

To Set Forth His Praise

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Date: 12 November 1989

Preacher: Harry Robinson

[0 : 00] The great and the great day to bring it through the long Utah.

If you give this life, and you are Medicare, Thank you, Christ, Lord.

Thank you, Christ, Lord. Thank you, Christ, Lord.

Our God and Father, Father, I thank you that you inhabit the praises of your people.

We ask that we might create such a wonderful structure through our praises. As to be worthy of him who inhabit.

[1 : 19] Give us hearts to praise you. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Now, if you look at the order of morning prayer on page four where we began this morning, and in the middle paragraph of the exhortation on page four, it says the reasons for which we are met together.

And in this month, which marks the 500th anniversary of the birth of Thomas Cranmer, who largely put together the prayer book, he set down what it is we meet together for on this Lord's Day.

He said we assemble and meet together for these four reasons, to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands.

Secondly, to set forth his most worthy praise. The other two I'm going to leave until next week and the week after.

But there they are, right in front of you. And the business we have to deal with today is what did he mean when he said that our business is to set forth his most worthy praise.

[2 : 52] I would like to make some statements here. One is that the greatest music, and I mean the greatest music, is written to the praise of God.

I want your critical faculties to go to work on that and begin to deny it and to say what about. Well, go ahead. I want to say further that the greatest art is art which is done for the purpose of setting forth his most worthy praise.

I want to say that the greatest human life is a life lived for the purpose of setting forth his most worthy praise.

The circumstances of our life are quite secondary. The function of our life is to set forth his most worthy praise. Now, the fact of the matter is, and this came to me with great force this week, though it may not sound very surprising to you at all, that I made the great discovery, because as I think about you all and pray for you all and wonder about you all and wonder why you don't become the people that I think you ought to be, as you no doubt wonder why I don't become the person you think I ought to be, and we play that game, I came to the wonderful conclusion that you will probably end your life being you, nobody else, that's all, and that that's probably the inescapable conclusion of the years that you spend on this earth, that you will end up being you, inescapably and irretrievably you, and that that has to be recognized when I pray for you and when I talk to you.

That's who you are and that's who you will be. But what you will do as you is really dependent upon your recognition of what the ultimate reality in life is and in discovering that ultimate reality to make it your business to set forth his most worthy praise.

[5 : 24] You see, that's what art is all about. But it's any piece of art says to you, I think, in the words of the prayer book, lift up your heart.

That's what, when you see it, when you hear it, when you handle it, it's saying to you, lift up your heart. Your response to that work of art should be, we lift them up to the Lord.

We acknowledge further that it is meet and right to do this and to give thanks and that it's very meet and right, therefore, that we should, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, join in by all that we are in response to all that God has revealed of himself, join in the business of our life, which is to set forth his most worthy praise.

That's what human existence is about. That's what your whole life is about. That's why the first and great commandment for you is that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your mind and all your soul and all your strength.

That's what you're here for. I brought this along to tell you that the question that is raised by this great commandment is that we live in a world in which we've been told that the great reality is the material reality and the great business of human life is to take the material reality into our hands and shape it in order to suit us and to serve us so that we gain control over it and we can manipulate it and we can twist it and we can shape it and we can make it into what we want it to be and it will be a demonstration of our ability and of our control and of our mastery and this is what we will have done with the ultimate reality of life which is matter.

[8 : 02] We will have controlled it and thus we will have found the meaning of our lives. That's the way we've been taught to think. That's why we're embarrassed when anybody talks about God.

But you see the fact of the matter is that there's another dimension to the story and that is that we are material in the hands of someone else of whom it says that we are his workmanship.

It is he that is working on us and the ultimate reality is not our mastery mastery of matter but God's relationship and mastery of us.

The one in whose hands we are not the one who has everything not us who have everything in our hands.

That's not it. You see we are meant not to live as masters of matter but in relationship to God and in relationship to other people.

