



Highcliffe and Bransgore **Methodist Churches**

Sunday 28th June, 10:30am. Galatians part 4

Prepared by Rev'd Phillip Dixon

This written worship has been prepared to bless you, as we gather in separate places but fully united in love for our Lord Jesus Christ. Knowing that other people are sharing in this worship with you in their own homes is hopefully an encouragement to you and can bring us all closer together as a church, the family of faith in Jesus.

Good morning church!

This is the day the Lord has made.

We will rejoice and be glad in it!

Opening Prayer:

Loving God, we are joining with others this morning, joined by our faith, love and trust in You. Help us to remember that You are always with us by the presence of Your Holy Spirit who we welcome with expectation into our homes. This morning may our prayers be faithful and heartfelt, may our praise be with sincere gratitude and may our listening to what You say to us through Your Word be with eagerness. Minister to us this morning Lord as we raise our voices in praise of Your name and for all that You have and continue to do. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Proclamation: Then he (Jesus) said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self? Whoever is

ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

Song: Holy Spirit Sing/read /pray
/proclaim the words.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3zARVp3420I&list=PLcHqC9YNzSaB621igMmxf eMUvroQqYr3L>

There's nothing worth more
That could ever come close
No thing can compare
You're our living hope
Your presence, Lord
I've tasted and seen
Of the sweetest of loves
Where my heart becomes free
And my shame is undone
Your presence, Lord

Holy Spirit, You are welcome here
Come flood this place and fill the
atmosphere
Your glory, God, is what our hearts long
for
To be overcome by Your presence, Lord
Your presence, Lord

There's nothing worth more
That could ever come close

No thing can compare
You're our living hope
Your presence, Lord

I've tasted and seen
Of the sweetest of loves
Where my heart becomes free
And my shame is undone
Your presence, Lord

Holy Spirit, You are welcome here
Come flood this place and fill the
atmosphere
Your glory, God, is what our hearts long
for
To be overcome by Your presence, Lord
Your presence, Lord

Let us become more aware of Your
presence
Let us experience the glory of Your
goodness (Repeat x4)

Holy Spirit, You are welcome here
Come flood this place and fill the
atmosphere
Your glory, God, is what our hearts long
for
To be overcome by Your presence, Lord

Songwriters: Katie Torwalt / Bryan Wilson. This version
sung by Francesca Battistelli.

Hymn: StF 94 To God be the glory

Sing/read /pray /proclaim the words.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-15v9iworAU>

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 we may go
in.

Refrain:

*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 thro' Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory, great things he has
done!*

O perfect redemption, the purchase of
blood!

To ev'ry believer the promise of God;
the vilest offender who truly believes,
that moment from Jesus forgiveness
receives.

Refrain

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 wonder, our transport, when Jesus we
see.

Refrain x2

Frances Jane van Alstyne (Fanny Crosby) (1820-1915)

Prayer of confession:

*if my people who are called by my name
humble themselves, pray and seek my face
and turn from their wicked ways, then I
will hear them from heaven and will
forgive their sin and heal their land.*

2 Chronicles 7:14

Let us pray:

Loving and forgiving God, we confess to
You our errors, our pride, our self-reliance
and our lack of love for those who are
harder to understand. Your word says I
must love You and my neighbour as
myself, we are sorry for the times when
that does not happen. For the times when
our good intentions are not followed by
the sacrifice of self. **Father forgive, Christ
have mercy.**

For the times when we have made being a Christian a comfortable status, a statement of attendance or belonging instead of a way of living my life for You and helping others to do likewise. Forgive us for the times when we have not been a good witness to others. **Father forgive, Christ have mercy.**

For the times when we have believed or not highlighted the false teaching that salvation is something to be achieved, a rule to be kept, a hoop to be gone through or a hurdle to be jumped over instead of a beautiful sacrificial gift that by Your blood You freely give. **Father forgive, Christ have mercy.**

For the schemes and plans of man, our use of the worlds techniques, thinking that they will result in the growth of our gatherings instead of a prayerful obedience and seeking of Your will. For the sins of our world, for the aggression, the pollution, the racism, the greed and the immorality. **Father forgive, Christ have mercy.**

Pause

Father, I name the specific things for which I come to You, asking Your forgiveness today.... **Father forgive, Christ have mercy.**

A time of silence to hear what the Lord may be saying to us today.

