



AT HOME SERVICE

Sunday 19th October 2025

compiled by Alison Morgan - Local Preacher

May our ears be attuned to the whisper of God,
Our hearts open to the love of God,
Our voices raised in the worship of God
And our lives transformed by the power of God.

Hymn - 428 Mission Praise

1] Lord, for the years Your love has kept and guided,
Urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,
Sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided:
Lord of the years, we bring our thanks today.

2] Lord, for that word, the word of life which fires us,
Speaks to our hearts and sets our souls ablaze,
Teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us:
Lord of the word, receive Your people's praise.

3] Lord, for our land in this our generation,
Spirits oppressed by pleasure, wealth and care:
For young and old, for commonwealth and nation,
Lord of our land, be pleased to hear our prayer.

4] Lord, for our world where men disown and doubt You,
Loveless in strength and comfortless in pain,
Hungry and helpless, lost indeed without You,
Lord of the world, we pray that Christ may reign.

5] Lord, for ourselves, in living power remake us
self on the cross and Christ upon the throne,
past put behind us, for the future take us:
Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone.

Timothy Dudley-Smith (1926-2024)

Let us pray

Your word is a lamp to our feet, our guide through the dark, the wisdom and knowledge we follow each day.

Your word is sweeter than honey, yet sharper than swords; it is healing and justice and ours to obey.
Your word is our understanding of grace, peace and love - the reason we come to worship today.

Saviour to all, who healed the sick and brought wholeness, compassion and peace to lives that were broken;

Who brought direction, purpose and joy to those who were seeking;

Who brought forgiveness, wisdom and grace to those who were thirsting;

Grant us faith enough to trust your word, seek your face, follow your footsteps and know you as Lord.

God of justice, we give thanks that you listen to the cry of those suffering oppression or fear,

The forgotten and ignored who will always be your children.

God of justice, your will be done.

God of the poor, we give thanks that you listen to the cry of those suffering hunger, street children and refugees who have nowhere to call their home.

God of the poor, your will be done.

Your will be done through aid workers and politicians, fundraisers and donors.

Your will be done through us.

God of all, we give thanks that you listen to your people's prayers. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our 1st reading is from 2 Timothy 3 vs 14 to 4 vs 5

But as for you, continue in what you have learnt and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learnt it and how from childhood you have known sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that the person of God may be proficient equipped for every good work.

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable; convince, rebuke, and encourage with the utmost patience in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound teaching, but having their ears tickled they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. As for you, be sober in everything, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

Reflection

Faithfulness is the hallmark of Timothy's ministry. The steady tradition of right belief into which he was born is to be the thread that holds his community together. He has had the luxury of learning the Scriptures (which would, of course, have been the Old Testament, at this point) as a child, and now he is to pass on that gift to others. Clearly, there are people in Timothy's community who have 'itching ears'. They like the sound of all kinds of things, and they don't see why they shouldn't choose their own religion by cobbling together lots of different, attractive bits. In response to them, Timothy is to pour out a positive rain of proper teaching. Most preaching courses would expect careful preparation of your subjects and finding the right way to communicate in the right way. But Timothy can't wait for that, the situation is too urgent. This is his ministry, his responsibility. The old generation represented by Paul, is now formally handing on the task to Timothy's generation. In Timothy, at least, they have someone they can trust to be faithful.

Our 2nd reading is from Luke 18 vs. 1-8 The Parable of the Widow and the Unjust Judge

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, 'In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God, nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, "Grant me justice against my accuser". For a while he refused, but later he said to himself, "Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming". And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him

day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?’

Reflection

Under Jewish law, widows were entitled to special protection, but the judge failed again and again to provide it. But the widow does not give up.

The phrase, ‘if at first you don’t succeed try, try again’ comes to my mind. Which is exactly what this poor widow did. This story is about faithful endurance.

