



**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

Notes from our Sunday Morning  
Pre-recorded Worship

# Opening Welcome

Hello and welcome to our service! We miss seeing your lovely faces, but it's lovely to gather together in this way. Joey and Pete are leading our service this week, they normally go to our 10.30am service on a Sunday, and have been enjoying this week's sunshine!

We hope you encounter Jesus, and meet The One who can transform and change your life. Even in the current lockdown chaos, God is with us and we believe His Son has risen and conquered death. It's great that you join us and we hope you know God's presence with you too today.

## Songs

### Rescuer

Chorus

He's our Rescuer

He's our Rescuer

We are free from sin forevermore

Oh how sweet the sound

Oh how grace abounds

We will praise the Lord our Rescuer

Verse 1

There is good news for the captive

Good news for the shamed

There is good news for the one who walked away

There is good news for the doubter

The one religion failed

For the good Lord has come to seek and save

Verse 2

He is beauty for the blind man

Riches for the poor

He is friendship for the one the world ignores

He is pasture for the weary

Rest for those who strive

Oh the good Lord is the way the truth the life

Yes the good Lord is the way the truth the life

Bridge

So come and be chainless

Come and be fearless

Come to the foot of Calvary

There is redemption for every affliction

Here at the foot of Calvary

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## Pray

### Verse 1

Our Father high above  
Hallowed be Your name  
Reveal to us again who You are  
All things are possible  
God of the miracle  
Oh let Your will be done

### Chorus

We pray for heaven  
Here today Your kingdom to reign always  
Here on earth as in heaven  
Here on earth as in heaven (oh)

### Verse 2

You give us all we need  
Forgive us ev'rything  
Help us to love as You have loved us  
Now come and build Your throne  
As we go where You go  
God our deliverer

### Bridge

Yours is the kingdom the power and glory  
Now and forever amen  
Oh Yours is the kingdom the power and glory  
Now and forever amen amen

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## Here Is Love

### Verse 1

Here is love vast as the ocean  
Loving-kindness as the flood  
When the Prince of Life our Ransom  
Shed for us His precious blood  
(REPEAT)

### Chorus 1

Who His love will not remember  
Who can cease to sing His praise  
He can never be forgotten  
Throughout Heav'n's eternal days

### Verse 2

On the mount of crucifixion  
Fountains opened deep and wide  
Through the floodgates of God's mercy  
Flowed a vast and gracious tide

### Chorus 2

Grace and love like mighty rivers  
Poured incessant from above  
Heav'n's peace and perfect justice  
Kissed a guilty world in love

### Bridge

No love is higher no love is wider  
No love is deeper no love is truer  
No love is higher no love is wider  
No love is like Your love O Lord  
(REPEAT 4X)

### Ending

Yes here is love  
Vast as the ocean  
Yes here is love  
Vast as the ocean  
(REPEAT)

Matt Redman | Robert Lowry | William Rees © 2004 Thankyou Music (Admin. by Integrity Music), CCLI Licence No. 963500.

## Reflection

We invite you to continue in this space of worship. Close your eyes, hold out your hands or do whatever is comfortable. We welcome the Holy Spirit and say "Come, Holy Spirit." We pray now that you'd know that God is with you, He loves you, He is your peace and your strength. Just rest in His presence now. Thank you Jesus. Amen

## Reading: 1 John 2:18-27

<sup>18</sup>Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. <sup>19</sup>They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

<sup>20</sup>But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. <sup>21</sup>I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth. <sup>22</sup>Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father and the Son. <sup>23</sup>No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

<sup>24</sup>As for you, see that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. <sup>25</sup>And this is what he promised us—eternal life.

<sup>26</sup>I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. <sup>27</sup>As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him.

# Talk by Jens Mankel

Hello and welcome, my name is Jens Mankel, I'm part of the team here at St Saviours, and we're looking together today at the first book of John and continuing in our series. So today we're looking at becoming a discerning family, what do we want to discern? Now in the scripture that we've just heard, John is talking a lot about truth. And you see, the main theme of the book is genuine fellowship with God and with each other. So one of the things that we need to kind of figure out here, as we read through this text is what is this that John is giving us to help us discern? And he's giving us two litmus tests, one is the litmus test of truth, and the other is the litmus test of love. So we're learning about truth and about love in this book. And you know, discerning is quite important for us.

