



Aberuthven and Dunning

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Aberdalgie and Forteviot

20 June 2021



Welcome to Worship

Spirit of God unseen as the wind

Gentle as is the dove

Teach us the truth and help us believe

Show us the Saviour's love

You spoke to us long long ago

gave us the written word

we read it still needing its truth

through it God's voice is heard

Spirit of God ...

Without Your help we fail our Lord

we cannot live His way

we need Your power we need Your strength
following Christ each day

Spirit of God....

What a great God You are ...

... the telescopes show the vast extent of the universe,

... the microscope shows the intricate detail

And in Your written word You have shown us the truths of Your nature

and recorded evidence for Your action in history

In a world of unfairness and injustice we say "Thank You"

for the truth of Your word,

the justice of Your nature

and Your offer of transforming love..

We say "Thank You" that with Your truth there is also Your power,

for without Your help we fail our Lord

we need Your power and Your strength for living each day

Therefore as we come to study Your word we pray

May the mind of Christ, our Saviour, live in us from day to day,

By His love and power controlling all we do and say.

May the Word of God dwell richly in our hearts from hour to hour,

So that all may see we triumph only through His power.

Through Jesus Christ our Risen Lord and Saviour to Whom with You O Father and the Holy Spirit be all praise and glory for ever, AMEN

Psalm 9.9-20

The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed,
a stronghold in times of trouble.

Those who know your name trust in you,



for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you.
Sing the praises of the Lord, enthroned in Zion;
proclaim among the nations what he has done.
For he who avenges blood remembers;
he does not ignore the cries of the afflicted.
Lord, see how my enemies persecute me!
Have mercy and lift me up from the gates of death,
that I may declare your praises
in the gates of Daughter Zion,
and there rejoice in your salvation.
The nations have fallen into the pit they have dug;
their feet are caught in the net they have hidden
The Lord is known by his acts of justice;
the wicked are ensnared by the work of their hands.
The nations have fallen into the pit they have dug;
their feet are caught in the net they have hidden.
The Lord is known by his acts of justice;
the wicked are ensnared by the work of their hands
The wicked go down to the realm of the dead,
all the nations that forget God.
But God will never forget the needy
the hope of the afflicted will never perish.
Arise, Lord, do not let mortals triumph;
let the nations be judged in your presence.
Strike them with terror, Lord;
let the nations know they are only mortal.

2 Corinthians 6

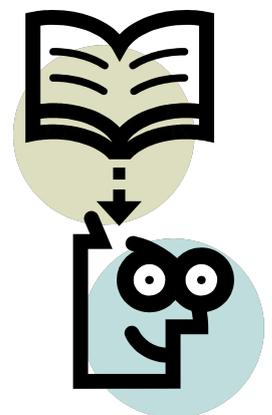
As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain.

For he says,

"In the time of my favour I heard you,
and in the day of salvation I helped you."

I tell you, now is the time of God's favour, now is the day of salvation.

We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; through glory and dishonour, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.



We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and opened wide our hearts to you. We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us. As a fair exchange—I speak as to my children—open wide your hearts also.

Lord of all hopefulness,
Lord of all joy,
whose trust, ever childlike,
no cares could destroy,
be there at our waking,
and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord,
at the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness,
Lord of all faith,
whose strong hands were skilled
at the plane and the lathe,
be there at our labours,
and give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord,
at the noon

I wonder if you have been struggling with something, wondering if you can endure this or that? In the letter Paul shares some reflections, not boasting but being open with them in the hope that they might be able to share openly JBPhillips translates verse 12 "any stiffness between us must be on your side for we assure you there is none on ours". He wants to be open with them, and that they would be open with him.



Later on in the letter there are some details of his turbulent life :

Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. I have laboured and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.

Wow ! If you have been struggling with something, wondering if you can endure it, then in our reading from chapter 6 Paul shares some reflections which may help us.

