



Highcliffe and Bransgore **Methodist Churches**

Sunday 5th July, 10:30am. Galatians part 5

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 come into Your presence this morning, joined to others in the family of faith by our devotion, love and trust in You. May we be faithful, quiet and obedient, our minds and hearts being still, resting and abiding with You.

We are here to worship You Lord, to proclaim the great things You have done and continue to do in our lives and those who have gone before us. Your Spirit holds us together in love, let no foolishness, quibble or grumble come between us but let us drink deeply together from the living water that You offer us. Bless us this morning we pray as we raise our voices heavenward in praise of Your Holy Name. May we be a people of restoration; strengthening and encouraging each other and sharing burdens. Help us to know with absolute certainty that, bound together, we are the church, Your people, a family fulfilling Your perfect will. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Proclamation: For, dear brothers, you have been given freedom: not freedom to do wrong, but freedom to love and serve each other. For the whole Law can be summed up in this one command: "Love others as you love yourself." But if instead of showing love among yourselves you are always critical and catty, watch out! Beware of ruining each other.

I advise you to obey only the Holy Spirit's instructions. He will tell you where to go and what to do, and then you won't always be doing the wrong things your evil nature wants you to. Galatians 5:13-16 TLB

Hymn: Blessed Assurance StF 548

Sing/read /pray /proclaim the words.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bon0S8_oq0w

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine;
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

*This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long.
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long.*

Perfect submission, perfect delight,
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels descending, bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.
*This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long.
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long.*

Perfect submission, all is at rest,
I in my Saviour am happy and blest;
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.
*This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long.
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long.*

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

Prayer of confession:

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:4-10 NIVUK

Let us pray: God our Father, we come to You in sorrow and repentance for our sins. For the times of not fully trusting, abiding and relying on You as we should. For turning away from you, and ignoring Your

will for our lives; Father, forgive us, **save us and help us.**

For times when we have behaved with selfishness, just as we wish, looking out for ourselves and those we love without thinking of You or our brothers and sisters in Christ; Father, forgive us, **save us and help us.**

For failing You by the wrong we do and think and say, forgive our foolish ways and our quickness to judge others based on our opinions. Father, forgive us, **save us and help us.**

For letting ourselves be drawn away from You by the temptations of the world about us; forgive us for the times when we have allowed half-truths and anything less than complete honesty to fall from our mouths. Father, forgive us, **save us and help us.**

For not living our lives in step with Your Holy Spirit, for times when we have compartmentalised our faith in You as being only for a special day or time. Father, forgive us, **save us and help us.**

A time to bring your personal prayers of confession and to hear what God may be saying to us:

Loving and forgiving God. Your Grace is an unmerited gift to me each and every day. You are rich in mercy and as I resolve to live a life closer to You I give thanks for Your forgiveness for my weaknesses and errors and pray that Your Holy Spirit will strengthen and guide me in the days ahead. Fill me afresh today Lord with Your power light, love and kindness so that my life may always reflect Your wondrous glory **Amen.** With excerpts from the Church of England Common Worship, Prayer for the Family.

Preparation for the reading of Scripture:

Lord, prepare our hearts like fertile 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 6 1-10

Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. ²Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ. ³If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. ⁴Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, ⁵for each one should carry their own load. ⁶Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor.

⁷Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. ⁹Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. ¹⁰Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. (NIVUK)

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 5th July.

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

As we come to the last segment in our series on Paul's letter to the Galatian churches we should remind ourselves of where we have started from. In these 6 chapters Paul has set out a clear case of error, a deserting from the One true Gospel. False teaching, like any good forgery can be deceptively similar but it is still false, no matter how close to the original. Past success is no protection, Paul points out "you were running well; but who now prevents you from obeying the truth?"

We are exhorted to restore, with gentleness and love, those who have taken a wrong step towards sin and a different teaching but we are warned - with very good reason- to take care that we ourselves are not tempted as they have been. Paul then raises three incredibly challenging issues for the Galatians and I believe for us today also:

Firstly, is the need for a faithful, learning, loving, self- correcting community (a family of believers) that will continually measure itself against Gospel truth. Without which, how can we ever consider the "restoring" of a brother or sister in error, by what means will we do so and who will recognise the need to do so?

Secondly, we are to bear one another's burdens, not partly as a "nice to do" or for

those we like or know well but for the family of believers, so that we fulfil “the law of Christ” (our Lord’s command). How do we know what someone’s burden is unless we are close enough to know their struggles and problems?