What is truth? Some people are saying these days, you know, well truth is really up to you, what is true for you, might not be true for me. There's no absolute truth. But when you say there's no absolute truth, you are stating in fact, an absolute statement and well, there you are, it's already refuting what you've just said. So, let's continue and looking at it means to discern. Now Paul writes to the Romans in Romans 12 verses two and three, well, just verse two I'm reading, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds. So that you may discern what is the will of God. What is good and acceptable and perfect."

And John is inviting us onto this journey of discernment. So what is John saying first of all? What is John calling us? He is saying, "Children, it is the last hour." So he's inviting us to discern the times, what time is it? Is it one of the first things you learn when you learn a foreign language, what time is it?

So, you know, some time back, there has been this doomsday clock that has been invented, which indicates how close our planet is to complete annihilation. Now it's set at 100 seconds before midnight. This is done by the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, and it started in 1947 to warn humanity of the dangers of nuclear war. The reason why they set it 100 seconds before midnight, before self destruction in that sense, is this, they said it's made due to nuclear proliferation, failure to tackle climate change and cyber based disinformation. Interesting that fake news is such a danger to our planet. I don't know how you're faring during this Corona crisis, you've heard lots of news about this and about that, fake news can set people off in the wrong direction, and that's why it's important to discern what is true.

In Acts 1:7, we read, "It is not for you to know the times and periods that the Father has set by his own authority." This is what Jesus is saying as an answer to his disciples, who are asking, "Is now the time that you restore His will to power?" And he's saying it's not for you to know the times, but why is then, John discerning the times, why is he saying it's the last hour? Obviously John wasn't referring to the doomsday clock, which appeared much later. But you see, the Old Testament Jews were looking forward to the last days and the coming of the Messiah was for them already, oh, this is the end times for us, the Messiah has come. So for him it was the last hour, but that's 2000 years ago, but now, of course, we are 2000 years further on, and all the more in the last hour. So it's not just about knowing exactly when the end times are, but it is about knowing something else. We need to discern the times, Jesus wants us to be able to scrutinize the signs of the times. He saying to the Pharisees and the Sadducees, he's saying, "When it is evening, you say it will be fair weather, for the sky is red. And in the morning, it will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening. You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times."

We all try to determine what weather it is out there, we love talking about it, there's a lot of weather in England, much more so than in Germany, where we love long periods of cloudiness, we have long periods of cloudiness. But here it can change within seconds, so it's exciting to talk about. We're discerning what will the weather be like tomorrow. The signs of the times are as clear and predictable as the weather, this is what Jesus is saying. But you see, we're not just talking about interpretation and telling exactly what time it is, but we're talking about interpretation as enactment.

You know a score or a script, in that sense, to interpret the gospel as precisely, to enact its demands. To live out the kind of life it demands of us. So the church has the duty in every age of examining the signs of the times and interpreting them in the light of the gospel, this is what Jesus is inviting us to do, interpret the signs. It is important that we understand our task of prophetically reading this present age, our culture, as well as what God is up to. How do we do this? By engaging with the culture around us, by seeking to understand what God is doing in the lives of those who do not know Him yet, and by joining in God's mission in this world. You know that God is the missionary, and we kind of are invited to help out a little bit, to join Him and that's what we're doing by discerning the times. We need to understand where the culture is at and how to reach people. You see, there's a danger that the church becomes so much concerned with reading itself, how do we do church properly? And constantly fiddle around with how we do things, rather than focusing on what God is doing out there, amongst the people. And I think the times that we're in at the moment, is actually aiding us to focus on our neighbours, to focus on what others need and to get out there as the body of Christ and not just the professionals out there.

So getting the gospel out there, getting the good news out there, is part of discerning the times, joining in with what God is doing. So children, it is the last hour, that's what John is saying. How did John discern that it was the last hour? It was because the pure and simple gospel was attacked by antichrists.

So the second point is that we need to discern the simple gospel, what is actually the simple gospel? How do we believe properly? And you know, it's fairly simple, because what it means is to believe is that Jesus Christ is our Saviour, to believe in the person of Jesus and to have relationship with Him. But the antichrists, you know anti doesn't just mean being against, but it also means instead of, they're trying to add things in, or you know, say, well, you've got to believe this instead of that. You need to add things to the simple faith.