[9 : 28] The ultimate reality for us is God. We come close in the course of our human life sometimes to worshipping people someone who is exquisitely beautiful perhaps someone who is profoundly wise somebody who is enormously gifted we can find it in our hearts to almost worship such a person and the gifts that they have whatever they may be.

But if we have the capacity to almost worship another human being we should explode with praise when we encounter God as he has encountered us.

Now you all know that the big event of the weekend is it seems to me to be the Berlin Wall is down broken whatever it is. What a peculiar way of celebrating the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the war.

Ah the armistice that ended that war. And what does it mean that this wall is penetrating?

It means as I've been reminded that there are still 400,000 Russian troops in East Germany. But it also I think marks the end of the great experiment of our century.

[11 : 16] And that is that man could take his own destiny into his own hands and control it. That man was the master of the whole of his circumstances.

And that man was in control. Now we face the very great danger of a world out of control. Because we haven't been able to.

And that there is something totally explosive in humanity that you see in Tiananmen Square. That you see in the breaking down of the Berlin Wall. That you see in the countries of Eastern Europe.

Even that you see in Canada. Some kind of an explosive awareness that there is a greater reality with which we must come in touch.

And that reality is not our own greed or our own desire and the almost incalculable capacity we have for self-gratification.

[12 : 13] That's not to be the great reality. It's something that is far beyond that. It's the reality which Cranmer speaks about when he says the great reality by which man encounters the ultimate reality of his own existence is in his relationship to God.

Now if you look in your bulletins you will see some of the scriptures on which these words are based. you will find them on the third page of the green bulletin the scriptures which relate to Cranmer saying that our business in church is to set forth his most worthy praise.

praise. And there we read from the Psalms that our business and this is in Psalm 150 verses 1 and 2 we are to praise him in his sanctuary.

We are to praise him for his mighty acts. We are to praise him for his excellent greatness. That this business of praise is the ultimate business of our life.

It's the way we relate to the ultimate reality of our life who is the God that has made himself known to us in Jesus Christ. We are to gather in his sanctuary under his care in order to offer him our whole hearts.

[14 : 02] And in effect to join with the whole of creation and with angels and with archangels and with all the company of heaven to join with them all in offering to our God praise.

That's our business. To praise him in his sanctuary. To praise him for his mighty acts as we review the mighty acts of our God in history and in the way he has visited and redeemed his people.

We rehearse his mighty acts all down through history. We are reminded of them in order that we may be given that faith and assurance that that God who did these mighty acts is mightily at work among us even here and now.

And build the walls though we may, we cannot protect ourselves from him and from his mighty and redeeming purpose of love towards him and for this we offer him our whole hearts praise.

We praise him for his excellent greatness. We praise God because he is God that means. We praise him because we praise him because he is a jealous God and the praises that we owe to him should be given to no other.

[15 : 40] A wife is rightly jealous of a wandering husband because he is her husband and he belongs to her.

and our God is our God and we belong to him and we are to praise him for his excellent greatness and not wander off in praising something or someone else.

We are to praise him for his excellent greatness. In Psalm 149 and verse 1 it says sing unto the Lord a new song and we were reminded at the clergy conference today that the new age begins with the resurrection of Jesus Christ and what we call the new age today has no such reality at the basis of it.

we are to sing a new song to celebrate the new age and all the hymns of the church are in a sense to make you aware of the new age and that you might lift up your hearts in the praise of God for the promise of the new age that is present among us now and will find its fulfillment in history as God reveals his glory.

In Acts and 4 and verse 24 and this verse is quoted on the page again it says and this was when Peter and John had been arrested for preaching in the name of Jesus in the temple in Jerusalem and they had been released and they went back and joined the Christians in an upper room and it says that the Christians there lifted up their voices together to God and said sovereign Lord who did make heaven and the earth the sea and everything in them that they went back and they praised God that he was sovereign and he was Lord and that's the business we have together is to praise him for who he is.

