

Sunday 15th May 2022

Welcome

Call to Worship – I will proclaim Your greatness, my God and King; I will thank You for ever and ever Every day I will think You; I will praise You for ever and ever. The Lord is great and is to be highly praised; His greatness is beyond all understanding” Psalm 149

Hymn 100

O Lord, Thou art my God and King

1. O Lord, thou art my God and King;
thee will I magnify and praise:
I will thee bless, and gladly sing
unto thy holy name always.

2. Each day I rise I will thee bless,
and praise thy name time without end.
Much to be praised, and great God is;
his greatness none can comprehend.

3. Race shall thy works praise unto race,
the mighty acts show done by thee.
I will speak of the glorious grace,
and honour of thy majesty:

4. Thy wondrous works I will record.
By many shall the might be told
of all thy awesome acts, O Lord:
and I thy greatness will unfold.

Prayer and Lord's Prayer

Lord our God, we bless Your Name this morning, with all our hearts.
We will never forget what You have done for us.

You surround us with good things. Your loving mercy is always present.
You are extremely patient with us and always slow to become angry.
You never remain angry or bear a grudge against us.

You have forgiven us all our sins through the death of Your Son.
But we have acted as if those sins are still a burden to us.
Lord, help us to see that You have set us free from our sins and from the guilt that goes with them.

And forgive us even now Father, for living according to our old earthly natures and not setting our hearts and minds on the things above, where Your Son, who is seated at Your right hand in the place of honour and has given each one of us a new nature.

Teach us Lord, teach us about Yourself, for we long to know You better and we realise that You want to really get to know us too.

May we always look first to You in everything we plan and do this week.
Committing all things, our hopes, our fears, our joys and our sorrows, into Your hands.

Receive now our gift offerings which we lay before You in gratitude for all that You are and for the many ways in which You have blessed us.

And hear us as we join together as Your people, in the prayer which Jesus has taught us:

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,
For ever.
Amen

Old Testament Reading - Psalm 43: 1-7 (Elise Williams, Selkirk)

43 ¹⁻⁴ But now, God's Message,
the God who made you in the first place, Jacob,
the One who got you started, Israel:
"Don't be afraid, I've redeemed you.
I've called your name. You're mine.
When you're in over your head, I'll be there with you.
When you're in rough waters, you will not go down.
When you're between a rock and a hard place,
it won't be a dead end—
Because I am God, your personal God,
The Holy of Israel, your Savior.
I paid a huge price for you:
all of Egypt, with rich Cush and Seba thrown in!
That's how much you mean to me!
That's how much I love you!
I'd sell off the whole world to get you back,
trade the creation just for you.
⁵⁻⁷ "So don't be afraid: I'm with you.
I'll round up all your scattered children,
pull them in from east and west.
I'll send orders north and south:
'Send them back.
Return my sons from distant lands,
my daughters from faraway places.
I want them back, every last one who bears my name,
every man, woman, and child
Whom I created for my glory,
yes, personally formed and made each one.'"

Hymn 153

Great is Thy faithfulness

1. Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father
There is no shadow of turning with Thee
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not
As Thou hast been, Thou forever will be

*Great is Thy faithfulness
Great is Thy faithfulness
Morning by morning new mercies I see
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me*

2. Summer and winter and springtime and harvest
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love

3. Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow
Blessings all mine with 10, 000 beside

Thomas O. Chisholm (1866-1960)

Prayer - (Gordon Junor - Selkirk)

