

Circuit Service – 14th March 2021

Led by Bart Woodhouse and Sarah Ford

Welcome and Prayer (Bart)

Opening worship (Sarah)

10,000 Reasons – Matt Redman

Chorus:

*Bless the Lord O my soul
O my soul
Worship His Holy name
Sing like never before
O my soul
I'll worship Your Holy name*

Verse 1:

*The sun comes up
It's a new day dawning
It's time to sing Your song again
Whatever may pass
And whatever lies before me
Let me be singing
When the evening comes*

Verse 2:

*You're rich in love
And You're slow to anger
Your name is great
And Your heart is kind
For all Your goodness
I will keep on singing
Ten thousand reasons
For my heart to find*

Verse 3:

*And on that day
When my strength is failing
The end draws near
And my time has come
Still my soul will
Sing Your praise unending
Ten thousand years
And then forevermore*

Time of Prayer (Sarah)

Opening prayer and thanksgiving.

What A Beautiful Name – Hillsong

*You were the Word at the
beginning
One with God the Lord Most
High
Your hidden glory in creation
Now revealed in You our Christ*

*What a beautiful Name it is
What a beautiful Name it is
The Name of Jesus Christ my
King
What a beautiful Name it is
Nothing compares to this
What a beautiful Name it is
The Name of Jesus*

*You didn't want heaven without
us
So Jesus, You brought heaven
down
My sin was great, Your love
was greater
What could separate us now?*

*Death could not hold You
The veil tore before You
You silenced the boast of sin
and grave
The heavens are roaring
The praise of Your glory
For You are raised to life again
You have no rival
You have no equal
Now and forever, God You
reign
Yours is the kingdom
Yours is the glory
Yours is the Name above all
names
What a powerful Name it is
What a powerful Name it is
The Name of Jesus Christ my
King*

Reading – Deuteronomy 14:22-29, Colossians 1:15-20

With All I Am – Hillsong

Into Your hand I commit again
With All I am for You Lord
You hold my world in the palm
of Your hand
And I am Yours forever

Jesus I believe in You
Jesus I belong to You
You're the reason that I live
The reason that I sing
With all I am

I'll walk with You wherever You
go
Through tears and joy, I'll trust

in You
And I will live in all of Your ways
Your promises forever

Jesus I believe in You
Jesus I belong to You
You're the reason that I live
The reason that I sing

Jesus I believe in You
Jesus I belong to You
You're the reason that I live
The reason that I sing
With all I am

Build This House – Lou Fellingham

All I have and all I am is Yours
There's nothing that I have on

earth
That doesn't come from You.

I lay aside my pride and worldly
worth;
Serve You is the greatest thing
That I could ever do.

For unless You build this house,
I am building it in vain.
Unless the work is Yours,
There is nothing to be gained.
I want something that will stand
When Your holy fire comes;
Something that will last,
And to hear You say 'well done',
Giving glory to You, Lord,
Glory to You, Lord.

So easy to desire what others
have,

Instead of seeing all the gifts
that You have given me.
So help me fan the flame which
You began,
And burn in me a love for You
that all will clearly see.

For unless You build this house,
I am building it in vain.
Unless the work is Yours,
There is nothing to be gained.
I want something that will stand
When Your holy fire comes;
Something that will last,
And to hear You say 'well done',
Giving glory to You, Lord,
Glory to You, Lord.

Sermon (Bart) –

Giving to the Giver

- Colossians shows us clearly that Christ is above all things and that all things ultimate belong to Him. There is an even more direct claim that all things belong to God in Psalm 24:1 “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.” My start point this morning is for us to recognise afresh that everything we feel we own is in actuality God’s. This includes all our resources, time, energy, and even our own bodies. Everything we have in our lives is in the end a gift to us, and in some sense, we are stewards of God’s possessions, His earth, and His people, including our own lives.
- Our response to this truth is expressed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 and Galatians 2:20. “You are not your own, you were bought at a price” and “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me”. There is a gift given to us, our salvation and restored friendship with God, and we then are called to mirror the example of Christ in then giving ourselves into this new relationship, we give to the giver, it’s an exchange, he took our death and gave us His life, we give our lives and find ourselves carrying our own cross as we follow Him. Everything is the Lord’s!