This story involves two larger-than-life, stereotyped characters. On the one hand, there is a widow; one of the most exploited, marginalized and vulnerable people in the world of the Bible. On the other hand, there is a judge; one of the most powerful, rich and respected people in the world. The widow is described as longing for justice, and the judge as someone who is indifferent to justice and has no respect for anyone, including those the law tells him to look after – the poor and widows. The writer of Luke wanted to give people a full and accurate account of the life of Jesus and emphasises that, at the beginning of his ministry, Jesus laid out his plans and put the poor, the captives, the blind and the oppressed right at the centre. Sticking to this focus leads us, as readers, to centre the woman in this story. We see her as a woman in her own right, knows her own mind, rather than see her as a means to an end for a powerful man. We see her as a woman of self-awareness that she is a victim and the wisdom to know the name and perpetrators of that injustice. She is a woman who has the self-confidence to initiate a campaign for justice. She is a woman who believes in her ability to verbally reason and persuade. She is a woman who radiates the sort of spirit that isn’t phased by social niceties and is quite happy to embarrass people to get justice. ‘I will grant her justice, so that she may not finally come and slap me in the face’, is one way of understanding the biblical text. It sounds like she is just nagging, but she isn’t. She is just persistent as she knows she is in the right to be heard and not ignored.

This is a woman who can envisage a future full of justice and fairness and who is on fire with a sense of the divine within. This picture gives us the why of prayer. We pray because we need to bring all our thoughts and worries to God, and of course as well as our thanks and praise. Prayer seeks the God of justice and fairness, of grace and love. It’s a deep-down quiet confidence in the unswerving goodness of God, even when the world around us at a personal level and in society seems confused, unjust and those in power are corrupt. It’s that ability to look up at the hills and say, even if through gritted teeth, our help does come from the Lord. It’s the breath, even if it only comes out as a whisper, that sings about God who keeps us in grace and guides us when troubled.

Prayer is an intricate thing. In Christian culture, it’s something we do in private and in public. It’s something we do by ourselves and with others. It’s something we do without really knowing what it’s doing. It’s something as simple as having a single thought in your head and as complicated as centuries of diverse traditions and practices.

Prayer is also personal. Whether it be a short prayer or a long wordy prayer, or just a chat with God, it will always be heard by the God who loves us and who always listens.

Let us pray - Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills – from where will my help come?

My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.

He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is your keeper;

The Lord is your shade at your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day nor the moon by night.
The Lord will keep you from all evil; He will keep your life.
The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and for evermore.

Hymn - 1351 Mission Praise

*Spirit of God, unseen as the wind,
Gentle as is the dove:
Teach us the truth and help us believe,
Show us the Saviour's love!*

1] You spoke to us – long, long ago –
Gave us the written word:
We read it still, needing its truth,
Through it God's voice is heard.
Spirit of God unseen as the wind,

2] Without Your help, we fail our Lord,
We cannot live His way;
We need Your power,
We need Your strength,
Following Christ each day.
Spirit of God unseen as the wind,.....

Margaret Old (1932-2001)

Our help comes from the Lord.
Let us pray to him now.

Loving Father, we pray for our Ministers, for our Local Preachers and our Worship Leaders,
And for those who write the At Home Services, who speak your words.
We pray that many will find your words speaking into their situation
And providing the guidance they need.

We pray for those picking their way through situations of potential conflict and danger;
For law makers and keepers
And all who are oppressed unjustly;
For the leaders of the nations and their people.

We pray for the grace to listen to one another and respond to one another's needs;
We pray for a spirit of co-operation and generosity
In our homes and neighbourhoods.

We pray for those who are wrestling with problems which seem too big to cope with;
For those who have recently received news that has stunned and appalled them,
And are still in a state of shock.

Lord we love your ways:
Our help comes from you.

Loving Father, we thank you for your constant faithfulness to us in spite
of our tendency to fall far short of our responsibilities.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.
And may the blessing of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen