



# Highcliffe and Bransgore Methodist Churches

**Sunday 31st January 2021 – Chris Slade - "It's all about Mission" Luke 10: 1-24**

These written worship sheets are for you to use as we gather, as one, in our homes to worship God. Welcome to the fourth Sunday of our six week preaching series, using Luke's gospel, to hear what Jesus is telling us about being His disciples. Please join me in praying that each of us will hear and take into ourselves the lessons that Jesus is teaching us. May His Holy Spirit be with each of us guiding us to be His hands and feet within our communities and always boldly sharing the reason for our love, joy and hope – it's who we are in Christ.

## Opening words:

Sing to the Lord a new song;  
Sing to the Lord, all the earth.  
Sing to the Lord, praise his name;  
Proclaim his salvation day after day.  
Declare his glory among the nations,  
His marvellous deeds among all peoples.

For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise.

**Amen** Psalm 96:1-4 NIV

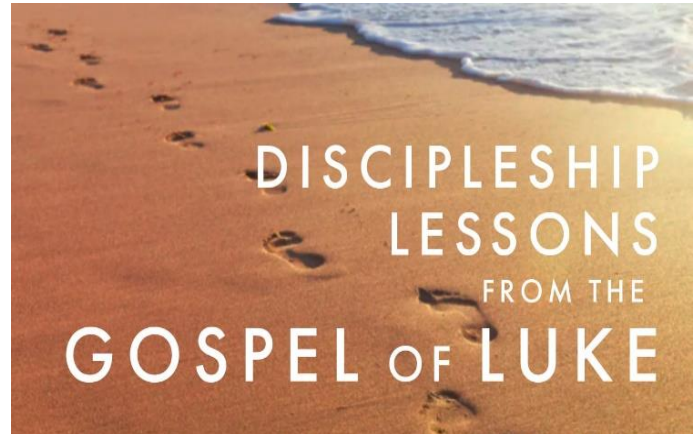
## Song: Great is the Lord StF 50

Sing/read /pray/ proclaim the words.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H561IFJ7pUw&ab\\_channel=vicluvsdLord](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H561IFJ7pUw&ab_channel=vicluvsdLord)

Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise,  
The city of our God, the holy place,  
The joy of the whole Earth.  
Great is the Lord in whom we have the victory,  
He aids us against the enemy,  
We bow down on our knees.

And Lord, we want to lift your name on high,  
and Lord, we want to thank you,  
for the works you've done in our lives;  
and Lord, we trust in your unfailing love,



for you alone are God eternal,  
throughout Earth and Heaven above.

And Lord, we want to lift your name on high,  
and Lord, we want to thank you,  
for the works you've done in our lives;  
and Lord, we trust in your unfailing love,  
for you alone are God eternal,  
throughout Earth and Heaven above.

Great is the Lord...

Steve McEwan

## Opening Prayer:

Father God can words ever express our love for you? Can we truly comprehend all that you have done for each one of us? You started by creating this world we live in, you continued by creating each and every one of us and then because we wandered away from you, you sent your only Son to pay the price for our sin and bring us back into a relationship with you. And then you gave us your Holy Spirit with all the gifts and fruits that he brings as our counsellor, to guide us through life and enable each of us to talk directly with you.

Father God we thank you and we love you, we ask you to accept today's worship as a token of

our affections for you. We pray that as we walk each day with you we will grow to love you even more. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. **Amen.**

Father God we know we do not deserve to be in your presence, for time and time again our words and thoughts and deeds have brought misery; our silent inaction has often denied joy. In Christ you came for the outcast and the sinner, with sorrow we confess that we create outcasts by our lack of love. With shame we acknowledge our need for forgiveness. Our past weighs heavily; our present holds us captive; our future seems unclear.

