

Welcome and Introduction

Welcome everyone! This is the second online worship service from home. We are in the middle of the winter here in Leicester UK and we're all still facing the third national lockdown, due to the increase wave of infection of Corona virus. Nevertheless we thank God for His protection and for keeping us safe this far. He's been so good to us and we want to praise and worship Him with all our hearts and minds today. He is always worthy of our praise! **Let's read together Psalm 27:1-6 "The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked advance against me to devour me, it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall. Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then I will be confident. One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple. For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock. Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me; at his sacred tent I will sacrifice with shouts of joy; I will sing and make music to the Lord."**

Song 1 – Jesus, Be The Centre

<https://youtu.be/EG-I1kK-BpU> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*Jesus, be the centre.
Be my source, be my light
Jesus*

*Jesus, be the centre
Be my hope, be my song
Jesus*

*Be the fire in my heart
Be the wind in these sails
Be the reason that I live
Jesus, Jesus*

*Jesus, be my vision
Be my path, be my guide
Jesus*

Song 2 – Shout to the North and the South

<https://youtu.be/xcqxmlBqWBk> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*Men of faith rise up and sing
Of the great and glorious King
You are strong when you feel weak
In your brokenness complete*

***Shout to the north and the south
Sing to the east and the west
Jesus is saviour to all
Lord of heaven and earth***

*Rise up women of the truth
Stand and sing to broken hearts
Who can know the healing power
Of our awesome King of love*

*We've been through fire, we've been through rain
We've been refined by the power of His name
We've fallen deeper in love with You
You've burned the truth on our lips*

*Rise up church with broken wings
Fill this place with songs again
Of our God who reigns on high
By His grace again we'll fly*

Song 3 – My Jesus, My Saviour (Shout to the Lord)

https://youtu.be/gn5CMSSAx_c Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*My Jesus, my Saviour
Lord there is none like You
All of my days I want to praise
The wonders of Your mighty love*

*My comfort, my shelter
Tower of refuge and strength
Let every breath, all that I am
Never cease to worship You*

*Shout to the Lord all the Earth, let us sing
Power and majesty, praise to the King
Mountains bow down and the seas will roar
At the sound of Your name*

*I sing for joy at the work of Your hands
Forever I'll love You, forever I'll stand
Nothing compares to the promise
I have in You*

Preaching and Teaching
Run The Race With Endurance
By Pr. Claudio Moises

Introduction

We are living in a very difficult and troubled time. Last week we looked at what really matters in life, based on Philippians, chapter 3:7-14. For the apostle Paul what really mattered in life was to know Christ and pursue an intimate and personal relationship with Him, to value our relationships and to fix our eyes on eternal things. Today I want to encourage you to continue putting your faith and your trust in Jesus, no matter what. It doesn't matter what circumstances we may find ourselves in, we must remain firmly in our faith in Jesus. He is the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. Let us read together **Hebrews 12:1-31** **"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."** This book is considered one of the most beautiful scriptures of the New Testament, due to its content and the richness of literature. We don't know for sure who wrote Hebrews. The primitive church was divided between Paul and Barnabas. Church fathers had different opinions: Clement mentioned in his writings that it was probably written by Paul in Aramaic and by Luke in Greek; Martin Luther assigns the author as being Apollo and Origin of Alexandria said: 'Only God knows who wrote Hebrews'. Whoever wrote this book we know for certain was inspired by the Holy Spirit and was written to encourage all of us today to put our trust and our faith in God. We also know that by its teaching and content that it was first addressed to the Jewish believers during or after Nero's persecution of the Christians in Rome. Due to the severe persecution and suffering many of these Jewish Believers in Jesus started to turn back to their old ways of life, to their religion and traditions in Judaism. We also see that this book was written in a rhetoric figure of language called Greek Synchrisis, in which the author compares two great and excellent things; the second thing always being better and more excellent than the first one. Jesus is Superior and More Excellent than Anything and Everything. Nothing and no one can compare to Jesus. We started reading in chapter 1 about **Angels**, we find them everywhere in Jewish-Christian scriptures and they are real. They're not supposed to be worshipped. They were created to serve us. The angels worship Jesus just like us. Jesus is superior and more excellent than the angels. Our faith is in Jesus, the living Word of God. **"Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?" Hebrews 1:14** Then the author writes about **Moses**, who was a great leader of the people Israel who God chose to deliverer them from the slavery in Egypt, however Moses was a finite man who depended on God himself. Jesus is the Son, infinite and worthy of more glory than Moses. **The sacrifices**, animal sacrifices could never take away our sins. They're just a reminder, year after year of our sins. Jesus sacrificed himself once and for all and we've been sanctified and cleansed by His blood forever and there is no more sacrifice we can offer for sin. **The Priesthood**, the priests were appointed by men, who were weak and subject to sin as they too had to offer sacrifices for their own sin and the sins of others. Jesus, the son of God is the High Priest forever, who came and identified with us in all our weaknesses and temptations and yet He was without sin. **The old covenant** cannot be compared with the new