[18 : 03] that's why we sing on occasion I don't remember an occasion within the last 10 years but if you were brought up an Anglican you no doubt will remember when we used to sing oh all ye works of the Lord praise ye the Lord and we called on frogs and stones and cows and horses and mountains and valleys and river and rain and frost and snow and all of it was to praise the Lord all ye works of the Lord it was quite endless I'm afraid but on and on it went and its motive was right and at the heart of the Christian church is the throbbing of praise to our God that has to be there that's the very heartbeat of the Christian church let me tell you one thing that I find very helpful Australians are a peculiarly contrary people and one of the things that some of the Australians among us have insisted on is that we don't call this worship what we do on Sunday morning here they don't like us calling it worship and there are grounds for saying that is that the whole of a life of a Christian is to be worship everything you do every day of your life every breath you draw should be drawn in the trust and worship of God by the whole of your life so that worship is not something that is confined to 10 o'clock on Sunday morning worship is the whole the whole of your life so when

Paul says in Romans chapter 12 I beseech you brethren by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice holy acceptable unto God that this is worship the whole giving of our life in praise to God in everything we do always and we are to be edified and we are to be built up and we are to be encouraged and we are to sing his praises as we meet together to set forth his most worthy praise but the whole of our life is to be involved in that you live the whole of your life as a conscious sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to God then I want to leave you with one other verse which isn't there but it's look it up in this book because the red book doesn't handle it as well but if you look up

Psalms 22 in the back of the book of alternative services Psalms 22 says you are verse 3 Psalms 22 page 728 oh my God I cry in the daytime but you do not answer by night as well but I find no rest yet you are the holy one enthroned upon the praises of Israel that God does not need this shabby little building of which we are going to talk some on Wednesday night we need it to keep us warm and keep us in line for the hours that we spend here in the worship of God because the structure in which he dwells is the structure which is created by the offering of our praise to him that's what it says he enthrones he is enthroned upon the praises of his people we create by our worshiping sorry praising him together in this service we create the wonderful thing that is spoken of in Psalms 22 we create the praises on which our God is enthroned and by which he makes himself known to us our business is to praise him to set forth his most worthy praise that's what our life is all about you see either that God is the ultimate reality of whom it is our business to set forth his most worthy praise by the whole and in the whole of our lives for nothing ultimately of any meaning at all so what a wonderful thing it is that we have the privilege of setting forth his most worthy praise inviting others to come and join us in that activity which is at the very heart of human existence let's set forth his most worthy praise then as we sing this hymn number 30 sorry number 67 hymn number 67 rhino ae ae

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[26 : 17] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we submit our hearts and our minds to you at this time.

[29 : 46] Amen. Acknowledging your presence in our midst as we gather together to worship you. We ask that through the Holy Spirit, you might so guide and govern us, that despite all the cares and occupations and distractions of our daily life, we may never forget you.

But remember that we are ever walking in your sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Father, we give you thanks for the many blessings you have given to each one of us, for freedom and peace and the liberty we so enjoy.

We pray for peace throughout the world. We thank you for the many signs that the repression which has existed in Eastern Europe is coming to an end.

We pray, Lord, that men and women throughout these countries and around the world should shout their praise not to men, but to you, the sovereign God.

Protect mankind from the delusion that peace on earth can be created by man. And show us all that true peace comes only from you, O Lord.

[31 : 03] We pray for all leaders and persons in authority throughout the world, and especially in these countries. Lord, we proclaim our faith that you are a God who gives far more abundantly and liberally than anyone could comprehend.

Like an eternal, inexhaustible fountain, which the more it gushes forth and overflows, the more it continues to give. Lord, we believe that you desire of us nothing more ardently than that we may ask many and great things of you.

And so, Lord, at this moment, in the quietness of our hearts, knowing that you are listening, and with faith founded in our acknowledgement of Jesus Christ as your Son and our Brother, and with the humility of one who has confessed one's sinfulness, and with the joy of one who has been forgiven, we make our requests known to you.

Lord, we pray for John Stott and for all those who will gather to hear him speak this week, tomorrow night here at St. John's, and Wednesday at Christchurch, Defeatley.

Lord, may his words inspire women and men to turn to you to discover the meaning of what is too often a meaningless existence. We pray also for the John Chapman mission in January.