Forgive us merciful God cleanse us from all kinds of unrighteousness. Free us from sin's tyranny, that our whole lives might be lived for your glory that we might stand renewed and restored from the crippling effects of guilt and despair. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour we pray. **Amen**

*A time of quiet to hear what God may be saying to us.*

Almighty God, who in Jesus Christ has come to us and offered us reconciliation and renewal of life, thank you for the forgiveness of our sins, open our eyes to Your truth, strengthen us to do Your will and grant us the joy of Your kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.** Absolution based on the Church of England Common Worship

### **Song: Is He worthy?**

Sing/read /pray/ proclaim the words.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fs7Kah6wnY8&feature=emb\\_logo&ab\\_channel=FellowshipWorship](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fs7Kah6wnY8&feature=emb_logo&ab_channel=FellowshipWorship)

Do you feel the world is broken? (We do)  
Do you feel the shadows deepen? (We do)  
But do you know that all the dark won't  
Stop the light from getting through? (We do)  
Do you wish that you could see it all made new?  
We do)

Is all creation groaning? (It is)  
Is a new creation coming? (It is)  
Is the glory of the Lord to be the light within our  
midst? (It is)

Is it good that we remind ourselves of this?  
(It is)

Is anyone worthy? Is anyone whole?  
Is anyone able to break the seal and open the  
scroll?

The Lion of Judah who conquered the grave  
He is David's root and the Lamb who died to  
ransom the slave.

Is He worthy? Is He worthy?  
Of all blessing and honour and glory  
Is He worthy of this? He is.

Does the Father truly love us? (He does)  
Does the Spirit move among us? (He does)  
And does Jesus, our Messiah hold forever those  
He loves? (He does)  
Does our God intend to dwell again with us?  
(He does)

Is anyone worthy? Is anyone whole?  
Is anyone able to break the seal and open the  
scroll?

The Lion of Judah who conquered the grave  
He is David's root and the Lamb who died to  
ransom the slave.  
From every people and tribe  
Every nation and tongue  
He has made us a kingdom and priests to God  
To reign with the Son.

Is He worthy? Is He worthy?  
Of all blessing and honour and glory  
Is He worthy? Is He worthy?  
Is He worthy of this? He is! He is! He is! He is!  
He is worthy of all blessing and honour and glory  
He is worthy, He is! He is!

Based on passages from Revelation 5, song written by Chris Tomlin,

### **Our Lord's Prayer (the Christian family prayer):**

Our Father in Heaven,  
Hallowed be Your name.  
Your Kingdom come,  
Your will be done,  
on earth as it is in Heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our sins,

as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For Yours is the Kingdom and the power  
and the glory forever. **Amen.**

**Prayer:** Loving Lord God, as we read Your Holy Word together, we pray that our hearts and minds will be fully open to hear what You are saying to us about our lives being devoted to You. May Your Word always be to us a fresh and insightful revelation and by the power of Your Holy Spirit may we be changed by hearing it.  
**Amen**

### **Scripture Reading: Luke 10: 1-24**

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. <sup>2</sup> He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. <sup>3</sup> Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. <sup>4</sup> Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.

<sup>5</sup> "When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' <sup>6</sup> If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you. <sup>7</sup> Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.

<sup>8</sup> "When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is offered to you. <sup>9</sup> Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' <sup>10</sup> But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, <sup>11</sup> 'Even the dust of your town we wipe from our feet as a warning to you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God has come near.' <sup>12</sup> I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

<sup>13</sup> "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. <sup>14</sup> But it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. <sup>15</sup> And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted to the heavens? No, you will go down to Hades.

<sup>16</sup> "Whoever listens to you listens to me; whoever rejects you rejects me; but whoever rejects me rejects him who sent me."

<sup>17</sup> The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."

<sup>18</sup> He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. <sup>19</sup> I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. <sup>20</sup> However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

<sup>21</sup> At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

<sup>22</sup> "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

<sup>23</sup> Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. <sup>24</sup> For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."

New International Version.

**A time to pause, read again, pray, and reflect.**

## Preaching Notes:

Those who have studied behavioral science or management theory may recognise the “forming, storming, norming and performing” stages that are contained within these passages. Long before the “management speak of this age” Jesus was doing exactly this, preparing the disciples to undertake the great commission, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” Matthew 28:19.