A. Aspects in which endurance was required

i. inner pressures

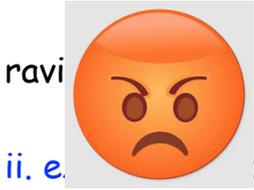


troubles - literally things
which weighed him down

distresses - literally



a place where there is no room to manoeuvre, like being trapped in a



ravi

icturing the pressure of conflicting demands

ii. e. problems

beating imprisonments violent mob rule. Although some other countries experience that, we may not this country, but not infrequently Christians can with a kind of sophisticated amused contempt.



iii. practical points

hard work - exhaustion sleepless nights danger miss meal

Is there an aspect in our lives in which endurance is required? Then it might be helpful to look at ways aspects with which Paul was equipped and encouraged. It is not just tholing problems like Weir of Hermiston whom Robert Louise Stevenson described as "on he went up long staircase of duty, uncheered and undepressed". There is positive equipping and encouragement.

Aspects in which Paul was equipped and encouraged

i. features of mind:

purity - being single minded

understanding - knowing how to do things in practice

truthful speech - what a contrast to fake news and distortion of truth!

ii. features of heart:

kindness - not pushing folk around

. sincere love - looking beyond to what really best

iii. factors to equip for service

- . he realised that he was in a spiritual battle, and used the image of a soldier with weapons for right hand and for left. left hand to defend, right hand to challenge. The shield of faith helps us defending our faith and the word of God for challenging others



- . he was dependant on what God thought not on what said about him, about his image, or peer pressure for he was a servant of Christ
- . he was poor making many rich, having nothing yet possessing everything .. real riches are not financial, but knowing that he was valuable to God. His priorities were indexed linked to eternity, and sharing good news was sharing real riches enriching others.

- he did it all in the power of God - on Pentecost Sunday we looked at the 6 vivid words used for the power of God. Wonder how many do you remember? In this passage the word used for power is dynamic - the dynamic of God
- he depended on the grace of God - this initiative of God was the basis of it all. Some 60 years ago I remember it being explained like this

God's
Riches
At
Christ's
Expense

Are you going through a period of difficulty with inner pressures external problems or just feeling spiritually and possibly physically exhausted? Then may some of the aspects which helped Paul to endure also help you.

Or we may be in the happy position that we have no problems just now! Then let us seek to echo Paul's experience that we equipped to endure when troubles come. Before the Falklands war the Government wanted to scrap the Antarctic survey ship HMS Endurance. They ignored the advice of Captain Nick Barker who understood the situation better than anyone else.



Let us not ignore the advice of Paul who understood the spiritual battle, and shared how he was equipped to cope and to endure! He did so on the basis of the victory over death and the resurrection.

Sing to God new songs of worship -
 Earth has seen his victory;

Let the lands of earth be joyful
 Praising him with thankfulness.

Therefore let us appropriate that to ourselves as we look at the words of ...

Sound upon the harp his praises,
 Play to him with melody;

Let the trumpets show his triumph,
 Show your joy to God the King!

Sing to God new songs of worship -
 All his deeds are marvellous;
 He has brought salvation to us
 With his hand and holy arm:

He has shown to all the nations
 Righteousness and saving power;
 He recalled his truth and mercy
 To his people Israel.

How much it means to know that You understand us because You know the issues which can occur, and that as the writers of the New Testament faced many problems we can learn from how they coped with issues and problems.



Hear us as we lay before you something which has been causing us hassle
and some concerns about the future and give thanks that You are there for us.

We pray for folk who are struggling just now with chronic illness or health uncertainty
for those who are caring for others, or have jobs where they are responsible for others
for those who feel isolated, misunderstood or stressed
for those who are need to know the thrilling wonder of Your grace, the sense of Your
power at work, or the deep peace which comes from knowing You.

Hear us as we pray for our witness in our community, and for vision for the Kirk Session
and Presbytery at this time of uncertainty, that the certainty of Jesus Christ may
clearly come across.

As young people start school holidays, we pray for those who are worried about their
grades, their courses or future employment, and for those who are trying to help them.

We give thanks for the work of Scripture Union, and we pray for the activities which
they are running for young people during the school holidays.

We pray for those who are working for peace in the many troubled parts of the world,
and for those who are seeking justice and fairness in the distribution of Covid vaccines.

We pray for honesty and integrity in the words and actions of the media and of
politicians, local, national and global.

Hear us then we pray in our spoken and our unspoken prayers and as we sum up all our
prayers in the words Jesus taught all those who loved You to pray saying

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 debts as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

and until that great day when with all those throughout the ages who have loved You we see
You face to face may

the amazing grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
the understanding love of God, and
the strong friendship of the Holy Spirit be with us all,
Amen

