

Worship@Home 13th October 2024 with Revd David Speirs

Opening Prayer:

O God, you alone are our Judge. Send your Spirit of truth to expose our self-deception and challenge our complacency so that we may surrender to your mercy and follow your will through Jesus Christ our Liberator. Amen.

From a collection of prayers posted on the Worship@North website. <https://northchurchindy.wordpress.com/> Accessed at RE:Worship: <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2017/11/prayer-of-illumination-amos-5.html>

STF 341 – All for Jesus

<https://youtu.be/A2M1f34veo?si=tjC03Qz1Gjs--xy>

All for Jesus - all for Jesus, this our song shall ever be:
For we have no hope, nor saviour, if we have not hope in thee.

All for Jesus - thou wilt give us strength to serve thee, hour by hour;
none can move us from thy presence, while we trust thy love and power.

All for Jesus - thou hast loved us; all for Jesus - thou hast died;
all for Jesus - thou art with us; all for Jesus crucified.

All for Jesus - all for Jesus this the Church's song must be;
till, at last, we all are gathered one in love and one in thee.

W.J. Sparrow-Simpson (1859-1952).

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Please read: Mark 10: 17-31

<https://bible.oremus.org/?q=215158326>

Time to Reflect

In 2013 Walt Disney Pictures released the computer-animated feature film 'Frozen', inspired by the 1844 Hans Christian Anderson fairy tale 'The Snow Queen'. During the course of the film Queen Elsa, one of the central characters, sings a song called 'Let it go' which went on to become a commercial success, selling millions of copies worldwide when it was released as a single. The song has since been adopted by some as an anthem of self-acceptance and empowerment, although it's role within the narrative of the film is more complex and potentially ambiguous.

In the Gospel reading that we have today a rich man comes before Jesus asking what he must do to receive eternal life.

After confirming that he has followed the commandments of God since his youth Jesus then identifies the one more obstacle that is acting as a stumbling block: The man's great material wealth. Jesus advises him to sell what he has and give the money to the poor. In so doing he is told that he will build up for himself treasure in heaven. However, the man goes away in shock and grief as he had so many possessions.

We are not told whether the man does ultimately choose to follow Jesus' advice but the implication from the passage is that his wealth was the obstacle that's preventing him from taking the next step. Jesus then makes the humorous observation that it would be easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God. Some commentators have suggested that Jesus might have been making reference to an actual gate in Jerusalem. However, there is sparse evidence for such a gate actually existing. It therefore seems more likely that Jesus was using this absurd image to make a serious point echoed elsewhere in the Gospels: That you cannot serve both God and money (see Matthew 6:24).

The problem that the rich man seemingly faced was that his love of money outweighed his love of God and by extension the love of his neighbour. Peter makes the point that the disciples had left everything behind in order to follow Jesus (Mark 10:28) and Jesus affirms that those who leave everything and follow him will receive the reward of eternal life and that "many who are first will be last, and the last will be first." (Mark 10:31).

The question that we might ask ourselves, as we reflect on this passage, is whether there might be obstacles to our discipleship that could act as a stumbling block in our love of God and our neighbour. This could be the love of material wealth and possessions, although it could equally be something else. Anything that we put before God can potentially become an idol, something that becomes the centre of our worship that is not God and represents temporary security to us rather than the eternal security offered to us by God in Christ.

What are the things that we need to let go of in order to grow in grace and holiness with God?

What should we leave behind, that will enable us to flourish in our discipleship? Just as in the song 'let it go' suggests leaving things behind can be liberating experience for us.

For in what we leave behind we may also gain so much more in and through Christ who has given us everything, including an eternal place in his Kingdom.

Prayer of Intercession

You are invited to pray silently for:

The needs of the world...

The Church and its calling...

Loved ones going through difficult times...

For peace, justice, and reconciliation...

In Jesus name. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven...

StF 673 – Will you come and follow me https://youtu.be/2AmzpK0SMVg?si=Uc_bJysUeuyQIDAV

Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?

Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?

Will you let my love be shown? Will you let my Name be known?

Will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?

Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?

Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?

Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare?

Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?

Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?

Will you set the prisoner free and never be the same?

Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as this unseen?

And admit to what I mean in you and you in me?

Will you love the 'You' you hide if I but call your name?

Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?

Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around

through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?

Christ, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show,
thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me?

By John Bell (b.1949) and Graham Maule (b.1958).

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CCLI Song Number: 4668756*

Final Prayer

O God, our Heavenly Father, give us a vision of our world as Your love would make it:

A world where the weak are protected

and none go hungry or poor;

a world where the benefits of civilized life are shared, and everyone can enjoy them;

a world where different races, nations and cultures live in tolerance and mutual respect,

a world where peace is built with justice,

and justice is guided by love; and give us the inspiration and courage to build it, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Geoffrey Brown and John Pridmore, St Martin-in-the-Fields' Prayer for the World. Posted on The Church of Scotland's Weekly Worship website and accessed at RE:Worship: <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2019/01/prayer-new-vision.html>