God of love and power, thank You for the forgiveness and freedom You have given me from my sins, heal and strengthen me by Your Holy Spirit so that I may walk in step with You today a path of righteousness with my past life of sin behind me. I am reminded that, as a believer, I am Your redeemed child, bought back into relationship with You for

a price, the suffering and death of my Lord Jesus Christ.

Your Grace is an unmerited gift to me each and every day. I pray Your Holy Spirit will fill me afresh today with miraculous light, love and kindness so that I may always reflect Your wondrous glory **Amen.**

Preparation for the reading of Scripture: Lord, prepare our hearts like fertile and prepared soil for the reading of Your Word, help us to understand the meaning of what we are reading and how You are speaking to us through it. May Your Holy Spirit, who inspired these words, come to us now in power and truth **Amen.**

Reading: Galatians 5:16-25

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. New King James Version (NKJV)

A time to pause; perhaps read the passage again seeking something not seen or understood on the first reading, pray, and reflect.

Preaching notes:

These notes are complementary to the preaching on this passage that can be accessed on our YouTube channel, Highcliffe and Bransgore Methodist Churches, Sunday 28th June.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoF3pzV1QdM6DPfGUEAgp0g>

Galatians 5:22 and 23, titled as “the Fruit of the Spirit” is an extremely popular and well-known section of scripture and you will, I’m sure, have heard many sermons concerning them. These nine characteristics are given to us by Paul as part of his desire to help the Galatian believers to stay firmly and closely to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Notice that he begins 5:22: “by contrast”, this is the biggest clue to the fact that the true Christian life is one of transformation, it is contrasted against something else, another type of life that looks very much unchanged (what Paul calls “a life satisfying the desires of the flesh”).

Whilst I’m sure we can all readily agree that those “works of the flesh” such as murder, sorcery, fornication and idolatry are completely contrary to a Christian life, Pauls purpose is to expose the fact that factionalism, dissensions and strife are equally (yes equally) in opposition and just as damaging to the Christian life. This is the true Gospel that Paul received in the Spirit from Jesus, “Paul an apostle sent not by human commission or human authority but through Jesus”.

This is teaching that flows throughout the New Testament, straight from the mouth of God (in particular Jesus teaching from the Sermon on the Mount), the letters to the Hebrews 13: 1-8,15-16, to the Romans 12, the letter to the Ephesians (unity in the body and the old life versus the new Ch.4) and the letter of 1 Peter. These are but a few examples and demonstrate that Bible literacy and study is essential for a fulfilling Christian life.

If we lose touch with the one, true Gospel of Jesus Christ or believe it’s meaning can be reinterpreted for 21st Century society we have already lost touch with the teaching of Jesus and along with the Galatians we are following a different gospel, a different path and a different destination.

Notice that we use the singular to talk of “Fruit of the Spirit”, there is a common misunderstanding that these are gifts that come to us in different ways, similar to the Spiritual gifts that Paul talks of in 1 Corinthians 14. We do not receive these characteristics singularly, the idea that someone can be “walking in the Spirit” but be joyless or have a bad temper or be given to factionalism is not contemplated. It may sound harsh and binary to some, but it is completely true, you are either walking in Spirit or you are not. The Fruit of the Spirit are qualities of unity, they are all to be within everyone who is filled with the Spirit and faithfully following Jesus.