But you see, no one must stand in the place of Christ. We've got to recognize the antichrists, the left the fellowship with the truth, they denied that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, and they tried to mislead or deceive true believers, we see this in verse 19, verse 22, and verse 23. So we need to remain within the fellowship of truth, and that means that we understand the Bible and interpret the Bible, not just from our own culture, and through our own lens, but that we need to understand through the world wide church, what do other people actually say? What is their experience over the centuries? What does church history teach us? How does this fit? And how can we interpret and make light of it in our culture today? And that's why we have theologians, that's why we speak to each other across continents, that's why we come together and try and seek out what does this word mean today in our culture and for this moment in time?

That's why discernment is so important. Through the Spirit of God, we'll use The Word of God, confirm what he is saying. This Word is lively, it's alive, it's not just written down and you've got to read and say, "Well, this is what it says," it's alive and active. Because the Holy Spirit will interpret it for us, for our situation and will apply it for our culture. So it's important to remain within the fellowship of the church, not to walk off and do your own thing, but to remain within in it. The enemy tries to

corrupt the church, to draw them away from truth. He questions the validity of the believer, are you really a believer? That's the sort of questions he would ask. He then tries to add things to your faith, if you really want to be a true believer, you have to add this and that to what Jesus has done. And a lot of folks like spiritually and what it can do for them, but they do not want to deny themselves in order to follow Christ, their firstly interested of what God can do for them. What can faith actually add to my life in terms of value?

But the Bible makes it very clear, the simple gospel is this, Jesus says it, "I am the resurrection and the life," he says, in John's gospel, "Those who believe in me, even though they die will live and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." Do you believe this?

And then in the book of Acts we read what the right response to the gospel is. And the right response to hearing the simple gospel is to believe in Jesus, and to turn from sin, return to God, change your life, be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, so your sins are forgiven, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit will help you to live this different life, He will transform your life so that you don't get stuck in old patterns of simple behaviour, of behaviour that separates you from the way that God wants you to flourish and live. So there are lots of teachers out there who are twisting the simple gospel, by appealing to political correctness for example, in the name of tolerance and they say, for example, all roads lead to the same mountain top. All religions mean the same thing, and they say even, when Jesus said, "I'm the way, the truth, and the life," he just said it as this "Christ-Spirit", and every "Christ-Spirit" in every religion says the same thing.

You can see the little tweaks that people are doing in order to tolerate others, but, you know, it's a heresy, it's not corresponding with the Bible or with Christian doctrine. In Acts we read, "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved." In 1 Corinthians we read, "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid, that foundation is Jesus Christ." In Hebrews 1, we read that, "Jesus is the reflection of God's glory, and the exact imprint of God's very being and he sustains all things by his powerful word." And this doctrine is known as Christian particularism. And common objections to this doctrine, of course, it's not fair, it's arrogant, it's prideful. But in order to have another way of salvation, a person must change the goal of salvation in itself.

Now I've got a tool here, some people might say, "Well, this isn't the right angle," and I would say, well, it depends what you use it for, it might be the right angle for something else. So, if you for example, want to a measure a drawer, like this one, and if you see dovetail point here. Now they come at different angle than what we call a right angle, and if you put this little tool against it, you see it's exactly the right angle, for this particular work. And it's the same with salvation. If you want salvation, you need to check out what for, or what from. And you know, Jesus came to show us that our relationship with God, the Father, had been broken, and so then he showed us how we can get reconciled with the Father, and in fact, he didn't show us what to do, but he did it himself and he said, "I reconcile you with the Father, all you have to do it is participate in that reconciliation by believing in me". So as you believe in Jesus and what he did, and say, "Well, I believe Jesus died for me on the cross, therefore, I will be reconciled with the Father," then you are saved. And then the Holy Spirit will come and anoint you in order to live right and in reconciliation and peace with other people too, and your life will be sorted out.

And this is the salvation the Bible talks about, you know, therefore, it's so important to understand what are we actually saved from and what are we saved for. So for example, if the purpose of salvation is to become a god, or realize your godhood, or merely escape from some form of hell, the means of accomplishing salvation will reflect those mistaken salvific ends. While the means of biblical salvation

includes many concepts, justification and you know, adoption, regeneration, there's a big transformation actually happening when you turn to Christ. The Bible points out that in Paul's mind that the problem of the entire human race, every religion in the world and every tribe and people in the world, is the same, namely, we are alienated from God and Adam. Jesus comes into the world as the answer to their problem. There is no other answer out there because there isn't another problem out there. So discern the simple gospel by sticking to the simple gospel, trusting in the finished work of Jesus Christ. So my last point is that we need to learn to discern the anointing. In the first book of John, John is encouraging us in verse 27, "As for you, the anointing that you received from Him abides in you, and so you do not need anyone to teach you, but as His anointing teaches you about all things and it's true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, abide in it." We're invited to abide in the anointing of the Holy Spirit, who is teaching us the truth, and is teaching us to love one another.

