

# RYDE BAPTIST CHURCH SUNDAY SERVICE

## 7 March 2021 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent

Dear Friends,

One of the blessings we have benefited from during this Lent has been The Prayer Course, which we are now half way through. Last week we were thinking about intercessory prayer, and one of the pieces of advice given was to get indignant in our prayers. I wonder whether 'indignant' is a word you would usually associate with prayer, but it is a good one as we pray for an unjust, broken, suffering world. When we get indignant we demonstrate just how much we care about what is happening to people's lives and in communities; we are passionately concerned that God will do something about righting clear wrongs, healing obvious wounds and disease. Indignant, zealous prayers are powerful prayers for they rise from genuine love rather than just casual concern.

When Jesus entered the Temple on that occasion just before the Jewish Passover, indignant is an appropriate word to describe his reaction. Seeing animals being sold and money being exchanged we read that 'he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said, 'Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father's house into a market!' [John 2:15-16] Indignant is one word for it. Righteous anger is another way in which this incident is described. Later, we read that his disciples remembered the words of Psalm 69:9, where it is written: 'Zeal for your house will consume me.' [John 2:17]

The Temple that Jesus entered was the second one built on this site. The first was built by Solomon, to the glory of God and according to his instructions, and later rebuilt after its abandonment when the people were taken into exile and eventually returned. This second Temple was one of the great building and engineering projects of the so-called Herod the Great, and was constructed with a mixed raft of motives. Second Temple Judaism was a far cry from the expectations of God-worship expected and found in the Hebrew Bible, our Old Testament. Still unfinished, this building was as much to the glory of Herod upon which his reputation would depend. Matthew's Gospel records Jesus responding to the Temple corruptions by quoting Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11, 'It is written,' he said to them, "'My house will be called a house of prayer," but you are making it "a den of robbers."'

These were challenging words, and along with other things added to the serious 'blasphemy' accusation with which Jesus was to be charged. But they must surely resonate with us too. We must humbly ask of ourselves, whether we have made the Church of Christ into something that it is not or should not be. Are we ourselves humble enough to recognise that our habits, traditions, practices, and comfortable expectations of church life might not be all that they could be or should be?

Many thanks to Ian Pratt for providing our Sermon Notes this morning considering the nature of worship. We look forward to reflecting on them in our online service.

Zoom is the safest way for most people to meet at this time. Our Zoom Sunday Service is at 10.30am today, and our Zoom Prayer Meetings start at 7pm on Monday. The Zoom links will be sent to those who have signed up to receive them. If you'd like us to send you the links, please let us know. If you are reading this sheet on your computer or device you can click on the the readings and songs. There is more information on our website at <https://ryde-baptist.xyz>

## **BIBLE READINGS**

[Psalm 145:1-21](#)

[Exodus 20:1-17](#)

[John 2:13-25](#)

[1 Corinthians 1:18-25](#)

## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

'I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever. Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever. Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom. One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts.' [Psalm 145:1-4]

## **SONGS**

[Great Is the Lord](#)

[I Could Sing Of Your Love Forever](#)

## **FOR REFLECTION**

We are entering the season of the Great British Spring Clean. I don't know whether we follow this tradition these days, but now is certainly a good time to get all those household tasks done that we have been putting off over the last year of restricted movement and staying at home. Spring cleans are good to do. But we don't

have to think about them just in terms of dusting and polishing and sorting out our physical possessions. What about other aspects of our lives? What about our minds and spirits as well as our bodies? Lent is a good time to build up our spiritual health, by spending more time in prayerful Biblical meditation and study, just as much as it is a good time to get outside, blow off the cobwebs and get some exercise. How are you going to Spring clean your life with God this year? Pray for God's help in this essential regular task.

## **PRAYER**

'For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.' [1 Corinthians 1:18]

Saving God, we are your people  
yet the world cannot see this.

We are your children,  
and fail to live in peace.

We are your voices  
and choose to be silent.

We are your hands and feet  
and walk a different road.

Forgive us, for ignoring your love,  
for brushing aside your hand  
and trusting our own wisdom.

Enable us to worship you

in spirit and in truth,

to bring to you our joyful songs

in the everyday moments of our lives;

that your name might be glorified  
through our words and lives.

