



Worship at Home : 10th May



O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvellous works among the peoples. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.

Psalm 96



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gUH_NzfRmbs

Give thanks to the Lord our God and King
His love endures forever
For He is good, He is above all things
His love endures forever

Sing praise, sing praise

With a mighty hand and outstretched arm
His love endures forever
For the life that's been reborn
His love endures forever

Sing praise, sing praise [2x]

Forever God is faithful
Forever God is strong
Forever God is with us
Forever

From the rising to the setting sun
His love endures forever
And by the grace of God we will carry on
His love endures forever

Sing praise, sing praise [2x]

[2x]

Forever God is faithful
Forever God is strong
Forever God is with us
Forever

Sing praise, sing praise [4x]

Forever God is faithful
Forever God is strong
Forever God is with us
Forever

Forever You are faithful
Forever You are strong
Forever You are with us
Forever

Chris Tomlin



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bk_7wUR2Wdg

Give thanks with a grateful heart,
give thanks to the Holy One ;
give thanks because he's given
Jesus Christ, his Son.
Give thanks with a grateful heart,
give thanks to the Holy One ;
give thanks because he's given
Jesus Christ, his Son.

And now let the weak say, 'I am strong,'
let the poor say, 'I am rich,'
because of what the Lord has done for us ;
And now let the weak say, 'I am strong,'
let the poor say, 'I am rich,'
because of what the Lord has done for us ;

Give thanks.

Henry Smith (b. 1952)

Let us pray.

Lord God, in your love you have called us to seek you. When we turn to you we find you are waiting for us and come to us. You meet our hunger and emptiness with the richness of your presence.

As we worship together, yet apart, renew and refresh us. Help us to know that we are united in you, and united with one another as we offer you our thanks and praise.

Lord, grant to each of us a quiet heart, that we may hear you,
a generous heart, that we may receive you,
an obedient heart, that we may serve you,
a pure heart, that we may abide in you this day
and for all eternity.
Amen.



1 Peter 3:1-12 (NRSV)

Wives and Husbands

³ Wives, in the same way, accept the authority of your husbands, so that, even if some of them do not obey the word, they may be won over without a word by their wives' conduct, ² when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. ³ Do not adorn yourselves outwardly by braiding your hair, and by wearing gold ornaments or fine clothing; ⁴ rather, let your adornment be the inner self with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in God's sight. ⁵ It was in this way long ago that the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves by accepting the authority of their husbands. ⁶ Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him lord. You have become her daughters as long as you do what is good and never let fears alarm you.

⁷ Husbands, in the same way, show consideration for your wives in your life together, paying honour to the woman as the weaker sex, since they too are also heirs of the gracious gift of life—so that nothing may hinder your prayers.

Suffering for Doing Right

⁸ Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind. ⁹ Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called—that you might inherit a blessing. ¹⁰ For

“Those who desire life
and desire to see good days,
let them keep their tongues from evil
and their lips from speaking deceit;

¹¹ let them turn away from evil and do good;
let them seek peace and pursue it.
¹² For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and his ears are open to their prayer.
But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

Reflection

I love it when this passage is read in church, if only to see the reaction of some to the opening line, which in some versions says: “Wives submit to you husbands.” But please do not let that opening put you off from what Peter has to say. As with all biblical content there is a context in which it was written and we do not live in that same context now.

Peter reminds us that God sees those ordinary things in our lives. God is interested in the attitudes that are deep within our hearts and how they find expression in the day-to-day living of both husbands and wives and indeed of all of us whether married or not. In remembering the very opening of our scriptures, ‘In the beginning God ...’ Peter encourages us to focus first upon God and Godly ways of living, that they may be seen in all aspects of our lives.

More than this, Peter wants us then to have confidence in our relationships, our relationship with God, and our relationship with those we love and with all people. Peter is saying that to live out our discipleship every day is to do it in the ordinariness of life, and that as we grow closer to God, so our whole lives will reflect a godly quality that will not just be for show, but will be deeper than that and more sustainable. Discipleship of Jesus has no barriers or limits. We cannot say we are Sunday Christians and that we then turn our Christianity off at other times. There is no time when we are not follower of Jesus.

Peter uses the relationship of husband and wife to show the closeness of the relationship with God and with Jesus. He does not let either husband or wife off the hook. Rather, by continually pointing first to God, Peter begins to explore how it is we can have confidence in our relationships. It is not in demonstrating wealth or outward show, rather it is filling your life with Christ so that his response becomes your response. Verse 9 makes this clear, “Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this you were called that you might inherit a blessing.”

In the last few days I saw on the web an article about someone who had, for reasons known only to them, decided to do a u-turn and drive up a slip road the wrong way. Obviously this was

dangerous and they were duly dealt with by the police. However in the comments that people made there were a lot of people not quite 'wanting blood' but not far off. The police did as the law allowed them to. But others wanted the offender off the road completely; crush the car, ban them from driving for life etc. etc. It was vitriolic.

