

Outward Looking



Worship

Today we are going to take one of the classic hymns of the church as the basis of our worship time together, but there is no need to sing (unless you really want to). On the reverse of this sheet you will find the words of two different hymns, I suggest you choose just one of them, or another hymn entirely if you prefer. Take it in turns to read a few lines or a verse and then take a minute or two for everyone to consider the meaning of the words you have just heard. Allow them to inspire you to a few short prayers of praise and worship, and then move on to the next verse...



Bible Study

Read Colossians 4:2-6, and discuss together:

- What is the role of prayer in our sharing of the Gospel? How do watchfulness and thankfulness play a part in this?
- What do you think Paul means by being wise in the way we act towards outsiders?
- How would you explain the meaning of verse 6 to someone who had never encountered salt?
- Ask each person to share a little about what opportunities they have.
- How can we as a group help one another to make the most of these opportunities?



Prayer

In groups of three or four, reflect back on what you have shared and discussed. Ask each person to share one specific area where they would like prayer, either for God to open a door for them to share the gospel, or for God's help in wisely making the most of every opportunity, or for God's help with keeping their conversation full of grace and seasoned with salt. Take a few minutes to pray for each person in your group before moving on to the next. You could use the words of the passage as the basis of your prayer.



Reflection

Being 'Outward Looking' in our group can embrace a whole variety of things. It will almost certainly mean regularly supporting one another in our own life and witness, as we have just been doing, but what else might it mean to us as a group? Talk and pray together about some of the ideas below, or anything else that occurs to you – no group can do all of these things, but every group can do something.

- Could you support one of our missionaries? Perhaps you as a group could commit to praying regularly, writing, maybe even visiting?!
- We often become aware of needs in the local community or people who need some occasional help at home. Could your group commit, say, a Saturday once or twice a year to form a task-force and bless some of our neighbours?
- Did you do something inspiring with your £100? Could you build on this?
- Do you have friends and contacts as a group who would come along to a social event?

- Could you support one of the outreach activities at church? Ask the leader of the group how you could pray for them, and whether there are any practical ways you could help. Perhaps you could have an occasional ‘whip-round’ for the Community Larder or Clothes-to-go.
- Has God given your group a burden for a particular area? Maybe you could do some prayer walking, or knock on doors, or invite people to Alpha or some other event, or distribute ‘Jesus’ videos, or give away some Easter eggs, or...

Crown Him With Many Crowns,

The Lamb upon His throne;
Hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns
All music but its own!
Awake, my soul, and sing
Of Him who died for thee,
And hail Him as thy matchless King
Through all eternity.

Crown Him the Lord of life,
Who triumphed o’er the grave
And rose victorious in the strife
For those He came to save:
His glories now we sing,
Who died and rose on high,
Who died eternal life to bring
And lives that death may die.

Crown Him the Lord of love;
Behold His hands and side,
Those wounds yet visible above
In beauty glorified:
No angel in the sky
Can fully bear that sight,
But downward bends His burning eye
At mysteries so bright.

Crown Him the Lord of peace,
Whose power a sceptre sways
From pole to pole, that wars may cease,
And all be prayer and praise:
His reign shall know no end,
And round His piercèd feet
Fair flowers of paradise extend
Their fragrance ever sweet.

Crown Him the Lord of years,
The Potentate of time,
Creator of the rolling spheres,
Ineffably sublime!
All hail, Redeemer, hail!
For Thou hast died for me;
Thy praise shall never, never fail
Throughout eternity.

Matthew Bridges & Godfrey Thring.

Before The Throne Of God Above,

I have a strong, a perfect plea,
A great High Priest whose name is Love,
Who ever lives and pleads for me.
My name is graven on His hands,
My name is written on His heart;
I know that while in heaven He stands
No tongue can bid me thence depart,
No tongue can bid me thence depart.

When Satan tempts me to despair,
And tells me of the guilt within,
Upward I look and see Him there
Who made an end to all my sin.
Because the sinless Saviour died,
My sinful soul is counted free;
For God the Just is satisfied
To look on Him and pardon me,
To look on Him and pardon me.

Behold Him there! The risen Lamb,
My perfect, spotless righteousness;
The great unchangeable I AM,
The King of glory and of grace!
One with Himself I cannot die,
My soul is purchased with His blood;
My life is hid with Christ on high,
With Christ, my Saviour and my God,
With Christ my Saviour and my God.

Charitie L. Bancroft (1841-92)