Eternal and generous God,
thank You for Your many gifts to us –
not least the gift of Your Son
who in turn gave His own life for the life of the world.
Help us we pray to live as generously:
ready to offer time, energy and all we have and are, for Your kingdom's sake.
Take these gifts we pray,
and let them symbolise the giving of ourselves afresh to You this day.
Use them and use us, to spread and to share Your love, with all.
Influencing this world with hope, joy and peace.
Lord Jesus Christ, risen to live forever,
Thank You for continuing to entrust us with Your good news.
Thank you for continuing to stand by us even when we let You down
and thank You for never faltering in Your care for us and Your love for us,
even when we hurt and betray You.
May we in return, stand by You...care for You....love You...
and above all, may we work with You in feeding Your sheep.
Give us, we pray, the courage as individuals and as communities of Your people, the courage to listen for
Your voice, the courage to pick up the nets of old habits, to follow You to different waters.
And when we fear where that might lead us, when we hesitate, pulled by the safe and familiar,
reassure us of being held in Your arms and embolden us simply to follow.
Ever with us Lord,
we bring to You a world You care for deeply.
Into those places where violence is rife,
We think again, especially at this time, of the continuing Russian aggression against Ukraine
bring Your peace, we pray.
Into those places where hatred and suspicion grow, encourage understanding, we pray
and sow and nurture the seeds of love and respect.
Where poverty and disease make life miserable for people, don't let us turn away.
Instead, Help us to be Your hands: Your heart, Your feet, Your voice.

For the planet itself, we pray –
giving You heartfelt thanks, Lord God, for its beauty, its life and power...and majesty...
A thing so great and yet so vulnerable.
We rejoice in seas, mountains, lakes, fields, beaches and gardens –
all of them gifts from You to be enjoyed and cared for.
Help us to make sure we do just that. May we thank the Creator for all creation
and know and value our own part in it.
All these prayers we offer in Jesus' name, the Living God,
who sees so much more than we could ever think or know,
and who chooses to invite us to join in the divine mission
to bring love and life and light to this world.
Glory be to Father , Son and Holy Ghost, Creator, Son and Spirit –
Lord Jesus Christ, when we forget that You are alive...
when we act as though You cannot speak for Yourself: forgive us, we pray.
When we're slow to ask for Your advice and to look for Your guidance;
when we think we know best and forge ahead regardless, because we are sure we know Your mind,
again, please forgive us.
Remind us in firm but gentle ways of how close and active You always are –you who are the ever-living,
Lord of all creation.
Lord Jesus, set God's Spirit free to move among us here and now, we pray.
Give us the courage to let that Spirit renew and inspire us
as through Your Word, Your people and Your world,
You speak to us of hope and faith and love
and challenge us to live lives that are faithful to Your cause of justice and peace.
Protect human rights for all across the world and, indeed, at home
Restore and affirm your morality where that is at risk or, indeed , where it seems lost
Hear us now, as together with all Your people
we pray the words You taught Your friends, saying (from the Lorimer Bible):
Our Faither in heiven,
be hallowt thy name;
thy Kingdome come;
thy will be done on the yird, as in heiven.
Gie us our breid for this incomin day;
forgie us the wrangs we hae wrocht,
as we hae forien the wrangs we hae dree'd;
an sey-us-na sairlye, but sauf us frae the Ill Ane:
for the Kingdome, the pouer an the glorie ar thine
for ivver an aye.
SAE LET IT BE

Hymn

You're the Word of God the Father

You're the Word of God the Father
from before the world began;
every star and every planet
has been fashioned by your hand.
All creation holds together
by the power of your voice.

Let the skies declare your glory,
let the land and seas rejoice!

*You're the Author of creation,
you're the Lord of every man
and your cry of love rings out across the lands.*

Yet you left the gaze of angels,
came to seek and save the lost,
and exchanged the joy of Heaven
for the anguish of a cross.
With a prayer you fed the hungry,
with a word you stilled the sea,
yet how silently you suffered
that the guilty may go free.

With a shout you rose victorious
wresting victory from the grave,
and ascended into Heaven
leading captives in your way.
Now you stand before the Father
interceding for your own;
from each tribe and tongue and nation
you are leading sinners home.

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Bible Teaching

Matthew 14 v 22-32 (GNB) Jesus & Peter Walking on the Water.

Bible Catchphrases.

