for those who are suffering. Help me to show those I meet your love and help them to open their hearts and minds to you.

Finally Father I pray for myself that you will give me a loving and forgiving heart so that I may treat fellow human beings with compassion, that I may share what I have with those who have nothing, that I may reach out to all those who need to know of your love. Amen

Reflection part 2:

Jesus brought us so many words of love and reassurance from the Father - He understood the frailty of humanity and our need for hope. The New Testament is full of Jesus's teachings and by following His words we not only receive peace - and joy - and hope - but also the assurance that He walks beside us each and every day of our lives and is with us in the good times and helps us through the most difficult times. This certainty in life is the foundation on which we can depend and build as we move forward facing daily challenges.

In any difficult situation, I stop and ask 'what would Jesus have done – how would he have handled this' and reflect on His teachings, praying that, even though imperfect, I may follow in His footsteps.

As the reading from Amos said 'seek good and not evil', follow Jesus's ways every day of our lives, showing love and compassion to all those we meet, have forgiving hearts and understanding minds, come alongside those who are in need and show His love.

We know how to follow Jesus by reading His teachings in the Bible and through His answers to our prayers. He challenges each of us to be His disciples on Earth and to bring others into the Kingdom, witnessing by the way we live and the actions we take. What a wonderful gift faith is! Let us cherish this gift, nurture it and spread it wide and far.

By following Jesus and listening to Father God, we learn to become more compassionate and caring for our World and humanity, which in turn can result in a more peaceful existence with those around us and those further afield so that we can live more harmoniously and work towards a peaceful World without war and conflict and ensure that the sacrifices that were made in the world wars were not in vain. The words of our last hymn are so wonderful and I often use its verses as a prayer.....

Hymn: STF 495 (Words by John Greenleaf Whittier 1807-1892) To sing along [click here](#)

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| 1. Dear Lord and Father of mankind
forgive our foolish ways;
re clothe us in our rightful mind;
in purer lives Thy service find,
in deeper reverence, praise. | 4. With that deep hush subduing all
our words and works that drown
the tender whisper of Thy call,
as noiseless let Thy blessing fall
as fell Thy manna down. |
| 2. In simple trust like theirs who heard
beside the Syrian sea
the gracious calling of the Lord,
let us, like them, without a word
rise up and follow Thee. | 5. Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
till all our strivings cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of Thy peace. |
| 3. O sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
where Jesus knelt to share with Thee
the silence of eternity,
interpreted by love! | 6. Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still small voice of calm! |

Blessing:

As it says in The Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

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

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