



WORSHIP & PRAYER:

A Living Hallelujah

MONDAY – The Lord Your God is with you



Psalm 91: 15 & 16 *He shall call upon Me and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honour him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him My salvation.*

This year I find it impossible to give the usual platitude of “Happy New Year.” It has certainly started on a somber note. Some experiences and realisations of 2020 have left me profoundly changed. My greeting then is “May you worship the Lord with love and gratitude. May He give you strength, peace and comfort this year”.

Psalm 91 highlights these promises of the Lord:

- He is paying attention to us and will answer when we call out to Him.
- Whatever we are going through, He will walk with us.
- He will bring us through.
- He will surround us with His presence and honour.

- Our life, in His hands, will satisfy us.
- At the end of it all, He has promised His salvation.

It begins with an action on our part – **we need to ask God for help.** Then we need to praise Him for His presence in our lives.

So put on praise music and start praising God. Something happens when we worship in the midst of difficulties. Praise changes our perspective on life. Let us begin 2021 in praise and worship to a God who hears YOU.

“Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High, will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.” (Ps 91: 1)



Prayer: Lord help me to rest in You. May I begin to praise You more, worship You more and give You thanks. May my 2021 begin with a commitment to praise and worship. AMEN

TUESDAY – Every single day, WORSHIP



Psalm 103: 1 *Praise the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise His holy name.*

As I write this, my neighbour is playing praise and worship music and has just cranked up his stereo. I smile and can't help saying, "Ok, Lord, I get the message!" But that **is** what it is about. On an ordinary day, doing ordinary things and praising God!

The definition of worship can be seen as the response of the creature to the creator. The stars, sun, moon, rainbow and plants cannot help but shine and display their beauty and God's glory. But man decides if he is going to worship God.

We have to consciously decide to give praise to God. It is not about FEELING; it is about KNOWING

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXDGE_IRI0E

that God is worthy of our praises. Worship is about God – it is an expression of our love for Him regardless of our circumstances.

If you have to wait for joyful feelings, chances are not much worship happened in 2020 and 2021 doesn't look much better! But it is NOT what I can get out of it, but what can I give to God? Worship is what I do out of love for what He does for me. Community worship is not our reality at the moment, so we need to figure out how to cultivate personal worship. Gratitude IS worship. Giving thanks IS worship. Let us each start a new journey of praise and worship – especially when it seems impossible!



Prayer: O Lord, then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee. How great Thou art. How great Thou art. Thank You Lord for Your presence in my life. AMEN.

WEDNESDAY – A Living Hallelujah



Psalm 100: 1-3 *Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before Him with joyful songs. Know that the Lord is God. It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, the sheep of His pasture.*

We are called to be – a living hallelujah. A people of praise in ALL situations. This is a tall order. In a world where things seem so out of control. When fear of illness grips our hearts. When the News fills us with trepidation. Where the prospect of improvement is far off. When we do not understand why God does not step in. How are we to praise?

- *I love You Lord, And I lift my voice, to worship You. Oh, my soul, rejoice! Take joy my King in what You hear; let it be a sweet, sweet sound in Your ear.*
- *In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We*

do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people... (Romans 8: 27 & 27)

Find that verse or song that speaks to you. Memorize it, put it on your screensaver, hold on to it and repeat it when you do not know what else to do. Just offer it up as your praise to God – over and over if that is all you can manage. He hears you and the Spirit intercedes. In those dark moments, worship needs only be “I love You Lord.” You just need to ‘show up’ and He will meet you where you are.



Prayer: Lord, whether it be in dark moments or days of contentment, let my day be filled with worship and praise to You. Help me to make this year about turning my focus to You and others; about learning to be a living hallelujah. AMEN

THURSDAY – Gratitude: A Chosen Attitude of Praise



1 Corinthians 11: 23 – 26 *The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, took bread, **and when He had given thanks**, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way, after supper He took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of Me."*

With the cross ahead – Jesus gave thanks.

There is a difference between FEELING grateful and BEING grateful. It does not mean we are blind to the bad things of life; it means we choose to be grateful for the good, positive things in our life.

Much of our time and energy is spent on pursuing things we don't have. Gratitude reverses our priorities to help us appreciate people and things we do have (Joshua Brown, 2017). Humans

are not wired to be grateful. It is a practise that needs to be developed. If you do a Google search on "**How does gratitude change your life**", you will be amazed at the results. I was.

Gratitude needs to be built into our daily habits. It needs to be practiced. It is worth cultivating. It is worth looking outward and upward and less inward.

Don't be impressed by the size of the giants in front of you – instead give thanks for the size of your God!

Perhaps saying this grace over the next few days can be your gratitude starting point:



Be present at our table Lord. Be here and everywhere adored. These mercies bless and grant that we, may live in fellowship with Thee. Thank you for the food we eat, thank You for the friends we meet, thank You for the birds that sing. Thank You God for everything. AMEN

FRIDAY – Do Not Grow Weary



Isaiah 40: 30 & 31 *Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*

Last year Easter came, and we were in lockdown. We all said surely by Christmas it will be over. Now we stand on the brink of a new year, with Easter once again not so far away. I think the realization is sinking in that we are in this for the long haul. A time frame which is unknown to us. We have just celebrated the birth of Jesus and reflected on a new light for the world. As we look back over 2020 many new things have been born because of it.

- What is your new birth?. Your re-orientation?

Perhaps your hope was that 2021 would see some relief and normality and that doesn't seem to be the case. And you are weary.

Maybe your re-orientation is putting your trust in a God that says "I make all things new (Revelation 21: 5).

Maybe your new birth is to begin to pray and worship and practice gratitude just a little more intentionally.

- Does it matter how far down the road you can see?
- Can you raise your weary body and soul to take His hand and carry on?

You can be that eagle. Let go of doubt, fear and worry and let your loving God renew your strength everyday and you will soar in praise and worship.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=58FuuMI6LFA>



Prayer: Lord I turn my eyes upon You. I lift my voice to praise You. Please renew me, give me courage and strength for this continued journey. Lord I want to soar like an eagle. Build Your people of power and praise that they may move through this land by Your Spirit and glorify Your precious name. AMEN