Last week my wife Adrienne and I were up in Aberdeen visiting family. We stayed one night with our grandson and in the evening he persuaded us to watch his favourite TV programme, 'Celebrity Catch Phrase'. Now I don't think we had watched this programme for years, in fact the last time I had seen it, it was just ordinary people and not celebrities. But I found it quite entertaining and found that I could guess quite a few of the catch phrases - "Say what you see" apparently is the key.

Now, why am I telling you all this? Because this morning we are going to look together at three Bible 'catchphrases.' See if you can guess what this catchphrase is:

(PICTURE OF JESUS FEET ON WATER)

'WALKING ON WATER!' (repeat)

Jesus had just performed another great miracle. He had fed over 5,000 people with just five loaves of bread and two small fish. All those who were fed were amazed at what had happened. Jesus had fed them both physically and spiritually & many of them had been healed of their diseases.

And now we look together at what happened just after this amazing miracle:

Matthew 14: 22-32 (GNB)

Jesus Walks on the Water

²² Then Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people away. ²³ After sending the people away, he went up a hill by himself to pray. When evening

came, Jesus was there alone; ²⁴ and by this time the boat was far out in the lake, tossed about by the waves, because the wind was blowing against it.²⁵ Between three and six o'clock in the morning Jesus came to the disciples, walking on the water. ²⁶ When they saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. "It's a ghost!" they said, and screamed with fear.

²⁷ Jesus spoke to them at once. "Courage!" he said. "It is I. Don't be afraid!" ²⁸ Then Peter spoke up. "Lord, if it is really you, order me to come out on the water to you." ²⁹ "Come!" answered Jesus. So Peter got out of the boat and started walking on the water to Jesus. ³⁰ But when he noticed the strong wind, he was afraid and started to sink down in the water. "Save me, Lord!" he cried. ³¹ At once Jesus reached out and grabbed hold of him and said, "What little faith you have! Why did you doubt?"

³² They both got into the boat, and the wind died down.

So Jesus sends His twelve disciples ahead of Him in a boat to row across the Sea of Galilee to the other side. Then He sends the 5,000 plus people back to their homes, while He goes up a hill to pray (the Sea of Galilee is surrounded by hills.) As the evening wears on, Jesus is there on His own, praying to His Father. As He looks down on the water, Jesus sees His disciples struggling against the wind and waves, about halfway across. They are straining at the oars and making little headway against the wind which is blowing against them. Now Jesus sees all this from His high vantage point and decides to go to their aid.

And so, in the wee small hours of the morning, Jesus approaches them, not in a boat, not swimming, but **WALKING ON THE WATER!**

"What's happening" the terrified disciples scream.

"It's a ghost!" they cry out.

But Jesus reassures them: "It's ok, don't be frightened, it's Me!"

Peter is not convinced, so he cries out: "Lord, if it really is You, then prove it, order me to come out and join You."

And this brings us to the second of our catch phrases: It comes from John Ortberg and it's the title of his book -

'IF YOU WANT TO WALK ON WATER, YOU'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF THE BOAT!' (repeat)

What Jesus was now doing (walking on the water) He could enable His disciples to do also!

Now Peter was just in the very early stages of coming to understand this:

"Jesus if You really ARE walking on the water, then let me do the same!"

"Come!" says Jesus.

And Peter is now faced with a big decision to make. Does he stay where he is, in the relative safety of the boat, or does he step out of the boat and on to the rolling waves to join Jesus? Does he have the faith and the courage to

'GET OUT OF THE BOAT?'

Peter completely TRUSTS Jesus and so when Jesus tells him to "Come", he does! Not only does Peter TRUST Jesus, he OBEYS Him. He PROVES that he trusts Jesus by what he DOES - by stepping out of the boat.

'IF YOU WANT TO WALK ON WATER, YOU'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF THE BOAT!'

And so, amazingly, miraculously, Peter steps out of the boat and puts his foot on the water, keeping his eyes on Jesus.

