

## Welcome

**Hymn** Praise my soul the King of Heaven

*by William Henry Baker*

*CCLI Music licence 2370586*

1. Praise my soul the King of Heaven! To his feet thy tribute bring.  
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven, who like me his praise should sing?  
Praise him! Praise him! Praise him! Praise him! Praise the everlasting king!
2. Praise him for his grace and favour to our fathers in distress;  
Praise him still the same for ever, slow to chide and swift to bless.  
Praise him! Praise him! Praise him! Praise him! Glorious in his faithfulness.
3. Father-like he tends and spares us; well our feeble frame he knows;  
In his hands he gently bears us, rescues us from all our foes.  
Praise him! Praise him! Praise him! Praise him! Widely as his mercy flows

## Confession

For failing to love you with all our hearts, soul, mind and strength

Lord have mercy      **Lord have mercy**

For failing to love our neighbours as we love ourselves

Christ have mercy      **Christ have mercy**

In your mercy forgive us what we have been, help us to amend what we are; and direct what we shall be

Lord have mercy      **Lord have mercy**

And may God, the Father, who loved the world so much that he sent his Son to be our Saviour, forgive us, and make us holy to serve him in the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord      **Amen**

## Reading

Romans 14:7-12

7 For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself.

8 For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

9 For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

10 But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

11 For it is written: "As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God."

12 So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God

This is the Word of the Lord      **Thanks be to God**

## Matthew 18:21-35

21 Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"

22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

23 "Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

24 "And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.

25 "But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made.

26 "The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.'

27 "Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

28 "But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!'

29 "So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.'

30 "And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt.

31 "So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done.

32 "Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me.

33 'Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?'

34 "And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

35 "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

This is the Word of the Lord      **Thanks be to God**

## Reflection

What would you say is the heart of the Christian message? It's forgiveness.

The Scripture constantly shows us that our God is a God of forgiveness.

The Bible is full of incidents when God forgave people;

That's why God's Book is full of prayers in which people own up to their faults and failings and ask for forgiveness and how God gave it to them.

Our God is a God of forgiveness.

The prophet Nehemiah concluded: *You are God, ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abundant in kindness* The Psalmist wrote songs in which he rejoiced and sang *You forgave my sin. I'm forgiven; I'm pardoned; I'm free.*

Remember how Jesus got into trouble with the religious authorities when he healed a crippled man and said *Your*

*sins are forgiven you;* and when Jesus pardoned an adulteress telling her *Your sins are forgiven;*  
Forgiveness is a precious thing; but it is also a painful thing; it cost Christ his life. From his cross as he looked on his crucifiers he prayed for them and all the world, *Father forgive them*  
Our God is a God of forgiveness; that's why the heart of the Good News that Christians proclaim is a message all about forgiveness

But forgiveness is like a coin that has two sides. One side shows us that God forgives us. The other side shows us that we are to forgive one another.

One of the saddest stories that Jesus told was the one we have read in Matthew's gospel

It's about a man who was forgiven, but who refused to forgive.

He'd got into debt and owed his master about ten thousand pounds that he was not able to pay

His master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, so that payment be made. His servant fell on his knees and begged him, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.'

And graciously the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him his debts.

But not long later that forgiven servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred pounds, and grabbed him by the throat, demanding, 'Pay me what you owe!'

His fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.'

But the freed servant would not, He threw the man into prison till he should pay the debt.

Ironically both men used the same words *Have patience with me, and I will pay you all of my debt.* But the pardoned man didn't forgive as he had been pardoned. He didn't appreciate what he'd been given. He not only didn't show forgiveness to others, but forfeited it for himself. When we don't forgive we are the losers

The heart of God and the heart of the Good News of the Gospel that we proclaim is all about forgiveness

That's why Jesus taught his followers to pray *forgive us our trespasses and sins as we forgive those who sin against us.*

Maybe we are facing a conversation that has hurt us; maybe we are 'snared' by something done to us.

Forgiveness is not about closing our eyes to those wrongs. It's about facing that situation and that person. But it is also about releasing them the Lord's justice and mercy; to the one who lets us off the hook through Christ's blood shed on the cross. Then in our hearts we can release God's forgiveness to others.

Let's be a forgiving people. We will be all the better for it.

**Hymn** God forgave my sin *by Carol Owens CCLI Music licence 2370586*

1 God forgave my sin in Jesus' name, I've been born again in Jesus' name,  
and in Jesus name I come to you to share his love as he told me to

*Ref: He said 'Freely, freely you have received, freely, freely give'*

*'Go in my name, and because you believe, others will know that I live'*

2 All pow'r is given in Jesus' name, in earth and heav'n in Jesus Name.

And in Jesus' name I come to you to share his pow'r as he told me to.

*Ref: He said 'Freely, freely you have received, freely, freely give' .....*

**Prayers - Collect for today:** God who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon your Church in the burning fire of your love; grant that your people may be fervent in the fellowship of the gospel that, always abiding in you, they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service; through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord.

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

- For the peace and prosperity of the world and our environment, and the harmony of all mankind

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

- For the welfare of your church, for our bishops, clergy and people and the leaders of our sister churches

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

- For Charles our king, the leaders of the nations, and all set in authority, to act in justice and truth

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

- For the communities of the Bride Valley and those who join us today; for every city, town and village, and the people who live in them Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

- For deliverance from all affliction, strife and need, especially for those who are sick in body, mind and spirit .

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

- For your presence and peace for all those who are bereaved and those nearing the end of life's journey

Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer**

And remembering Christ's message of forgiveness, as the family of God we pray together **the Lord's Prayer**

**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 trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us**

**And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,**

**For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen**

**Hymn:** Great is thy faithfulness *by Thomas Obadiah Chisholm CCLI Music licence 2370586*

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 for ever wilt be.

*Ref: 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. 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 ten thousand beside!

*Ref:* 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!

### **Blessing**

May the love of the Father surround you, the presence of Jesus the Saviour fill you, and the power of the Holy Spirit strengthen you and .....

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you

The Lord turn his face toward you and give you his peace **Amen**

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