



SUNDAY IN HOME WORSHIP

Sunday 21st June 2020

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A resource from

GRANGE BAPTIST CHURCH

ANNOUNCEMENTS

As per the emails, please stay tuned for announcements about our gathering back together. We want to assure you again that we aren't dragging our feet, and nor are we sprinting carelessly with this. Keep praying for us to have wisdom and grace as we, Lord willing, hope to be meeting together soon.

We had a really lovely time praying together last Sunday afternoon on Zoom, and we'd love to encourage you to hop on as we pray together for unity and oneness. (5pm this afternoon for those who are capable of logging on). As much as some of us find video chats awkward, let's remember that sacrificing our comforts to encourage one another, even by our virtual presence, is a small way to foster unity and love others who could do with our prayers.

So, here we go! Let's now come to God with reverence and awe, and with joy and thankfulness. Let's begin by remembering how worthy he is of our praise, no matter what our circumstances.

10,000 REASONS

Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul,

Worship his holy name.

Sing like never before, O my soul

I'll worship your holy name.

The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning;

It's time to sing your song again.

Whatever may pass, and whatever lies before me,

Let me be singing when the evening comes.

Chorus

You're rich in love, and you're slow to anger.

Your name is great, and your heart is kind.

For all your goodness, I will keep on singing;

Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find.

Chorus

And on that day when my strength is failing,

The end draws near, and my time has come;

Still my soul will sing your praise unending:

Ten thousand years and then forevermore!

Chorus

Jonas Myrin, Matt Redman

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PRAYERS OF PETITION

Since God is sovereign and pleased to work through the prayers of his people, let's bring our requests to him.

- Pray for fruit from our hearing of God's word this morning. And pray too that we would remember, remember, remember: "Listen, beloved, don't be carried away; grow into Jesus as you wait for his day."
- Pray for our world wherever you know lawlessness to be present. Pray for believers' safety at this time, and also that they would grow in the grace of Jesus to love the unlovely and point them to the hope of a godly life in him. Pray for authorities who are under immense pressure.
- Pray that we will be able to gather all together very soon, and that when we do, we would be exemplary in our submission to authorities and in our love of one another, and in our concern to be above reproach to our neighbours.
- Pray that we would remain united and grow in our unity by our love for one another. Ask God to bring his word to mind in us so that we can lovingly encourage each other with his truth.
- Pray for the Barletts in light of this momentous period of their lives. Pray for their joy as parents. Pray for their comfort in mourning. Pray for Ted too. And ask God to provide them with all wisdom for decisions to be made. Rejoice with Ben & Sharmini on the occasion of their four-year wedding anniversary. Keep praying for Ben's future as an elder at Grange.

EPHESIANS 4:11-16

HOW CHRIST WILL GROW AND UNIFY HIS BODY (EVEN IN THE MIDDLE OF A PANDEMIC)

READ & PRAY

INTRODUCTION

Over these last few months, it could be the case that you've wondered 'How would we survive a second-wave of COVID-19?' What if we can't gather together for another few months yet? How will Christ's body of Grange Baptist Church stay healthy and continue to grow in maturity and unity, even in the midst of a global pandemic?

Well, if you've found yourself asking this or similar questions, I trust that God's Word will bring you reassurance this morning. The good news is that Christ hasn't abandoned His body. Even in the midst of a pandemic Christ is working to unify, mature, and grow us up into his people. What might come as a surprise, however, is how important you are to this work.

CONTEXT OF EPHESIANS

- Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesians in order that he might reveal to them the mystery of the gospel. The heart of the mystery is this: through Christ, God has both reconciled sinners into relationship with Himself, and into relationship with one another (Read Eph. 2:1-5 and Eph. 2:11-16).
- It is this gospel of salvation, which unites God's new people, the church, as one (Eph. 4:4-6).

- But how can we preserve this unity, especially in the middle of a pandemic? More than that, how can we ensure we keep growing and maturing as Christ's body here on earth? In 4:11-16, Paul teaches us how Christ plans to grow us up in maturity and grow us together in unity.
- You could summarise Paul's point in these verses as follows: *"As pastors equip members, and as members minister to one another, the body of Christ grows up and grows together."*

EPHESIANS 4:11-13

AS PASTORS EQUIP MEMBERS...

- In Ephesians 4:7-8, we read that Christ, after he ascended, gave gifts to his church. Then, in verse 11, we see those gifts listed as roles for the church. What does each of these Christ-given roles have in common? (Consider what people in these roles are doing).
- How should we understand the gifts of apostle and prophet, especially in light of Eph. 2:19-20 and Eph. 3:4-6? The apostles and prophets had a critical but temporary ministry in laying the foundations of the church. Once that foundational ministry was complete, the need for these gifts ceased.
- Look at Eph. 4:12. Why has Christ given pastors/teachers to the church? Discuss ways in which pastors go about this work of equipping the saints.

AND AS MEMBERS MINISTER TO ONE ANOTHER...

- Christ has given pastors/teachers to the church in order to equip the saints. Equip the saints for what? Look again at verse 12.
- Is ministry just for those employed by the church, or is it something that every Christian is called to? What might this member-to-member ministry look like? (Rom. 15:14, Tit. 2:1-5, Col. 3:16, Heb. 3:12-13).

- John Stott, a great Bible-teacher from yesteryear, once wrote that, *"the New Testament envisages ministry not as the prerogative of a clerical elite but as the privileged calling of all the people of God."*
- Why do you we shy away from Scriptures call to minister and serve one another? What might this reveal about our hearts?
- When pastors seek to equip, and members and seek to serve, what should we expect to come as a result? Look at verse 13.

EPHESIANS 4:14-16

THE CHURCH GROWS UP AND GROWS TOGETHER.

- In verse 14, how does Paul describe those whose faith is immature? Take note of the link between immature faith and susceptibility to false teaching.
- In order that we don't get led astray (verse 14), what does Paul say we should do in verse 15.
- What is this 'truth' that Paul commands us to speak to one another in love? (See Eph. 1:13).
- Have a look at Eph. 4:2-3 to understand what Paul means when he commands us to speak the truth 'in love.'
- Look again at verses 15-16. What will come as a result of members speaking the truth in love to one another?

CONCLUSION & PRAYER

- As pastors equip members, and as members minister to fellow members, the church body grows up in maturity and grows together in unity.
- Let's pray together in response to God's word, asking him to bring us to greater and greater unity by us speaking the truth in love to one another.

O HOW GOOD IT IS

O how good it is
When the family of God
Dwells together in spirit
In faith and unity.
Where the bonds of peace,
Of acceptance and love
Are the fruit of his presence
Here among us.

**So with one voice we'll sing to the Lord
And with one heart we'll live out his word
Till the whole earth sees the Redeemer has come
For he dwells in the presence of his people.**

O how good it is
On this journey we share
To rejoice with the happy
And weep with those who mourn.
For the weak find strength
The afflicted find grace
When we offer the blessing
Of belonging.

Chorus

O how good it is
To embrace his command
To prefer one another
Forgive as he forgives.
When we live as one
We all share in the love
Of the Son with the Father
And the Spirit.

Chorus