And the laws of nature, which state that he will sink..... are suspended as he walks towards his Master.

What an amazing sight that must have been! We can imagine the other disciples gasping in astonishment as Peter heads towards their Lord. Peter learned that day that, whenever Jesus is involved, TRUST coupled

with OBEDIENCE results in something amazing! Whereas trust which is NOT followed by obedience results in nothing!

Peter could have told Jesus that he trusted Him, but stayed where he was, safe in the boat - but he didn't. He showed that he REALLY trusted Jesus by doing exactly as he was told, no matter how frightening or bizarre it seemed.

And this is something which I believe God is trying to impress upon us here in Selkirk, Ashkirk, Ettrick & Yarrow. Because it has come up a lot lately in our Bible teaching. Last week with the ten men trusting and obeying Jesus and being cured of leprosy. And a few weeks before when we looked at the disciples trusting and obeying Jesus on Palm Sunday.

As the hymn puts it: 'Trust and obey, for there's no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.'

It's all a case of trusting in Him enough to take that first step of faith. It's not a 'leap of faith' (there's another catchphrase!), just a gentle, tentative step forward.

I wonder if you've ever been abseiling? What happens is that you stand at the top of a high cliff or building, securely roped up, with the rope fixed to a higher point. And then, standing with your back to the sheer drop - you slowly release the rope a wee bit at a time, bouncing with your two feet off the cliff-face as you descend! When you first learn to abseil, an instructor stands at the top of the cliff to help you, holding on to the fixed rope and letting it out gently as you descend. The instructor is full of encouragement and seeks to fill you with confidence that you can do it.

But the hardest, most nerve-wracking part is when you take that first step BACKWARDS off the cliff! It seems to go against all common sense and going through your head are the thoughts which tell you you are going to fall to your doom! You need to have FAITH. You need to have TRUST. Trust in the ropes and trust in your instructor!

As you prepare to take that first backward step into the unknown, you need to KEEP YOUR EYES ON YOUR INSTRUCTOR and not on the bottom of the cliff!
And you need to LISTEN to your instructor as he or she quietly ENCOURAGES you to take that first step and to continue your descent.

And it must have been a bit like that for Peter that early morning on the Sea of Galilee. Peter LISTENED to Jesus, when Jesus bid him "Come" and as long as he kept his eyes on the Master, all was well - he was walking on the water.

Now we don't know how far Peter walked on the water, but all of a sudden it all went wrong.
v 30: "But when he noticed the strong wind, he was afraid and started to sink down in the water. Save me Lord! he cried.

Can you remember when you first learned to ride a bike. With your mum or dad holding on to the back of the saddle, Running along with you as you pedalled, then letting go?
I remember teaching our younger daughter Helen, many years ago now, on the pavement just outside our house. Things went really well at first, I was holding on with one hand, then as she built up speed I let go and off she went. Then Helen suddenly realised that I was not there holding on, she panicked, the bike started to wobble & down she went. She tells me that she still remembers seeing my feet running towards her as I ran to her aid!

Everything was fine until she realised I was not there to support her. "Dad's not holding on - I can't do this - I'm scared - I'm going to fall!" And that's exactly what she did!

For Peter, everything is fine when he looks at Jesus and walks towards Him. But when he takes his eyes off the Lord and looks instead at the waves and hears and feels the wind blowing around him - then, just like Helen, he panics!

“I can’t do this” he tells himself. “It’s ridiculous, it’s impossible - how can a man walk on water?” Peter’s attention went from JESUS, upon whom he was depending, to THE PROBLEM against which he was fighting! And with his attention so changed - then the inevitable happened - and he began to sink.

“He was afraid” Matthew tells us. Fear! Fear is the emotion we all experience when we are faced with something we perceive to be bigger and stronger than we are, something we feel unable to cope with, something which threatens our resources.