[32 : 46] Prepare each of us, Lord, to play a part. Help us to encourage one another to invite friends to hear his message, and to have their hearts open to receive your word.

Let's close together with the general thanksgiving prayer at the bottom of page 14 in the wine-colored prayer book.

This is a prayer of general thanksgiving. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. for the means of grace, for the hope of glory. And we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfaintedly thankful, and that we show forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days.

[34 : 18] Through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

We sit for the notices. Good morning.

All I can say is what a joy it is to be here with you all, praising God, and on such a lovely November day, having been washed out this past week, we're delighted to have you all here.

I hope you'll join us at the conclusion of this service for a cup of tea or coffee, and by all means I hope you'll make our visitors and any people who are newcomers here feel welcome.

That's a job we all must undertake. As always, the bulletin is full of all kinds of information of upcoming events. This is going to be a good full week. As Ben has prayed, tomorrow night John Stott will be speaking here at 7.30.

[35 : 36] This is no question one of the true opportunities we have to hear a very gifted Christian speaker and writer. So John Stott at 7.30.

And he also will be speaking at the Faith in the Marketplace at Christ Church Cathedral on Wednesday at noon. So if you either don't make it tomorrow night, you have another opportunity on Wednesday, or maybe you like to attend both.

I'm sure you'll find that a good use of your time. Wednesday also is our special vestry meeting, kind of a congregational meeting to consider two things, the restoration of this church building and some renovations that we would like to see happen to the church hall.

It's an important decision because it does set the physical stage for our parish growth into the 90s. So I hope you'll all take this invitation to attend seriously.

And in preparation for that, we have a little bit of material. Over at the information counter at the, in the church hall, there is the vestry meeting agenda plus two motions that are going to be raised at the vestry meeting.

[37 : 01] There's also copies in somewhat limited quantity, but, you know, one per family or one per interested party, copies of the reports of the church restoration committee and the hall renovation committee.

So by all means, we want you to be aware of the issues and invite you to attend. further, November 25th is the training day for the John Chapman mission.

I won't say anything more other than there's this pink sheet in your bulletin. It tells you all about it and we hope you'll all put that in your calendar to attend. There's also a note that on December the 11th, the Monday Church Club has invited our parish, families or others, to sail on the Malibu Princess for the family carol cruise.

That's a Monday evening. It looks like it could be a wonderful evening. I'm sure recognizing them, have seen those carol cruise ships, you'll have to dress warmly, but I'm sure that the warmth of the group will offset some of the coldness of the air.

And finally, there will be an epilogue service immediately after the service, 10 minutes after the postlude, which is intended to pray for the activities of this week, the John Stott visit, and the vestry meeting on Wednesday evening.

[38 : 33] After that, please come for coffee. Oh, Harry just slipped me a note. I hope this isn't too late. There is a red Ford at the back of the church who's left their lights on.

Good luck. Anyway, you probably already know who you are, but it's XDB733, so you may want to dash out there and turn the lights on before coming for coffee.

Off, I mean. Our closing hymn is number 303, Praise to the Risen Christ.

Thine be the glory, Risen conquering Son. F thrown in the Christian. known for■■■ by this, einer gift of glory, above all, theyoracted tua. Thank goodness, thank goodness, thank goodness, thank goodness.

Thank goodness. Thank goodness. For the Ray, it may be our benefit, and then the Lord have come. ■■■■, kurt aller. Track■■■■'s zuvor,omeOr, whether it may be our friends or friends, we will not do provide with which people around.

[39 : 41] The Word of God CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

CHOIR SINGS Oh, Lord, help me, glorious things of life.

When these words without me made us in our strife, make us more than all the birds to lie in the sky.

May ourarest people harm, przez my merry Kundunai. Do thy hope above us. My fear that Sabbath may not fire my death, please come ██████, come apps, and letters Cay ██████, God will bear my soul.

Will you kneel, please? Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God be honor and glory forever and ever.

[42 : 34] And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.