

# Yateley Baptist Church, Sunday 21 February 2021

## Opening Prayer

### Hymn: Praise! 676

To God be the glory! great things he has done;  
so loved he the world that he gave us his Son  
who yielded his life an atonement for sin,  
and opened the life-gate that all may go in.

*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord!*

*Let the earth hear his voice!*

*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord!*

*Let the people rejoice!*

*O come to the Father through Jesus the Son  
and give him the glory; great things he has  
done.*

*Frances J Van Alstyne (1820-1915)*

### Reading: Psalm 118, ESV

Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;  
for his steadfast love endures for ever!

<sup>2</sup> Let Israel say,

“His steadfast love endures for ever.”

<sup>3</sup> Let the house of Aaron say,

“His steadfast love endures for ever.”

<sup>4</sup> Let those who fear the LORD say,

“His steadfast love endures for ever.”

<sup>5</sup> Out of my distress I called on the LORD;  
the LORD answered me and set me free.

<sup>6</sup> The LORD is on my side; I will not fear.

What can man do to me?

<sup>2</sup> O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood!  
To every believer the promise of God:  
the vilest offender who truly believes,  
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives.

<sup>3</sup> Great things he has taught us, great things he  
has done,  
and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son:  
but purer and higher and greater will be  
our joy and our wonder, when Jesus we see!

<sup>7</sup> The LORD is on my side as my helper;  
I shall look in triumph on those who hate me.

<sup>8</sup> It is better to take refuge in the LORD  
than to trust in man.

<sup>9</sup> It is better to take refuge in the LORD  
than to trust in princes.

<sup>10</sup> All nations surrounded me;  
in the name of the LORD I cut them off!

<sup>11</sup> They surrounded me, surrounded me on  
every side;

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in the name of the LORD I cut them off!  
<sup>12</sup> They surrounded me like bees;  
they went out like a fire among thorns;  
in the name of the LORD I cut them off!  
<sup>13</sup> I was pushed hard, so that I was falling,  
but the LORD helped me.  
<sup>14</sup> The LORD is my strength and my song;  
he has become my salvation.  
<sup>15</sup> Glad songs of salvation  
are in the tents of the righteous:  
"The right hand of the LORD does valiantly,  
<sup>16</sup> the right hand of the LORD exalts,  
the right hand of the LORD does valiantly!"  
<sup>17</sup> I shall not die, but I shall live,  
and recount the deeds of the LORD.  
<sup>18</sup> The LORD has disciplined me severely,  
but he has not given me over to death.  
<sup>19</sup> Open to me the gates of righteousness,  
that I may enter through them  
and give thanks to the LORD.  
<sup>20</sup> This is the gate of the LORD;  
the righteous shall enter through it.

<sup>21</sup> I thank you that you have answered me  
and have become my salvation.  
<sup>22</sup> The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone.  
<sup>23</sup> This is the LORD's doing;  
it is marvellous in our eyes.  
<sup>24</sup> This is the day that the LORD has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad in it.  
<sup>25</sup> Save us, we pray, O LORD!  
O LORD, we pray, give us success!  
<sup>26</sup> Blessed is he who comes in the name of the  
LORD!  
We bless you from the house of the LORD.  
<sup>27</sup> The LORD is God,  
and he has made his light to shine upon us.  
Bind the festal sacrifice with cords,  
up to the horns of the altar!  
<sup>28</sup> You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;  
you are my God; I will extol you.  
<sup>29</sup> Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;  
for his steadfast love endures for ever!

## **Sermon (Part 1): Psalm 118 – Working Out God’s Perfection in Your Life**

**FIRST POINT: if we are to be the best we can be, we need an idea of what the perfect looks.**

We often get stuck when considering God’s character, his attributes, his perfections. We refer to them, recite them to each other but forget that their purpose is to work them out in our lives.

**Why is a knowledge of the perfect or the ideal important?**

Because it provides a standard by which to measure and improve our lives in our service to God.

**Where can we find the perfections that the philosophers searched for thousands of years?**

In God, through the Bible.

**What are God’s perfections or attributes?**

His **communicable attributes** are:

Omniscience/Knowledge, Wisdom, Goodness, Love, Grace, Mercy, Longsuffering, Holiness, Righteousness/Justice, Veracity/Truth, Sovereignty, Omnipotence – 12.

(‘Communicable’ means that we see some evidence of these in mankind, but only in a limited and imperfect way.)

**His incommunicable attributes** are: Independence, Immutability/Unchangingness, Infinity, Simplicity (not composed of parts); not subject to division.

