

twelvebaskets

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EPIPHANY 5B

4th February 2024

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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For more information <https://theworshipcloud.com/terms/free-weekly-resource>

Opening Prayers

Take time to read this prayer:

God of all creation, I worship you.

You know me - what I need, what I rejoice in, what I'm nervous about.

You see me – as the unique individual you created with all my little habits and characteristics.

You hear me – when I pray aloud or silently.

You meet me – here and now and I am content.

God of all creation, I worship you. Amen

Wonder to yourself if you are really able to say the words.

Imagine what it would be like to hear someone else say them for you.

Notice how you feel as you read them.

Take time to tell God what you've discovered.

Then when you are ready and if you feel able say them aloud:

God of all creation, I worship you.

You know me - what I need, what I rejoice in, what I'm nervous about.

You see me – as the unique individual you created with all my little habits and characteristics.

You hear me – when I pray aloud or silently.

You meet me – here and now and I am content.

God of all creation, I worship you. Amen

You may now wish to say the Lord's Prayer in a version or translation with which you are familiar.

Reading: Mark 1:29-39 – [Click for reading](#)

Responding to the reading

What do you feel are the “responsibilities” of seeking to be a Christian?

I think the gospel reading this week gives us a set of clues that help to explore the answer...

So often this passage is read and talked about in terms of Jesus and healing. Who he heals, what he heals etc.

Simon's mother-in-law was ill, and Jesus did indeed come to her and she started to feel better, but what happened next is what grabbed my attention.

The instant she felt better, she got up and started work. She served.

There is a true sense of the obligation she felt to help those around her, as soon as she was physically able. This was what she did. This is what WE do, as part of our Christian faith, because this is what Jesus asked us to do through the way he lived his life.

It's reminiscent of the time Jesus called some fishermen to become his followers. “Immediately”, they dropped their nets and followed. Whatever actually happened, the gospel writers felt it important to let us know how quickly and powerfully they were compelled. And the same sense of urgency is apparent here.

Maybe today, we can be aware of our urge to “do” or to “serve”, and find a way to follow those urges?

- What? – We serve. We look for others in need. As long as we are able, we look out for others who may need our help. In addition to this, if we happen to be the ones in need, we open ourselves up to receiving the help too. This is equally as important.
- Why? – Because this was the message of Jesus in its simplest and purest form. Plus of course, we are assured of God’s help when we are weary, and we can be lifted up on wings like eagles...
- When? - Now! At once! Immediately! – get the message?
- How? – We humble ourselves to care enough to get alongside people to want to get to know about them, to listen. We seek to wear the other person’s moccasins for a while. We resist the temptation to tell them what they should believe!
- Where? - Wherever you find yourself.
- Who? – You.

How does that sit with you? Is it helpful, just sometimes, to make the whole thing seem a bit more simple?

Responding in music

You might like to spend some time listening to and/or joining in with some or all of these songs:

465 STF – Guide me, O thou great Jehovah - [YouTube](#)

707 STF – Make me a channel of your peace - [YouTube](#)

657 STF – You give rest to the weary - [YouTube](#)

89 STF – Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord - [YouTube](#)

Responding in prayer

You might like to spend some time praying for the world today. Look up (for example) the BBC News website live (World, National and Local) and read some of the headlines slowly, paying attention to the situation. If it helps, read the headlines aloud.

You may feel inspired to say or write a few words to widen the topic of each news item (for example if a headline is about a new government policy on plastics, you may wish to jot down or reflect on the overall issue of climate change and care for the environment) or it may be appropriate to leave it at the headline alone.

After this you might wish to write or reflect on any issues that are relevant to you, your immediate family or friends, your local community.

After you have done this for a few minutes, allow some time to ponder then repeat the following response:

Listen Lord Jesus, let my fears be few...

Walk one step before me, and I will follow you.

Amen.

Blessing

Now, I go and enter into the flow of love that is at work in the universe.
I go and discover that God is out there, moving, transforming, touching lives and all creation.
I go, ready to encounter the Spirit of God.

Amen.

Prayers and Prayer Pointers for the Week Ahead

Monday 5th February

- Place your hands flat against a wall and push. Pray thanksgivings that God has strength enough for our weakness.

Tuesday 6th February

- On this day last year (2023), two earthquakes struck the border of Turkey and Syria, killing around 60,000 people. Work is still going on to repair the damage done, support those affected and improve infrastructure.
- Today, you could pray for all involved in vital humanitarian aid work: pray for justice, for funds to reach those in need, for generosity and discernment amongst those who have resources to give.

Wednesday 7th February

- Today is celebrated as Independence Day in the Caribbean island of Grenada – and so our prayers are for all people who want a sense of independence in their lives. We pray for those who feel they have no freedom to make the choices they want to make, who feel restricted.
- Lord, bring liberation and freedom where it is needed most, we pray.

Thursday 8th February

- Read this poem “blessing and rest” by Malcolm Guite. Consider the blessings you have received today. Give thanks for them. <https://malcolmguite.wordpress.com/tag/sabbath>

Friday 9th February

- Draw around the shape of your hand. Write on it the things that you’re carrying that feel like burdens. Offer them to God in prayer, remembering that God carries your burdens with you.

Saturday 10th February

- God of all grace, as this weekend begins, help me to be someone who is using my time to see your kingdom come, here on earth. Help me to do what is mine to do, and to let go of the tasks, worries and anxieties that are not mine to hold.
Amen.