Being a disciple of Jesus is not about having a title or academic learning but is simply about being a learner and a follower of Jesus. We learn (now as then) by a combination of seeing, hearing and doing. Jesus is combining words and actions, vision and current reality, human need and our capacity to meet that need. Meeting that need is often described as “the mission of the church” but God’s mission goes far beyond meeting the physical needs of one or other group of people, we do not undertake work that may take our interest and ask for God’s blessing on it, instead we as the church, the collective body of Christ on earth (as with the first disciples) must first “learn and follow” together in love and truth with the beautiful harmony of an orchestra.

Consider the teaching of Jesus as “gifts” to the disciples (and to us) within this passage with these helpful subtitles which come from Isaiah 11:2-3.

**Wisdom:** We see God at work in our lives and in the world. For the wise person, the wonders of nature, historical events, and the ups and downs of our lives take on deeper meaning. The matters of judgment about the truth and being able to see the whole image of God. We see God as our Father and other people with dignity. We are able to see God in everyone and everything, everywhere.

**Understanding:** We comprehend how we need to live as a learner and follower of Christ. A person with understanding is not confused by all the conflicting messages in our culture about the

right way to live. The gift of understanding perfects a person's speculative reason in the apprehension of truth. It is the gift whereby self-evident principles are known.

**Counsel (Right Judgment):** We can know the difference between right and wrong, and we choose to do what is right. A person with right judgment avoids sin and lives out the values taught by Jesus. The gift of truth that allows the person to respond prudently, and happily to believe in Christ as our the Lord.

**Fortitude (Courage):** We overcome our fear and are willing to take risks as a follower of Jesus Christ. A person with courage is willing to stand up for what is right in the sight of God, even if it means accepting rejection, verbal abuse, or even physical harm and death. The gift of courage allows people the firmness of mind that is required both in doing good and in enduring evil.

**Knowledge:** We understand the meaning of God. The gift of knowledge is more than an accumulation of facts.

**Piety (Reverence):** We have a deep sense of respect for God and His people (the church). A person with reverence recognizes our total reliance on God and comes before God with humility, trust, and love. Piety is the gift whereby, at the Holy Spirit's instigation, we pay worship and duty to God.

**Fear of the Lord (Wonder and Awe):** We are aware of the glory and majesty of God. A person with wonder and awe knows that God is the perfection of all we desire: perfect knowledge, perfect goodness, perfect power, and perfect love. This gift is described by Aquinas as a fear of separating oneself from God. He describes the gift as a "filial fear," like a child's fear of offending his father, rather than a "servile fear" that is, a fear of punishment. Also known as knowing God is all powerful. Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Prov. 1:7) because it puts our mindset in its correct location with respect to God: we are the finite, dependent creatures, and He is the infinite, all-powerful Creator.

Notice how in the passage Jesus provides clear instruction (verses 3 -11) as well as vision -how the task (what they are doing) fits into the vision of full harvest fields (verse 2). He makes them aware of the challenges they will face (verse 3) and what they must do to overcome them.

In summary; everything we need to know today about Christian mission is contained within these verses. It is under the instruction of Christ that we “go”, we both “do (heal) and tell (proclaim)” we must all work together with clear communication, in harmony, for the benefit of the kingdom rather than for ourselves or the limited specific outcome of the task. Thanksgiving to God is essential and the belief of God as Father, Son and Spirit must be at the root of all we do. None of these factors are “optional extras” and from them will come the fruit that we so desire and from which we may rejoice that “our names are written in heaven” (verse 20).

**Amen** Written by Chris Slade with contribution from Phillip Dixon.

**Offering:** Had we been meeting physically this is the point when we take up our offering for God’s work.

**Prayer:** Lord we offer up our gifts, all things come from You and from Your hand we have gratefully received, at this time of giving, Lord we gladly and faithfully bring our offering for Your work. **Amen**

### **A reflection on Christian Mission:**

Christian salt has no business to remain snugly in elegant little ecclesiastical salt cellars; our place is to be rubbed into the secular community, as salt is rubbed into meat, to stop it going bad. And when society does go bad, we Christians tend to throw our hands up in pious horror and reproach the non-Christian world; but should we not rather reproach ourselves? One can hardly blame unsalted meat for going bad. It cannot do anything else. The real question to ask is: where is the salt? John Stott.