## **SECOND POINT: to say 'God is Good' is a concept; how do we translate this into everyday actions?**

Consider the Psalm Rachael read to us:

'Out of my distress I called on the LORD;  
the LORD answered me and set me free.

<sup>6</sup> The LORD is on my side; I will not fear.

What can man do to me?' (Psalm 118:5-6)

God's goodness free us from distress, it relieves our fear.

God works out his perfections in his revelation to us, the Bible – we could never find or manufacture these for ourselves because we are imperfect and the imperfect can only generate imperfection.

God's perfections have practical applications in our lives and he shows us how he takes the concept the ideal and sets it to work. We should admire God's perfections for what they are, but He also says we must understand how he applies them.

### **God outworks his perfections, should we?**

#### **Hymn**

Who has held the oceans in his hands?

Who has numbered every grain of sand?

Kings and nations tremble at his voice

All creation rises to rejoice

*Behold our God, seated on his throne*

*Come, let us adore him*

*Behold our king, nothing can compare*

*Come, let us adore him*

2 Who has given counsel to the Lord?

Who can question any of his words?

Who can teach the one who knows all things?

Who can fathom all his wondrous deeds?

3 Who has felt the nails upon his hands?

Bearing all the guilt of sinful man

God eternal, humbled to the grave

Jesus, Saviour, risen now to reign

*Jonathan Baird, Meghan Baird, Ryan Baird, and Stephen Altrogge*

#### **Sermon (Part 2)**

...to glorify God is to manifest God's glory: not only passively, as all creatures do, which have neither religion or reason, but also actively, men glorify God when the design of their life and actions is the glory and honour of God – Shorter Catechism Explained from Scripture, Thomas Vincent, 1674.

***The purpose of preaching and teaching, Bible reading and meditation on the word, fellowship and praying is to help us know and understand God's perfections and to design them into our imperfect lives and apply them as perfectly as possible.***

**Six Steps to Designing/Planning/Habituating Them into Your Life and Applying Them:**

- Glory in their purity, power and perfection – beware, in the best possible way; this can be overwhelming
- Understand them by understanding how God works them out in practice in the Godhead, the world and individuals

- Understand how they have and can be applied in the lives of others – role model: not perfect but high standard
- Understand how they can be applied in your own life
- Question whether they are present in your own life and to what degree
- Seek to make them habits – do them unconsciously, which is rewiring your brain for Godliness. More difficult when older, but can be done.

The first four are more heavily the duty of the church, along with yourself; the last two are more heavily your duty, along with the church.

Start with one and work it through. Try something other than love, which is often the favourite; perhaps goodness or holiness or mercy.

### **Hymn: Praise 2! 68**

The splendour of the king,  
clothed in majesty:

let all the earth rejoice,  
all the earth rejoice.

He wraps himself in light,  
and darkness tries to hide  
and trembles at his voice,  
and trembles at his voice:

*How great is our God, sing with me:  
how great is our God, and all will see  
how great, how great is our God.*

2 And age to age he stands,  
and time is in his hands:  
Beginning and the End,  
Beginning and the End.

*Chris Tomlin & Ed Cash & Jesse Reeves*

The Godhead, Three-in-One:

Father, Spirit, Son,  
the Lion and the Lamb,  
the Lion and the Lamb.

*How great is our God...*

Name above all names,  
worthy of our praise;  
my heart will sing  
how great is our God. (x2)

*How great is our God...*

## **Prayer**

### **Hymn: Praise! 215**

Awake, my soul, and with the sun  
your daily stage of duty run;  
shake off dull sleep and joyful rise  
to make your morning sacrifice.

2 Redeem your mis-spent time that's past  
and live this day as if your last;  
improve your talent with due care,  
for God's great day yourself prepare.

3 Let all your speaking be sincere,  
your conscience as the noonday clear;  
think how all-seeing God surveys  
your secret thoughts and all your ways.

4 Give praise to God, who safely kept  
and well refreshed me while I slept:  
grant, Lord, that when from death I wake  
I may of endless life partake.

*Thomas Ken (1637-1711)*

### **Closing Prayer**

5 To you my vows I here renew:  
disperse my sins as morning dew;  
guard my first springs of thought and will  
and with yourself my spirit fill.

6 Direct, control, suggest this day  
all I desire or do or say;  
that all my powers with all their might  
for your sole glory may unite.

7 Praise God, from whom all blessings flow  
in heaven above and earth below;  
one God, three Persons, we adore —  
to him be praise for evermore!