Lastly, verse 24, to crucify the flesh is a metaphorical yet purposeful action that we take as a “declaration of war” against the desires of the flesh, as I have previously quoted John Calvin “we must labour and fight and apply our utmost

energy". But be assured, we are not alone in this battle, God is with us through His Spirit and we walk, not alone, but with brothers and sisters who, also being tempted, undertake the same battle with us. **Amen**

Personal Prayer:

Holy Spirit come powerfully into my life today, help me to live my life always in step with You. May my life be a living example of a Spirit filled relationship, fill me afresh today with Your supernatural love and power. **Amen.**

Hymn: StF 338 There is a Redeemer

Read /pray /proclaim the words.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G0LA3GvAUGU>

There Is A Redeemer,
Jesus, God's own Son,
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah,
Holy One,
*Thank you O my Father,
for giving us Your Son,
and leaving Your Spirit,
till the work on earth is done.*

Jesus my Redeemer,
name above all names,
precious Lamb of God, Messiah,
O, for sinners slain.
*Thank you O my Father,
for giving us Your Son,
and leaving Your Spirit,
till the work on earth is done.*

When I stand in glory,
I will see his face,
and there I'll serve my King forever,
In that holy place.
*Thank you O my Father,
for giving us Your Son,
and leaving Your Spirit,*

till the work on earth is done. vv. 1-2 Melody Green (b 1946) v. 3 Keith Green (1953-1982)

We pray together our Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name,
Your Kingdom come,
Your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the Kingdom,
the power, and the glory are Yours
now and for ever. **Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession:

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything; tell God your needs, and don't forget to thank him for his answers. If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will keep your thoughts and your hearts quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4: 6,7 TLB.

Lord, we come to you to bring our prayers for our church, other people and your world. Help us to be led by your Holy Spirit in all that we do and say. Help us to listen to your voice, guiding and prompting, and give us humility when we are wrong.

We pray for the churches at Bransgore and Highcliffe, as the stewards meet to decide how and when our buildings can be reopened safely, abiding by the lockdown rules.

Help us to be faithful in our Bible study and prayer life, and never give up when we feel defeated.

We thank you for all those who have shown kindness in caring for those who have been shielding during the last three months. Now, as the shielding is lifted, may people feel safe to go out and shop and meet other people.

We thank you Lord that lockdown is easing but pray Boris Johnson and his Government will not do things too quickly so that a second wave of the Covid-19 virus does not raise its ugly head. We look forward to the joy which we will have in meeting our families and friends again.

We pray for all who are still suffering from Covid-19 and ask for your loving arms to surround all who are grieving and who did not have a chance to say 'good-bye' or attend a funeral. We thank you for the dedication of all who work in the National Health Service - doctors, surgeons, nurses, auxiliaries, cleaners, porters, cooks and medical secretaries. We pray for the scientists who are trying to find a vaccine to cure the virus: grant them patience while they find the right solution.

We pray for all teachers and children now returning to school, and all who will be going back in September. Keep them safe, Lord, as they follow the guidelines.

We remember the families of the three men murdered in Reading and ask for Your comfort on them as they mourn. We pray for the comfort also of the family of the father and his two children killed by a drunk driver on Father's Day as they were out for a walk. Be particularly with the wife and mother in her loss of her family. We pray for all who are mourning the loss of a loved one or experiencing a painful anniversary of loss.

We pray for all who take part in peaceful demonstrations highlighting injustice and inequality, for the rights of the various communities in our country, that peaceful solutions to the problems and pain of the past may be found.

We pray for those who arrived 72 years ago on the Empire Windrush, we pray forgiveness for the way they were treated, suffering terrible discrimination by the society they came to help and join.

A time of silence for our own prayers.

Heavenly Father we praise you that you hear our prayers and commit them to you in the name of Christ our Lord and Saviour. **Amen**

Contributed by Worship Leader Pam Sturtridge

Blessing: Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous and be strong, run the race that is set before you, looking unto Jesus, the author and perfecter of your faith. May all that you do today and this coming week, be done in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen**

Notices: Next Sunday the 5th July will be the last of our 5-week series on Galatians. Sunday 12th July we will be celebrating Action for Children Sunday, if you would like to contribute anything to this service please let me know.

Please be assured that work is progressing with your stewards and other office holders concerning our future worship and a safe building re-opening plan.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any concerns or needs. Until we meet again, God bless. Phillip 01425 673350 phillip.dixon@methodist.org.uk

YouTube links are external resources and are provided to help you engage with the songs. Singing the Faith resources are provided under license: CCLI 178182