

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use at home. We invite you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people across the Methodist Connexion are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Words

Wonderful creator,
we come into your company
to listen to your word, to hear your voice
and know your grace in this place and in our lives.

Amen

Hymn: Be Thou my Vision (Singing the Faith 545)

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/hymns/be-thou-my-vision-o-lord-of-my-heart-stf-545/>

*Irish, 8th century
translated by Mary Elizabeth Byrne (1880-1931)
versified by Eleanor Henrietta Hull (1860-1935) (alt.)*

Collect for the day

God of all power and might
the author and giver of all good things,
graft in our hearts the love of your name,
increase in us true religion,
nourish in us all goodness and of your great mercy
keep us in the same;
through Jesus Christ our Lord

Amen

Methodist Worship Book

Let us pray together our prayer of adoration

Loving God, we lift our praise to you who shaped this world and filled it with such beauty for us to explore in wonder

It is to you, Lord, that we lift our praises, from the beginning you had a plan for us and we are held in your hand.

We lift our praises to you, compassionate Father. It is you who grants us freedom from the burden of sin and, as a shepherd, brings us safely back to you.

Amen.

Let us pray together our prayer of confession

Forgive us, Lord, when our faith is too small and we struggle to believe that you can help us, when we cry out in despair not expecting an answer.

Forgive us when others try to persuade us that you do not exist or when the words of others lead us to doubt.

Forgive us, Lord, when the journey of faith is hard and we are tempted to wander, when we do not use wisely the gifts that you have given us.

Forgive us, Lord and rekindle the flame that once shone within our hearts.

Amen.

Hebrews 4: 12-16

Gospel Reading: Mark 10:17-31

Reflection

When reading a bible passage one of the things I sometimes do is to try and put myself in the reading, imagining what is happening around and what the feelings are of those mentioned in the passage.

In today's gospel reading, we hear of a man, described as the rich man, running up to Jesus to seek answers. I imagine that something in his life must have caused him to run to Jesus, kneel down and ask his question. The rich man has a desperation behind his question; a desire to know the answer, a desire to find out the answers from the teacher.

Many of us have had times in our lives when we have asked the same kinds of questions. The type of question I find myself asking in the middle of a sleepless night or in the middle of the day when I find myself longing to know all the answers, it's an in the moment kind of question about life, that moment in time, what do I need to do to receive God's grace and live a life filled with his plans for me. The rich man knew the answer to the question that he asked Jesus but he still felt the need to ask "...what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

When things go wrong or not in the direction we thought they would, we'd often like to turn back time, to long for something different but unless we're a time traveller, Dr Who or Doc and Marty McFly, that won't be happening to us.

The rich man is wanting a different quality of life, a second chance and Jesus' words may sound like a challenge, a list of things he has to do or a list of things he has to accomplish before he will inherit eternal life.

What if, instead of thinking of the list as challenges, we think of them as words of hope and words of recovery. I'm not thinking of rescue and needs as a prize; but as an alternative; the gift of being able to start again with God in our lives.

Jesus offers us hope and salvation in the grace of God. To receive God's grace, we may need to let go of the things that are holding us back. This may be our riches or the things we are doing in our lives that don't lead us in the direction that God intended. We need to invest in what God is offering us and take up his offer.

Like the rich man we may grieve for what we have to give up, for what we need to change, for the things we are asked by God to do differently. The rich man may have appeared to turn away from what he was being asked to do but we don't know this for sure, we don't know what he did after he left. He may have gone home and immediately changed his life, he may not have done it immediately, it may have been weeks, months or years later. We don't need to know what the rich man did; we need to think about our response, how we respond to God's call on our lives.

What is God asking you to do? Where do you need God's guidance and direction in your life? Are you living a life filled with God's grace or are there things you need to let go of, things you need to do more of? Do you see the hope that comes with having the Holy Spirit as your guide and Jesus in your life? There is so much on offer if we just listen to God's call.

Take time to sit quietly.

A time of prayer

God, you are there in our hours of activity and hours of rest. You heal us and forgive us. God, you are there when we pray and reach out to you. It is through you we find blessing.

Receive our thanks and praise.

In this time of prayer, almighty God, we bring our anxieties, worries and troubles to you in prayer.

We pray for the people and situations close to home. May our eyes be open to the needs of our family and friends and the community around us. May we use the gifts you give us to meet their needs.

Lord in your mercy
Hear our prayer

We pray for your world. We bring before you our concerns about situations in places in our news such as Afghanistan, and in other places which may not currently be in the news headlines but are no less important. We pray for the families who have been forced to leave their

homes to seek security and peace. We pray for those in positions of influence. May they make the right decisions as they work for justice and peace.

Lord in your mercy
Hear our prayer

We remember in our prayers those who are in poor physical or mental health and give thanks to those who look after them. We remember those suffering in other ways, especially those who mourn the deaths of family members and friends. And we pray for ourselves. We pray that we may hear your voice in the midst of our busy lives.

Lord in your mercy
Hear our prayer

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 debts as we forgive our debtors. 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: Will you come and follow me (Singing the Faith 673)

<https://youtu.be/S-Bq1YtpQL8>

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

A prayer of blessing

May you hear God's voice, know his plans for you and feel the support his loving arms give. May you walk with God today, tomorrow and the days ahead.

Amen.

Original Materials by Cathie Steele

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