Thirdly, an issue that goes to the very heart of our sinful nature and the danger of sin being within the church, the issue of being “puffed-up”. That some may think that through the benefit of education or knowledge they know more than another. Clearly there were some in the Galatian church who were leading others astray with deceitfulness and self-importance. Some may compare this to the idea of a clerical class that sees itself aloof from the rest of the church. Paul explains that each person should take a good look at themselves and test their own actions and motives rather than judging others.

Verse 5, rather than being a contradiction to verse 2, explains about being prepared to be responsible for one’s actions much like an adventurer on an expedition who very carefully packs his bag knowing that he will be the one carrying it. Verse 6 concludes this section on the church family by explaining that in a learning relationship there must be respect and equality between teacher and student, both of whom are also family members.

Verses 7-10 contain the “sting in the tail”, a warning, the wrapping up of what has just preceded. Perhaps a paraphrase could be “don’t think you can just pretend to do this and get away with it! God knows your heart, do it half heartedly and it will gain you nothing, do it with your whole heart, never giving up, and you will gain all. **Amen.**

Personal Prayer:

Holy Spirit teach me to be a faithful member of Your family of faith. Give me the courage to speak out at the right time and say the loving and encouraging words to those who need to be restored to a full relationship with You. May I never be self-seeking or proud of myself at the expense of others. 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 397 Walk in the light

Read /pray /proclaim the words.

The Spirit lives to set us free,
Walk, walk in the light;
He binds us all in unity,
Walk, walk in the light.
*Walk in the light,
Walk in the light,
Walk in the light,
Walk in the light of the Lord.*

Jesus promised life to all,
Walk, walk in the light;
The dead were wakened by his call,
Walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light (etc.)

He died in pain on Calvary,
Walk, walk in the light;
To save the lost like you and me,
Walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light (etc.)

We know his death was not the end,
Walk, walk in the light;
He gave his Spirit to be our friend,
Walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light (etc.)

By Jesus' love our wounds are healed,
walk, walk in the light;
the Father's kindness is revealed,
walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light (etc.)

The Spirit lives in you and me,
Walk, walk in the light;
His light will shine for all to see,
Walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light (etc.)
Damian Lundy (1944-1996)

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.

We pray for the vulnerable and those at risk to the coronavirus, and for strength, energy and protection for those working in the NHS, care homes and other key workers.

We pray for wisdom for the prime minister and other leaders as they make difficult decisions, and for employees on furlough as many are returning to work. Let us also pray for Leicester as the city faces a local lockdown and increased uncertainty.

We pray that our churches will be a non-anxious presence during this time of crisis. Help us Lord to stand out as different to the world, being brave and kind to those around us, as we continue to serve our communities.

Thank you Lord for politicians who love you and want to honour you. We pray for all of our representatives; please may you protect them from the love of power and glory. May You be glorified in our plans, laws and our discourse.

We pray for the work of Open Doors, working with persecuted Christians around the world. We pray in particular for their highlighting of the oppression and problems that Indian Christians are facing, in India and in many other countries Christians are forced to be the last in line to receive aid and suffer hardship for their being in our family of faith. We pray for an end to unfair and discriminatory regimes.

We pray against the rise in violence of persecuted Christians around the world and ask for our brothers and sisters to be strengthened and know our support both in our prayers and, if we are able, our financial giving to the cause of freedom in Christ.

We pray for a world where all people are treated equally, with kindness and respect irrespective of background, nationality, or the colour of our skin.

We pray for all of those who are losing their jobs, for those who are unable to meet their financial obligations and are worried about feeding their families. Help us to see practical ways in which we can help and to commit to pray continually for the relief of the poor.

We pray for the spiritually lost and the lonely of our village or town, those who are caught in the trap of addiction or are victims of domestic abuse. Lord help us to know how we can offer practical help and support.

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**

Prayers are from a combination of sources: The Evangelical Alliance, National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast 2020 and Open Doors.

Blessing: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters in Christ. **Amen**

Romans 15:13 and Galatians 6:18.

We end our time of worship with an amazing rendition of **Amazing Grace** from the “four corners” of our United Kingdom in celebration of this years National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast 30th June 2020 in which our PM gives thanks for his healing from Covid-19.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OldgjqEx00I>

Amazing grace (how sweet the sound)
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come:
'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be
as long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand
years,
bright shing as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we first begun.

John Newton (1725-1807)

Notices: The full video of the National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast 2020 can be viewed on the Christians in Parliament website.

<https://www.christiansinparliament.org.uk/prayer-breakfast/2020-livestream/>

Thank you for your many messages of support and encouragement along with your personal prayers for my Reception into Methodist Connexion last Saturday, it was a great privilege for me, as it is to be among you all every day during these very challenging yet momentous times.

The 2020 conference has amongst other subjects discussed Communion in these separated times. More soon!

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