Amen [[www.faithandworship.com](http://www.faithandworship.com)]

'The Lord is gracious and compassionate,  
slow to anger and rich in love. The Lord is  
good to all; he has compassion on all he  
has made.' [Psalm 145:8-9]

You can set up an altar to God in your  
minds by means of prayer. And so it is

fitting to pray at your trade, on a journey, standing at a counter or sitting at your handicraft. [John Chrysostom c347-407, Archbishop of Constantinople]

Lord, you turned over the tables of those who exchanged money, and turned away the animals that were being sold in the Temple, which should have been dedicated for prayer and worship of our Father, Almighty God. Forgive us when we have turned the temples of our lives, in which you live through the Holy Spirit, into something other than we have been created to be. Cleanse, renew, heal, restore us and fill us so that we can be temples of your praise and witnesses of your love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

‘The Lord is righteous in all his ways and faithful in all he does. The Lord is near to all who call on him, and to all who call on him in truth. He fulfils the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them. The Lord watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy. My mouth will speak in praise of the Lord. Let every creature praise his holy name for ever and ever.’ [Psalm 145:17-21]

## SONGS

[The Heart Of Worship](#)

[Holy And Anointed One](#)

## MINI-SERMON OUTLINE

### Introduction.

What is worship? Sally put the following quotation in 7/52 recently:

‘God doesn’t define worship as singing – and neither should we... Have you noticed the injustices exposed during this pandemic? I believe God is using this moment to draw the Church’s attention away from the music and show, and back towards the

things that he truly receives as worship. Things like racial equality; dismantling of white privilege; care for creation; kindness and care for our neighbour (including protecting our neighbours’ health); the value of the small and unglamorous church gathering. Amazing lessons in worship can be learned when the music stops (or as Matt Redman put it: “When the music fades”). In this season where congregational singing is not permitted, we need to engage in some congregational listening. Let us be open to what the Spirit is saying.’

Today we are going to explore a little what worship is and what it is not.

### Exposition.

One book of the bible helps us more than almost any other to understand what worship is. That book is the collection of prayers and songs of praise called Psalms.

Worship is not just an hour on a Sunday morning when we sing a few hymns, read the bible, say a few prayers, and hear an exposition of a passage from the bible. That is called a worship service, but it is hardly even the tip of the iceberg called real worship.

I have recently been reading Philip Yancey’s book “The Bible Jesus Read” and I have found it helpful. The author is very honest about his own feelings and emotions as he reads the Old Testament. He writes: “The more we comprehend the Old Testament, the more we comprehend Jesus.”

Some of us may have avoided the Old Testament in preference to the more easily understood New Testament and the words of Jesus and the Apostles. If that is how you feel I believe you have missed much, especially regarding Psalms.

Eugene Peterson (the author of *The Message*) in his book "Leap Over a Wall" defines worship as follows:

"Worship is the strategy by which we interrupt our preoccupation with ourselves and attend to the presence of God. Worship is the time and place that we assign for deliberate attentiveness to God - not because he is confined to time and place but because our self-importance is so insidiously relentless that if we don't deliberately interrupt ourselves regularly, we have no chance of attending to him at all other times and in other places."

That quotation is worth meditating on and allowing it to sink deeply into ourselves. Please re-read it.

Praise is part of worship. It is what C.S. Lewis calls "inner health made audible".

I studied George Herbert for A level English many moons ago. He writes this verse:

"Of all the creatures both in sea and land  
Only to Man thou hast made known thy ways  
And put the pen alone in to his hand  
And made him Secretary of thy praise."

Worship is putting God in the pre-eminent place in our lives daily, moment by moment. It is being aware of Him in everything we do, think, or say.

Worship is being aware of the world around us and endeavouring that God's kingdom in heaven be realised on earth, as we pray in the Lord's prayer. Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.

Worship is giving God 168 hours per week, not just one hour on a Sunday morning. It is giving God all our time, all our talents and all we have and are; not just a small proportion of ourselves.

I encourage each of us to read and re-read Psalms and to let the Psalmists guide you into real and deep worship as they praise God, argue with Him, shout at Him, confess to Him and eventually submit to Him. That will help each of us come to true worship.

### **Application.**

Very simple. Let us commit ourselves to worshipping God daily, minute by minute with all that we are.

### **SONG**

[Great Is Thy Faithfulness](#)

### **PRAYER**

Creator God, thank you that there is nowhere I can go that is beyond your presence. In your presence, I am blessed beyond measure. You have said that you will never leave me or forsake me, you are always with me. May I live a life of thanksgiving and worship in your presence. Hear my prayer and fill my heart and my mouth with praise to you for your good gifts. May your love be the passion in my heart. May your joy be my strength when times are hard. May your presence be my peace that overflows. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

'Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The Lord is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does.'  
[Psalm 145:13]

### **BLESSING**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, now and always. Amen.

<https://rydebaptist.xyz>