### **How much have we given up?**

Every time we (the church) give up a part of our faith to try and fit it into the ways of the world we lose it forever, we lose a precious part of God’s promise, sacrificed to the world, the world will never give it back. Some day -perhaps today- when the world tells us we can no longer believe what the Bible teaches and only believe on their terms then God’s people can look back and know that our beliefs were not taken from us, we gave them up, handed over bit by bit until we are left with nothing sacred, only an outward form. Words from Methodist Circuit Rider (Local Preacher) Robert Sheffy (1820-1902).

### **Prayers of Intercession:**

Loving God, we bring to you in prayer those people and places on our hearts today:

We pray for all those who have heard your call and responded in obedience because of their faith.

We give thanks for those whose work is prompted by their love of you and for the love of those you love.

In these difficult times, we pray for those whose call is to work in health care, both those who work in and for the NHS and those who look after people in residential care.

For the families of those in residential care and those who support them.

Give them the strength to endure and refreshing rest when they need to sleep.

We pray for all those who work to bring food to our tables as they struggle with the complexities of the pandemic guidelines to keep us safe.

For those whose livelihoods have been negatively affected by the pandemic and who are worried about making ends meet.

We give thanks for the ‘front line’ workers who daily put their lives at risk so that we can live with some kind of normality.

May they know that we are ever thankful and are loved by you.

We remember the parts of the world where people are being killed, oppressed and displaced. We pray especially for the people of Tigray in Ethiopia, for the people of Darfur in the Sudan, for the Uighur peoples in China. For those whose call has taken them to work in these countries and who are labouring to bring your love-light into the darkness. May those in power leave behind violence and follow your call to peace.

We pray for those around our country and the world who have been affected by extreme weather conditions. Whose homes have been flooded or no longer exist and for those who have been inspired to come alongside and selflessly help. We pray for the people of America as Joe Biden begins his term as President, and for Kamala Harris and all those entrusted with the responsibility of re-shaping and re-uniting the states that make up that vast nation, so divided by race and politics and so ravaged by the pandemic. Help them to leave behind ambition and to follow your call to serve.

We pray for each other, for our church families, our communities, and our loved ones, for those who feel overwhelmed by the challenges of each day, for those adapting to new ways of living, for those who are ill, for those close to death, for those who are grieving. Help us all to leave behind all that separates us from you and from one another and to follow your call to trust and to love – in Jesus' name. **Amen.** Written by Nicola Dunn

### **Closing Song: The Kingdom of God StF 255**

Sing/read/pray/proclaim words.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOrkdW5NAM0&ab\\_channel=RiccardoBonci](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOrkdW5NAM0&ab_channel=RiccardoBonci)

The kingdom of God is justice and joy;  
For Jesus restores what sin would destroy.  
God's power and glory in Jesus we know;  
And here and hereafter the kingdom shall grow.

The kingdom of God is mercy and grace;  
The captives are freed, the sinners find place,  
The outcast are welcomed God's banquet to share;  
And hope is awakened in place of despair.

The kingdom of God is challenge and choice:  
Believe the good news, repent and rejoice!  
God's love for us sinners brought Christ to his cross:  
Our crisis of judgement for gain or for loss.

God's kingdom is come, the gift and the goal;  
In Jesus begun, in heaven made whole.  
The heirs of the kingdom shall answer his call;  
And all things cry "Glory!" to God all in all.

Bryn Rees (1911-1983)

**Benediction:** As we conclude our worship today may Christ dwell in our hearts through faith; and may we be rooted and grounded in love and comprehend with the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ so that we may be filled with the fullness of God. **Amen**

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all ever more. **Amen**

**Daily Prayer:** "As we reach the terrible milestone of 100,000 deaths from COVID-19, we invite everyone in our nation to pause as we reflect on the enormity of this pandemic". Starting on 1st February we are invited to set aside time every evening to pray, particularly at 6pm each day. More information will be given in the weekly pastoral letter.

Phillip Dixon, January 2021. YouTube links are external resources and are provided to help you engage with the songs. Singing the Faith and Hymns and Psalms resources are provided under license: CCLI 178182