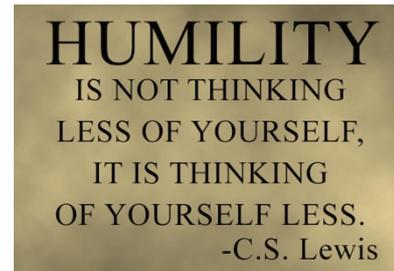
Peter says that we are to have love for one another, a tender heart and a humble mind. With that in mind, what would our response have been? Vitriolic or something else?

Peter is not saying anything remarkably new here, rather he seems to be emphasising some of the wisdom that has sought to guide people from generation to generation. In Proverbs 15:1 we read: "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." Time and again this verse has proved itself by taking the heat out of many a situation resolutions have been found and spirits calmed as opposed to unnecessary escalation.

This love, this tender heart does not mean a weak heart – we have all heard about 'tough love' and sometimes the strength of love is shown more in the quiet than it is in loud debate. I remember one of my lecturers being accompanied into a lecture by all the other lecturers because she threatened to say, "Be afraid, be very afraid" when it came to giving back graded course work. The department still wanted to have some students on the course by the end of the lecture!

In these days following Easter, we cannot be anything other than convinced of the strength of God's love, of the love Jesus had for us in going to his death and then rising again. There was immense power demonstrated then. Yet when he rose he did not seek a great fanfare Jesus appeared peacefully and calmly to Mary, then to the other disciples and later to many more.

Compassion and humility – two aspects of God's love that we are called to demonstrate - have at various times been misinterpreted. Sometimes humility has been understood to mean, be quiet, be subservient, don't make a fuss, don't complain – merely accept. However, maybe true humility is summed up in these words by C.S. Lewis:



This week is Christian Aid Week, a time when many people all over the country are involved in raising money for people in a variety of situations where the projects that Christian Aid are involved in. These projects make a huge difference to lives all over the world. I have always like the Christian Aid slogan, 'We believe in life before death.' It is a vital expression of our faith.

This week, we are invited to think of ourselves less and to think of others more. The traditional door-to-door collections will not be taking place and Christian Aid are expecting a big loss of income as a result. But whether it's for Christian Aid, or whether it's for Food Banks, or simply caring for our neighbours, lockdown has created great opportunities to share what we believe society could be like if we paid more attention to the relationships that we can have with those around us.

Peter urges us to have confidence in our human relationship because we can have confidence in our relationship with God. This part of his letter, like the letter as a whole, is encouraging us all to trust in the God who calls us and to have the confidence to live as God intended us to live. Maybe in our current situation God is teaching us more about this, in practical ways, than we could have imagined.

To God be the glory.

Amen.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-15v9iworAU>

To God be the glory, great things he has done !
So loved he the world that he gave us his Son,
who yielded his life in atonement for sin,
and opened the life-gate that all may go in :
*Praise the Lord ! Praise the Lord !
Let the earth hear his voice !
Praise the Lord ! Praise the Lord !
Let the people rejoice !*
*O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son ;
and give him the glory — great things he has done !*

O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
to every believer the promise of God !
And every offender who truly believes,
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives :

Great things he has taught us, great things he has
done,
and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son ;
but purer, and higher, and greater will be
our wonder, our rapture, when Jesus we see :

Frances Jane van Alstyne, (Fanny Crosby) (1820–1915)

Let us pray.

Lord God, we thank you for the words of
encouragement that we find in the Bible. May
you continue to guide us in in your ways as we
make these our prayers

In a world that faces uncertainty and frequently
changing new normals, we pray that you would
continue to guide all those who have influence
and make decisions.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for our own government in their constant
reviewing of planning and looking to the future;
for their negotiations about future trade and the
new working relationships that will come about as
a result of Brexit.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for our family and our friends. For our
church family, for all who we know, especially
those who are grieving at this time, or who
struggle because they cannot make that
important physical contact that would be such a
natural response.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for families now trying to get to grips with
home educating and those who are struggling
with not being with their friends or who cannot
easily access the materials for them that would
help. We pray too for the clubs and organisations
for people of all ages, that are trying to ensure
something can be offered in these times.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for the work of aid agencies, especially
Christian Aid this week. We pray for all the
volunteers who, for the first time in years, are
unable to be as involved as normal.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for a blessing upon our homes, our
neighbours, and all the key workers who may be
putting themselves at greater risk to care for
others.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We give you thanks and praise that whatever the
situation we are in we can confidently come to
you in prayer, knowing that you hear our prayers.

Heavenly Father, after a moment of quiet as we
bring our own concerns to you, we join in the
family prayer.

...

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. AMEN.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJkHkUw0tKk>

Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesu, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art ;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.

Come, almighty to deliver,
let us all thy life receive ;
suddenly return, and never,
never more thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation,
pure and spotless let us be ;
let us see thy great salvation,
perfectly restored in thee :
changed from glory into glory,

till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise !

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)

Blessing

May the love of the Father enfold you.
The love of the Saviour uphold you.
The love of the Spirit surround you.
And may you know the blessing of God with you
this and every day.
Amen.



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