covenant. The Word of God, **the Law**, was written on tables of stone, but in the new covenant, the Word of God, Jesus, the living Word is now written in our hearts. His Word is living in us. **“But in fact the ministry Jesus received is superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is the mediator is superior to the old one, since the new covenant is established on better promises.”** Hebrews 8:6 **“This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.”** Hebrews 8:10 Therefore, we have the confidence and full assurance of faith to draw near to Him. He who promised is faithful! Then we arrive at chapter 11 with this list of heroes of faith in contrast with chapter 3:7-19 where we find that a whole generation died in the desert because of their unbelief. **“See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. 13 But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called ‘Today’, so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.** Hebrews 3:12-13 - So let’s Run The Race With Endurance/Perseverance/Resilience

I – With a Genuine Faith in God

“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.” Hebrews 11:6 - The universe was created by the word of God and Jesus is the Word of God, which became flesh and dwelled among us. Jesus is the living word and He is now living in us. Nothing is impossible for God and we ought to believe He exists and that He will reward our genuine trust and faith in Him. Jesus can transform our lives, He is at work in us and is in control of every situation we may find ourselves in. Don’t be afraid and do not be anxious and worry about anything, but truly trust and put everything in God’s hands. He is able to transform and change any situation. We need to see the unseen with our spiritual eyes and call them into existence and walk in obedience because none of His promises can be frustrated. Even when we pray and it seems like God is not listening, God is working everything for the good of those who love him. **“‘For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,’ declares the Lord. ‘As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.’”** Isaiah 55:8-9. We see here in Chapter 11 on the book of Hebrews a list of so many examples of men and women who trusted and put their hope in God. Abraham believed in God’s promises for him and he moved in obedience and faith in God. **“By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. Hebrews 11:8** By Faith Abel, by faith Enoch, by faith Noah, by faith Sarah, by faith Isaac, by faith Jacob, by faith Joseph and by faith Moses... People like you and me, not because everything was ok with them, but they believed in God and He rewarded their faith. Even a prostitute was that later appeared in Jesus genealogy in the Gospel of Matthew. **31 By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient. You can read Hebrews 11:32-39** - This leads to my second point... we should run the race with resilience

II – Laying Everything Aside

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us” Hebrews 12:1 The cross is now

before me and the world needs to be left behind with all its pleasures and addictions. Just as an athlete running a marathon, they need to be training all the time. They need to be fit in order to reach the finish line and win the prize. We need to accept God's discipline and live a holy and pure life. We can't run our spiritual life with the weight of sin, carrying the things of the world with us. We need to let it go and be free from the world and feed our hearts and minds with things that are from Heaven. We need God's discipline to get rid of sin and addiction in our lives. They are a heavy weight and God wants to set us free so we can finish the race and win the prize. We don't want to stay behind and lose our place in this race. God has a plan and a purpose for your life here on earth. Because we only have one life to live we'd better live it in its fullness, for Him My third and last point is we need to Run The Race...

