

# Yateley Baptist Church, Sunday 5 April 2020

## Call to Worship: Psalm 103, ESV

Bless the LORD, O my soul,

and all that is within me,

bless his holy name!

<sup>2</sup> Bless the LORD, O my soul,

and forget not all his benefits,

<sup>3</sup> who forgives all your iniquity,

who heals all your diseases,

<sup>4</sup> who redeems your life from the pit,

who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,

<sup>5</sup> who satisfies you with good

so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

## Hymn: Praise! 103B

Praise my soul, the King of Heaven,

to his feet your tribute bring;

ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,

who like me his praise should sing?

Praise him! Praise him!

Praise him! Praise him!

Praise the everlasting King.

<sup>2</sup> Praise him for his grace and favour

to our fathers in distress;

praise him, still the same for ever,

slow to anger, swift to bless.

Praise him! Praise him!

Praise him! Praise him!

glorious in his faithfulness.

<sup>3</sup> Father-like he tends and spares us,

well our human frame he knows;

in his hands he gently bears us,

rescues us from all our foes.

Praise him! Praise him!

Praise him! Praise him!

widely as his mercy flows.

<sup>4</sup> Frail as summer's flower we flourish;

blows the wind and it is gone;

but while mortals rise and perish

God endures unchanging on.

Praise him! Praise him!

Praise him! Praise him!

Praise the high eternal One.

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5 Angels, help us to adore him;  
you behold him face to face;  
sun and moon, bow down before him,  
all who dwell in time and space.  
Praise him! Praise him!  
Praise him! Praise him!  
Praise with us the God of grace.

*Henry F. Lyte (1793-1847)*

### **Reading: Philippians 1:1-11, ESV**

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>3</sup> I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, <sup>4</sup> always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, <sup>5</sup> because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup> And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup> It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel. <sup>8</sup> For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. <sup>9</sup> And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, <sup>10</sup> so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup> filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

### **Hymn: Praise! 600**

Approach my soul, the mercy-seat,  
where Jesus answers prayer,  
and humbly fall before his feet  
for none can perish there.

2 Your promise is my only plea;  
to you alone I cry,  
for burdened souls in you are free  
and such, O Lord, am I.

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3 Bowed down beneath the weight of sin,  
by Satan sorely pressed,  
from outward foes and fears within,  
I come to you for rest.

4 Lord, be my shield and hiding-place,  
that, sheltered near your side,  
I may my fierce accuser face  
and tell him you have died.

*John Newton (1725-1807)*

## **Prayer**

### **Hymn: Praise! 614**

What a friend we have in Jesus,  
all our sins and griefs to bear;  
what a privilege to carry  
everything to God in prayer!  
O what peace we often forfeit,  
O what needless pain we bear,  
all because we do not carry  
everything to God in prayer.

5 Amazing love, to bleed and die,  
to bear the cross and shame,  
that guilty sinners such as I  
might plead your gracious name!

6 Poor tempest-driven soul, be still;  
the promised grace receive;  
when Jesus speaks, I must, I will,  
I can, I do believe!

2 Have we trials and temptations,  
is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged,  
take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Can we find a friend so faithful  
who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our every weakness-  
take it to the Lord in prayer.

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3 Are we weak and heavy-laden,  
burdened with a load of care?  
Jesus is our mighty Saviour,  
he will listen to our prayer.  
Do your friends despise, forsake you?  
take it to the Lord in prayer;  
in his arms he'll take and shield you,  
find your strength and comfort there.

*Joseph M. Scriven (1819-1886)*

### **Sermon: Philippians 1:7-11 – Praying with Paul (in Lockdown)**

‘For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus’ (8)

‘It expresses a yearning that is as much physical as mental, a longing love which moves the whole inner being. But what a remarkable expression Paul uses! He loves them “in the inner being of Christ Jesus”. Certainly this means that he patterns his love for them on that of Christ, but the wording demands something more than the notion of “imitation”. Paul is saying that he has so advanced in union with Christ that it is as if Christ were expressing his love through Paul. Two hearts are beating as one – indeed one heart, the greater, has taken over and the emotional constitution of Christ himself has taken possession of his servant’ (Alec Motyer)

#### **1. Abounding Love**

‘And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more’ (9)

‘Thus Paul prayed that the Philippians love would overflow all dimensions in a lavish, ongoing, limitless love – an unremitting geyser of love to God and a flood of love out to others’ (R. Kent Hughes)

#### **2. Knowledge and Discernment**

‘A virtuous man may be ignorant, but ignorance is not a virtue. It would be a strange God who could be loved better by being known less. Love of God is not the same thing as knowledge of God; love of God is immeasurably more important than knowledge of God; but if a man loves God knowing a little more about him, he should love God for knowing more about him: for every new thing known about God is a new reason for loving him’ (Frank Sheed)

‘abound more and more, with knowledge’ (9)

‘all discernment’

### **3. Approving what is Excellent**

‘so that you may approve what is excellent’ (10)

### **4. The Day of Christ**

‘... and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God’ (10b-11)

‘And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ’ (6)

‘pure and blameless’

‘filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ.’

‘love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control’ (Gal. 5:22-23)

‘Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit’ (John 15:5)

‘By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit’ (John 15:8)

‘the glory and praise of God’ (11b)

### **Hymn: Praise! 967**

Hear the church triumphant singing,

‘Worthy the Lamb!’

Highest heaven with praises ringing,

‘Worthy the Lamb!’

Thrones and powers before him bending,

odours sweet with voice ascending

swell the chorus never-ending:

‘Worthy the Lamb!’

2 Every tongue and tribe and nation-

worthy the Lamb!-

join to sing the great salvation:

‘Worthy the Lamb!’

Loud as mighty thunders roaring,

floods of mighty waters pouring,

worship, at his feet adoring:

‘Worthy the Lamb!’

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3 Harps and songs for ever sounding:  
'Worthy the Lamb!'  
Sin destroyed by grace abounding-  
worthy the Lamb!  
By his blood he dearly bought us,  
when we strayed he came and sought us  
and to glory safely brought us;  
worthy the Lamb!

4 Sing with glad anticipation  
'Worthy the Lamb!'  
through the vale of tribulation,  
'Worthy the Lamb!'  
Sweetest music, all-excelling,  
on his love for ever dwelling,  
still untold, though ever telling:  
'Worthy the Lamb!'

*John Kent (1766-1843)*

## **Closing Prayer**

## **Questions**

1. How does the Bible's view of love differ, practically, from our culture's?
2. Why is 'approving what is excellent' important? Why shouldn't we be content with 'good enough'?
3. Read Galatians 5:22-23. How can our current circumstances be a benefit to us as we seek to cultivate this fruit in our lives?