So in Jeremiah 31, we read about that, "God will put His law within us, and He will write it onto our hearts." So that we don't have to walk around with a book all the time, there's something that He wants to put in us so that we automatically decide to live a life of love, or live a life of generosity, and live a life of compassion and mercy and kindness. And He wants us to live that life where we can even love our enemies. So when you receive the Holy Spirit, you start to know God, and you know that Jesus is precious to you. You know that you are saved through Jesus. And you know, to kind of discern what is the truth, you basically learn from what the bank staff is learning. So for example, if people are invited to discern the right bank note from a counterfeit bank note. They're trained up in the bank, not by being shown loads of different counterfeits, but they're basically shown the real deal, they study this real bank note and all the intricacies, you know, the silver, where it goes, and the colours and the markings on it. And they study it and study it and study it, so when a counterfeit note crosses their eye sight, they immediately spot it, and they realize, this can't be true. And in the same way, God is inviting us to study Him, his character by looking at Jesus, and he's saying, "You know what I'm like by looking at Jesus."

So He sent His son to live His life as a human being, just like you are human, just like I'm human, in order to understand and discern what it means to live right with God, to live in right relationship with God and with others. To live in truth, and in love. So God has anointed you with Holy Spirit, to let you intimately connected to the truth. Jesus puts it this way in John 16, he says, "When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whenever he hears and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me because He will take what is mine and declare it to you." That's why it's important to discern the Holy Spirit within you. So what does this mean to abide in his anointing? It means to appreciate the Holy Spirit, and let yourself be transformed into his sanctuary.

Do you know that you're the temple of the Holy Spirit, this is what Paul calls you, and so we need to care for this temple, you need to make sure that it's pure, that it's a place of welcome, that the Holy Spirit will feel comfortable in this temple. And therefore, we try to do and live in a way that the Holy Spirit feels welcome within you. We don't watch stuff that the Holy Spirit will not like to see, we don't want to talk about things that the Holy Spirit might not like, because, of course, maybe you love someone, you'd do everything in order to accommodate them and make them feel comfortable. So, in 1 Corinthians 6, and we read this, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, that you are not your own, for you were bought with a price, therefore, glorify God in your body." It also means that you live connected to God through the Holy Spirit and turn away from sin. Repentance simply means to agree with God. You know what He says, goes, very simply. God knows best. And it means that you keep on being filled with the Holy Spirit.



Paul gives us practical advice on how that works in Ephesians 5, we read this, verse 16 here, "Be careful in how you live, not as unwise people, but as wise, making the most of the time because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of Lord is. Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts. Giving thanks to God, the Father, at all times and for everything in the name of our lord Jesus Christ."

So being filled with the Holy Spirit means that you start singing and worshiping God and reading the Bible, and by doing that, you're building yourself up, and others too, and you're being filled, constantly, by spending time with the word and with the psalms, and making melody in your heart, and letting the joy of the Holy Spirit rise within you. It sets you off on a road to constantly being filled again and again and again. So grow in Christ, never above Christ or out of Christ. You know, it doesn't make sense, to try and add things to Christian faith, that Jesus wouldn't want you to add to it. You know what I'm saying?

So, you know, if you take the Son, you get everything. If you invite Jesus into your life, you have everything, you have a relationship, a restored relationship with God and you learn to live in truth, not just for yourself, but also for others' sake, and you learn to live in love. So you learn to live truthful to your neighbour, but also, you learn to love your neighbour.

That's all for today, it was fun looking at the scripture together with you. I hope you feel uplifted and enjoy this day. And let's sing and continue to worship and pray, in order to be continuously filled with the Holy Spirit. And learn to discern the times, learn to discern the simple gospel, and of course, also learn to discern the anointing.

## Reflection

Thank you, Jens, for bringing God's word to us this morning. One thing that stands out from the talk is about discerning the Son. One of the most important things that we can learn to do as human beings is to understand the voice of Jesus and know who He is. If you want to know more about who He is, to start following Him, then why not say this prayer with us as you ask Jesus to come close to you, to ask Him to speak to you so you can discern who He is. We pray that you would know fully that His is the life for which you've been created.

