



Living by Faith: The Testing of Faith

“He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.” (Heb 11:19)

Call to Worship

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing!

**To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be blessing and honour and glory and might
forever and ever. Amen!**

(Rev 5:12-13)

Let us pray.

**Almighty God,
to you all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from you no secrets are hidden.**

**Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Praise to the Lord, the almighty

Praise to the Lord, the almighty,
the king of creation!
O my soul, praise him,
for he is your health and salvation!
Come, all who hear; brothers and sisters
draw near,
praise him in glad adoration!

Praise to the Lord,
above all things so mightily reigning;
keeping us safe at his side
and so gently sustaining.
Have you not seen all you have needed has
been met by his gracious ordaining?

Praise to the Lord,
who when darkness and sin are abounding,
who when the godless are rampant,
all goodness confounding,
shines with his light,
scatters the terror of night,
safely his people surrounding.

Praise to the Lord,
who shall prosper our work and defend us;
surely his goodness and mercy
shall daily attend us.
Ponder anew what the almighty can do,
who with his love will befriend us.

Praise to the Lord -
O let all that is in me adore him!
All that has life and breath,
come now with praises before him!
Let the "Amen!" sound from his people
again;
gladly with praise we adore him!

Public Domain

Confession and Assurance

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ says:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.” (Matt 22:37-40)

Have mercy on us, O God

**According to your unfailing love;
According to your great compassion.**

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
Therefore, let us confess our sins against God,
and against our neighbour,
first in silence and then aloud together.

Please kneel or be seated.

Prayer of Confession

**Almighty and most merciful God,
We confess to you that we are by nature
sinful and unclean,
And that we have sinned against You
in thought, word, and deed;
Not only in outward transgressions,
But also in secret thoughts and desires
that we are not able to understand,
But which are all known to You.
For this reason,
we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy,
Seeking and imploring Your grace
for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

“The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.” (Ps 103:8-14)

The Lord's my shepherd

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
His goodness restores my soul.

*And I will trust in You alone,
And I will trust in You alone,
For Your endless mercy follows me,
Your goodness will lead me home.*

He guides my ways in righteousness,
And He anoints my head with oil,
And my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.

And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
For You are with me, and Your rod and staff
Are the comfort I need to know.

© 1996, Thankyou Music, Stuart Townend.

Psalm 86

Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me,
for I am poor and needy. Preserve my life,
for I am godly; save your servant, who
trusts in you—you are my God.

**Be gracious to me, O Lord, for to you do I
cry all the day. Gladden the soul of your
servant, for to you, O Lord, do I lift up
my soul. For you, O Lord, are good and
forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to
all who call upon you.**

Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer; listen to my
plea for grace. In the day of my trouble I
call upon you, for you answer me.

**There is none like you among the gods,
O Lord, nor are there any works like
yours.**

All the nations you have made shall come
and worship before you, O Lord, and shall
glorify your name.

**For you are great and do wondrous
things; you alone are God. Teach me
your way, O Lord, that I may walk in
your truth; unite my heart to fear your
name.**

I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with
my whole heart, and I will glorify your
name forever.

**For great is your steadfast love toward
me; you have delivered my soul from the
depths of Sheol.**

O God, insolent men have risen up against
me; a band of ruthless men seeks my life,
and they do not set you before them.

**But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and
gracious, slow to anger and abounding
in steadfast love and faithfulness.**

Turn to me and be gracious to me; give your strength to your servant, and save the son of your maidservant.

Show me a sign of your favor, that those who hate me may see and be put to shame because you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be forever, age after age. Amen!

The Word of God

First Reading: John 15:1-17 "I Am the True Vine"

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading: Heb 11:17-22

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon: Living by Faith: The Testing of Faith (David Thornhill-Smith)

Response to God's Word

My hope is built on nothing less

My hope is built on nothing less
than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
no merit of my own I claim,
but wholly trust in Jesus' name.

*On Christ, the solid rock, I stand,
all other ground is sinking sand.*

When weary in this earthly race,
I rest on his unchanging grace;
in every wild and stormy gale
my anchor holds and will not fail.

His vow, his covenant and blood
are my defence against the flood;
when earthly hopes are swept away
he will uphold me on that day.

When the last trumpet's voice shall
sound,
O may I then in him be found!
clothed in his righteousness alone,
faultless to stand before his throne.

Creed (Heidelberg Catechism)

Believer, what is your only comfort in life and in death?

**That I, with body and soul, both in life and in death,
am not my own, but belong to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ,
who with His precious blood has fully satisfied for all my sins,
and redeemed me from all the power of the devil;
and so preserves me that without the will of my Father in heaven
not a hair can fall from my head;
indeed, that all things must work together for my salvation.
Wherefore, by His Holy Spirit, He also assures me of eternal life,
and makes me heartily willing and ready from now on to live unto Him.**

Prayers of Intercession

After each petition:

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

As our Saviour taught us, let us pray:

**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 those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Psalm 34

Tell his praise in song and story,
bless the Lord with heart and voice;
in my God is all my glory,
come before him and rejoice.
Join to praise his name together,
he who hears his people's cry;
tell his praise, come wind or weather,
shining faces lifted high.

To the Lord whose love has found them
cry the poor in their distress;
swift his angels camped around them
prove him sure to save and bless.
God it is who hears our crying
though the spark of faith be dim;
taste and see! Beyond denying
blessed are those who trust in him.

Taste and see! In faith draw near him,
trust the Lord with all your powers;
seek and serve him, love and fear him,
life and all its joys are ours:
true delight in holy living,
peace and plenty, length of days;
come, my children, with thanksgiving
bless the Lord in songs of praise.

In our need he walks beside us,
ears alert to every cry;
watchful eyes to guard and guide us,
love that whispers 'It is I'.
Good shall triumph, wrong be righted,
God has pledged his promised word;
so with ransomed saints united
join to praise our living Lord!

© Timothy Dudley-Smith

Benediction and Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
In the Name of Christ, Amen.