When Peter first stepped out of the boat, the POWER of the Lord Jesus Christ was STRONGER to Peter than the power of the wind and waves. But now, in Peter’s mind, the wind and waves had become stronger. But that was not the case - Jesus power was STILL stronger, but Peter’s fear took over, panic set in and he started to sink! “Save me, Lord” he cries out to his Master - and Jesus does just that. Jesus reaches out his hand to Peter and grabs him, lifting him up. “Peter, Peter” He says “How little faith you have! Why did you doubt?”

Peter’s problem was not the sheer impossibility of the situation NOR the strength and power of the wind and waves. IT WAS HIS LACK OF TRUST IN JESUS! He needed to realise the immensity of the power of Jesus! He needed to learn that Jesus is stronger than ANYTHING or ANYONE. He needed to understand that the One who created the wind and the waves and everything else has dominion over ALL He has created.

“Who is this, that even the wind and waves obey Him?” the disciples asked themselves on another occasion. Peter feared that the waves would soon be OVER HIS HEAD. But, all the time, the waves were UNDER JESUS’ FEET!

And this brings us to our final Bible catchphrase, perhaps a bit too long to be catchy, but very apt nonetheless. I’m grateful to Charles Price in his commentary on Matthew for coining this phrase.

And it applies to each one of us: When you are worried about something - put it all into perspective. Tell yourself that no matter HOW big the problem is - JESUS IS BIGGER! And repeat to yourself this catchphrase:

THE THING THAT THREATENS TO BE OVER MY HEAD - IS UNDER THE FEET OF JESUS!

(repeat)

Now there’s a real catchphrase!

ALL the things, ALL the things which trouble us, which we worry about.
Those things that are over our heads and threaten to overwhelm us -
ALL OF THEM, ALL OF THEM ARE UNDER THE FEET OF JESUS!!

The apostle Paul writes in 1st Corinthians

15 v 27, quoting from Psalm 8 and referring to Jesus: “For the Scripture says: God put ALL THINGS under His feet!”

Way out there in the middle of the Sea of Galilee, Peter came to see that he was utterly and entirely dependent on Jesus! And we all need to see this also. As Christians, each one of us is utterly and entirely dependent on Jesus! Without His help we will all go under!

That thing which is hanging over YOUR head at the moment.

That thing which is troubling you. It may be a concern about your health. It may be you are worried about a member of your family or about a friend. It may be you are troubled about how you will make ends meet. It may be you just feel low and can't seem to shake it off.

Whatever it is that hangs over your head. Whatever it is that threatens to overwhelm you. Remember the story of Jesus & Peter walking on the water. And tell yourself: That thing, however difficult it may seem. However immovable it may appear to be. However distressing it is. However much it is giving you sleepless nights. That thing is UNDER THE FEET OF JESUS! He has it all under HIS control. He has POWER & AUTHORITY over that thing which is troubling you and causing you distress. Just as He had power and authority over the wind and the waves that day on the Sea of Galilee.

Jesus helped Peter and He can help you to rise above your troubles. He can put them under YOUR feet! He can help you to overcome them! All you have to do is TRUST HIM! Trust in His awesome and amazing power

Fix your eyes upon HIM! DON'T look down at the wind & the waves, DON'T focus on that thing which is troubling you. Keep your eyes upon HIM! And repeat to yourself this phrase:

THE THING THAT THREATENS TO BE OVER MY HEAD - IS UNDER THE FEET OF JESUS!
(repeat)

The Lord's my Shepherd (Townend)

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
His goodness restores my soul.

And I will trust in You alone,
And I will trust in You alone,
For Your endless mercy follows me,
Your goodness will lead me home.

He guides my ways in righteousness,
And He anoints my head with oil,
And my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.

And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
For You are with me, and Your rod and staff
Are the comfort I need to know.

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Benediction - 'And now may
the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
the Love of God
and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with you all, now and forevermore.'

(3 fold Amen)