Let's pray this prayer together: Lord God, I hear this name Jesus and something in me stirs. I want to know more about who He is, about what His words mean for my life, about what His promises are to me, about what His death and resurrection means for the whole world and all of creation. God, I invite you to come close to me now, to help me know who you are. Thank you, God that you know my name. Help me to learn more about yours. In Jesus name. Amen

If you prayed that prayer and would like further prayer with one of our prayer ministry team, do get in touch with the church office ([office@st-saviours.org.uk](mailto:office@st-saviours.org.uk) or 01483 455333). See also the notice about our Alpha course in the family news section, below, if you'd like to learn more about the Christian faith.

## Prayers

Let us pray

We thank you, Lord, for what you're doing through people throughout the world. Thank you for our church and for working in many ways. We pray that we can still find refuge in you and rest in you. We pray that your Spirit would move in power amongst people. We pray for our government and those around the world making difficult decisions, particularly around re-opening schools – we pray that the right decisions would be made for children and safety.

We pray for everyone working on a vaccine and for research scientists. Give them knowledge to move forward and progress us to a safe, scientific, reasoned end to this epidemic.

Lord, we pray for all the key workers; for NHS workers, a lot of whom working in very tricky conditions (without PPE) and putting their lives at risk. Thank you for all their hard work and dedication, especially of ex-retired workers coming back towards the danger to help our country. We remember too the police and fire workers for keeping our country running, and supermarket workers and all the other essential services. We thank you and pray that you'd continue to protect them and keep them safe from the virus, and keep us all encouraged as we change through lockdown phases.

We pray for those with mental health struggles, especially for anxieties around jobs, we know that you're in control, Lord. We pray for all these situations in our family and across the UK.

Bringing our prayers closer to St Saviour's, we thank you for two amazing weeks on our Alpha course. Thank you for good conversations and those who have shared their stories. We pray that through the course and everything we're doing, you would teach us new things, and give us opportunities for conversations which bring people closer to you. We pray for a move of your spirit, despite the sad news around us. We pray for your peace and guidance with us all. We pray for lots of opportunities to speak your good news with those around us.

We pray particularly at this time for those who are sick and bereaved. It's a very difficult time for a lot of families. We pray that you would give them peace, support them, help them, cover them as they face their sickness or bereavement, which is mostly totally unexpected.

Finally, Lord, in Mental Health awareness week, we pray for all those who are having difficulties with being in lockdown, who can't socialise as normal. We thank and praise you for the technology and communications methods across our networks and across the world, especially for our church zoom chats. We pray that we'd stay connected and keep each other safe.

## Family News

If you are struggling or would like some prayer, we are here to help and support you. Please let us know by contacting 01483 455333 or [office@st-saviours.org.uk](mailto:office@st-saviours.org.uk).

We're not currently allowed back in the building for public worship, and don't foresee this changing soon, so we will continue our pattern of online, pre-recorded worship. We will of course update you if this changes!

The Alpha course continues this week, do contact the church office if you'd like to join us or have any questions.

# Song

## You Are My Vision

### Verse 1

You are my vision O King of my heart  
Nothing else satisfies only You Lord  
You are my best thought by day or by night  
Waking or sleeping Your presence my light

### Verse 2

You are my wisdom You are my true word  
I ever with You and You with me Lord  
You're my great Father and I'm Your true son  
You dwell inside me together we're one

### Verse 3

You are my battle-shield sword for the fight  
You are my dignity You're my delight  
You're my soul's shelter and You're my high tower  
Come raise me heavenward O Power of my power

### Verse 4

I don't want riches or man's empty praise  
You're my inheritance now and always  
You and You only the first in my heart  
High King of heaven my treasure You are

### Verse 5

High King of heaven when victory's won  
May I reach heaven's joy O bright heaven's Son  
Heart of my own heart whatever befall  
Still be my vision O Ruler of all

Eleanor Henrietta Hull | Mary Elizabeth Byrne | Rend Collective © 2011 Thankyou Music (Admin. by Integrity Music), CCLI Licence No. 963500.

## Close & Blessing

Thanks for joining us! We hope you've enjoyed this service and feel inspired. We'll see you again next week when Jens is leading and Tim Radcliffe is speaking on being a close family.

Let us pray. Lord God, Thank you so much for our church family. We pray now that you'd be with each of us as we go into this week, whatever it may bring. We pray for protection, strength, patience, and grace. Come Holy Spirit and be with us now. In Jesus' name. Amen