Giving in the Community

- Acts 2:42-47 and Acts 4:32-37 are often given as a picture of what Christian community should look like. What we see here are good early expressions of Christian community that many have attempted to replicate over the centuries in various ways, and usually struggled or failed quite catastrophically. However, they do give us a glimpse into

the innocent first expressions of Kingdom life after Pentecost, where there was an open sharing of resources for the common good, and as we read a little later, to care for those in need (widows are mentioned specifically in Acts 6).

- But, this is not a Christian form of socialism as some would want to suggest, but rather a radical sense of Kingdom. It is not that wealth is something that should equally belong to everyone, but rather that all wealth belongs to Christ and under Christ and in the love made manifest by the Spirit we are allowed to actively administer. We have no right to material possessions or security, but receive these things as a gift and, by the example of the King, make the continuing offer of a gift to others. Nor is it that we equally have a right to power or a voice, instead Jesus is the one who holds all power and speaks all truth, we only have power as adopted children, in the Holy Spirit, and again as a gift, and our voice only has weight as divinely loved child and not as an individual right. Kingdom is uncomfortably (in)different to postmodern individualism! Everything is the Lord's and, by His example and grace, he's entrusted us to "pay it forward".

Giving to the Church

- In Deuteronomy we get some more detail on the concept of the Tithe. It has been mentioned earlier in the Bible, in Genesis as Abram gives a tenth of the plunder to Melchizedek, acknowledging that the Lord had won the victory on his behalf, then again as Jacob prays for a safe journey and return, a tenth is promised, and in several places through Leviticus and Numbers. But, here in Deuteronomy we find a more developed understanding of the Tithe. The tithe here functions on many levels, it's a mark of obedience to God, it's an acknowledgement of God's provision, it allows the Jewish community to come together in celebration, and it requires that the people make space to meet in the presence of the Lord. (The tithe also pays for the dedicated priesthood!)
- Tithing is a principle that Jesus makes little specific reference to except when perhaps rebuking the Pharisees for tithing the herbs and spices and yet neglecting the poor (Matt 23:23). But, the principle remains a strong example of giving and its relationship to obedience, gratitude, community, and resourcing the mission and function of the body of Christ, the church, needs to be valued and reflected on. There are many other passages that speak about giving, the widows mite, Paul's remarks in 1 Corinthians 16 and 2 Corinthians 8, to mention just a few, and these are helpful to broaden out our understanding of giving and cultivating an attitude of generosity. I would encourage us all to think deeply about our giving, our generosity, our time and resources, what we consider "ours" and how willing we are to hand it over to "others". Indeed, to live in the principle of tithing as an act of discipleship that speaks of obedience, acknowledges that everything is His and our dependence is on Him, and that it resources Kingdom activity in giving to those in need and releasing people to express their particular calling in Christ.

- We are his possession, we the church are His reward, and we live because of His grace and by his Spirit He now lives in us. He gave everything for us, and we give ourselves to Him, in surrendered love, and in the generosity of the Spirit. Let us be the church that remembers the innocence of its youth, becoming ever more a radical Kingdom people who care for those in need and release a missional movement that can transform people, communities and nations. Everything is the Lord's and, by His example and grace, we offer our entrusted resources, time, and energy to advance His Kingdom and the Gospel.

All To Jesus I Surrender – Robin Mark

All to Jesus, I surrender
 All to Thee I freely give
 I will ever love and trust You
 In Your presence daily live

I surrender all, I surrender all
 All to Thee, my blessed Savior
 I surrender all

All to Jesus, I surrender
 Lord, I give myself to Thee
 Fill me with Your love and
 power
 Let Your blessing fall on me

I surrender all, I surrender all
 All to Thee, my blessed Savior
 I surrender all

All to Jesus I surrender
 Now I feel the sacred flame
 O the joy of full salvation
 Glory, glory, to Your name

I surrender all, I surrender all
 All to Thee, my blessed Savior
 I surrender all (I surrender all)
 I surrender all, I surrender all

All to Thee, my blessed Savior
 I surrender all

Closing Prayer (Bart)