

At Home Service for Sunday 7th November 2021 - Prepared by Joan Gosling

Welcome to our act of worship today, May God be glorified as we worship His holy name.

Precious Almighty God as we come before you today we give you thanks and praise for your constant presence. Enthroned in heavenly splendour and yet always there in our times of joy and sorrow. Great is your faithfulness, great is your tender loving care, and great is your rich source of blessings shared with us in so many different ways. Please forgive us when our eyes and hearts are not on you. May we never forget the price you paid Lord Jesus for us to receive your amazing forgiveness and grace. May all glory be given to you heavenly Father, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Hymn:

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,
Be all else but naught to me, save that thou art;
Be my best thought in the day and the night,
Both waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word,
Be thou ever with me, and I with thee Lord;
Be thou my great Father, and I thy true son;
Be thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.

Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight;
Be thou my whole armour, be thou my true might;
Be thou my soul's shelter, be thou my strong tower;
O raise thou me heavenward, great Power of my power

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise;
Be thou mine inheritance now and always;
Be thou and thou only the first in my heart;
O Sovereign of heaven, my treasure thou art.

High King of heaven, thou heaven's bright Sun,
O grant me it's joys after victory is won;
Great Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be thou my vision, O Ruler of all.

Readings: Mark 12: verses 41- 45 & 1 Timothy 6: verses 17-19

Worship Song

Give thanks with a grateful heart.
Give thanks to the Holy One.
Give thanks because He's given
Jesus Christ His Son.
(repeat)

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.
(repeat)

(last time)
Give thanks.

Reflection

Out of God's heart flows generosity beyond measure.

When we give ourselves to God, rich or poor, we are amazed at the rich blessings we receive. Not because we have to, but because we want to give back to God, in honour of His precious gifts to us.

I'm reminded of one of Dave Bilbrough's worship songs:

Love beyond measure, mercy so free,
your endless resources given to me.
Strength to the weary, healing our lives,
your love beyond measure has opened my eyes, opened my eyes.

What a Saviour we worship, one who wants the best for us and is willing to give His all, so that we may receive the riches of His kingdom.

'Delight yourselves in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.' Psalm 37:4

This poor widow in our Scripture today must have truly delighted in giving to her Lord. She came with just two small coins, giving out of the little she possessed, honouring those in need, putting others before her own needs as she placed the coins into the Temple treasury.

Jesus surveyed the scene, noting her devotion and generosity, and pointing out to the disciples how she gave out of her poverty, while the rich threw in large amounts, giving out of their plenty, not ever knowing what it's like to be in need.

There is nothing wrong with having wealth as long as it doesn't replace our devotion to God, as Paul points out in his letter to Timothy. I am sure God honoured this poor widow's giving and provided for her out of His rich resources.

We live in a part of the world where we have far more than we need and yet people are still living below the poverty line because everything is so unevenly spread.

Throughout the pandemic of Covid-19, we have seen the tremendous generosity of so many, giving beyond measure. Helping to feed the hungry, finding shelter for the homeless and so much more. It was amazing how the resources multiplied as people of faiths and no faith stepped out to put others' needs before themselves. Why does it take a crisis for eyes and hearts to be opened to the needs of others?

Thankfully it doesn't stop many still reaching out, even when things seem impossible. God uses his many resources to increase and help those who are willing to give of what they have.

When Jesus was surrounded by a crowd of 5,000+ hungry people, He said to the disciples "You give them something to eat." Wow what a challenge.

But when one little boy gave up his lunch of 5 small loaves & 2 small fish, and it was passed over to Jesus. What a miracle. God's resources just kept coming, satisfying those hungry souls in more ways than one.

Whatever situation we find ourselves in, rich or poor, if we give what we have to God with no holding back, we are amazed at the rich blessings we receive. They will not always be instant, sometimes the waiting can be hard, but rest assured God will provide, giving what He knows is best for each one of us.

Prayers of Intercession.

Loving Heavenly Father, we bring our world to you, a world in so much need. The hungry, the hurting, the homeless, the bereaved, the sick, the carers, the persecuted, the lonely and isolated by the effects of Covid, the abused, the addicts. Father God through your rich resources will you please reach out, to bring hope and healing through the loving care of your people, reminding us all, we all have a part to play to bring about your purposes. Come Lord Jesus, pour out your Spirit we pray.

The Lord's 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, forever and ever.
Amen.

Hymn

Now thank we all our God,
With hearts and hands and voices;
Who wondrous things has done,
In whom His world rejoices;
Who from our mother's arms
Has blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love,
And still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God
Through all our lives be near us,
With ever joyful hearts
And blessed peace to cheer us;
And keep us in His grace,
And guide us when perplexed,
And free us from all ills
In this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to god
The Father now be given,
The Son, and Him who reigns
With them in highest heaven,
The one eternal God,
Whom heaven and earth adore;
For thus it was, is now.
And shall be ever more.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3: 5-6

May the Lord bless you and keep you and give you peace, in Jesus name. Amen.