III – Fixing Our Eyes on Jesus

“fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” Hebrews 12:2-3 Moving forward and not looking back. I have decided to follow Jesus, no turning back, no turning back! There is nothing that compares to Jesus. He paid the ultimate sacrifice and he is now the high priest, who is seated on the right hand of the throne of God. Thinking about the first listeners of this word, they were ready to die instead of denying Jesus. They did not compromise their faith in Jesus. History says that The Emperor Nero would crucify and set fire on Christians while they were still alive, in order to illuminate his palace gardens. He would throw them to hungry lions in the arenas and they were devoured by them. Yet they wouldn't compromise their faith in Christ. When my family and I lived in Jerusalem I used to take my friends and people who came to visit us to the North to the Sea of Galilee in Tiberias. Passing through Tiberias on the coast of the lake we have the ruins of the old city of Capernaum, which was the head quarters of Jesus and where he performed many miracles. They are beautiful sites and there's a great feeling of walking where Jesus walked as we read and meditated on his word. In Capernaum there is a ruin of a house, which is believed to have been Peter's house where Jesus probably healed his mother in law, the mount of the Beatitudes where Jesus taught and preached his sermon of the mountain, the site where Jesus multiplied the bread. One of my favorite sites, which I can't forget as God spoke to me very clearly as I read His word inside the Synagogue of Jesus. The walls and pillars of the old Synagogue still stand today and I used to sit inside there and read John 6:25-69. Jesus arrives from the other side and the multitude was looking for Him because he had fed them. They were looking for Jesus because of the bread He had given to them. However, He wanted to teach them about the price of being His disciples and the cost of being His followers. He was predicting His death on the cross and the price he would pay in order to give His disciples eternal life. ***“Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. Mathew 16:24-25*** He is the bread of life that came down from heaven and His flesh was real food and his blood was real drink and whoever feeds from him will live forever ***“This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your ancestors ate manna and died, but whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.’ 59 He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum. On hearing these words, many of his followers started to desert and leave Him. John 6: 58-59*** ***“From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.***

***'You do not want to leave too, do you?' Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.'* John 6:66-69**

Conclusion

Nothing can be compared to Jesus. He is the most excellent and He's above everyone and everything. Let us run our race with perseverance and endurance, accepting God's discipline. With our faith firmly in God believing and trusting our lives in His hands. Leaving aside the worldly passions, evil desires and addictions. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. Running forward and looking ahead, no turning back no matter what, leaving the world behind, taking up our own cross and following Him

Responsive Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank you for your word that encourages us to run the race with perseverance, no matter what. Only you have words of eternal life and we are secure in your promises. Helps us to deny ourselves, pick up our cross and follow you. Father please forgive our sins and help us to get rid of the worldly passions, addictions and evil desires in our lives. We want to live a full and fruitful life for you. I pray that we may surrender our lives to Jesus and make the decision to follow Him. Jesus you're the most excellent in our lives, you are our hope. May we put our trust in you and not be afraid. In your precious name we pray. Amen

Intercessory Prayer, by Andrea Moises

Heavenly Father,

We come to you with our hearts full of gratitude for who you are and what you do in each one of our lives. Would you please help us to continue putting our trust in you, no matter what. Would you please cover us with your protection over this pandemic. Would you comfort those who mourn and heal those who are suffering either in a hospital bed or at home. Would you help also the frontline workers to be strengthened, protected and encouraged during this time. We know this is not an easy season and we'll only be able to overcome it if we fix our eyes on you. Use us Lord as your church to bring relief, encouragement and grace to all, beginning from our own household to the ones we've been deprived of seeing or visiting, at the moment. Help us to be your hands and your feet, carrying a message of peace, hope and faith. In Jesus' precious name we pray, Amen.

Song 4 – Give Me Faith

<https://youtu.be/SjFIhTNDyz0> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*I need you to soften my heart
And break me apart
I need you to open my eyes
To see that You're shaping my life
All I am, I surrender*

*Give me faith to trust what you say
That you're good and your love is great
I'm broken inside, I give you my life*

*I need you to soften my heart
And break me apart
I need you to pierce through the dark
And cleanse every part of me
All I am, I surrender*

*'Cause I may be weak
But Your spirit strong in me
My flesh may fail
My God you never will
I may be weak
But Your spirit strong in me
My flesh may fail
My God you never will*

Final Words and Announcements

Our Zoom home group prayer meeting is every Wednesday at 7:30pm and I will be sending the link for you all to connect on the email as well as sending you a reminder on the day via WhatsApp. You can make a direct payment to the church bank account for your contribution as follows: A D L Memorial Buckminster – Sort Code: 09-01-51 and Account Number: 13749406

Let me finish our service by praying the Lord's Prayer together

*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 trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
Forever and ever. Amen.*

See you all on Next Sunday!