

March 6, 2022

Deuteronomy 26:1-11 - Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16 - Romans 10:8b-13 - Luke 4:1-13 Second Sunday in Lent - March 13, 2022

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use at home. We invite you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people across the Methodist Connexion are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Verses as a Prayer

Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

¹You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, ²will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust." ⁹Because you have made the LORD your refuge, the Most High your dwelling place, ¹⁰no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent. ¹¹For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. ¹²On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone. ¹³You will tread on the lion and the adder, the young lion, and the serpent you will trample under foot. ¹⁴Those who love me, I will deliver; I will protect those who know my name. ¹⁵When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble, I will rescue them and honour them. ¹⁶With long life I will satisfy them and show them my salvation.

Prayer

You, Lord are our refuge and fortress. We are safe with You. You look after us and make certain that no-one harms us. When we call out to you – you hear us. You will answer our deepest cries, rescue us from trouble, and will keep us safe our whole life through. Thank you for your loving kindness. **Amen.**

Hymn: StF 66, The Steadfast love of the Lord never ceases

<https://youtu.be/JYkGipgrqmg>

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,

his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning,
new every morning,
great is thy faithfulness, O Lord,
great is thy faithfulness.

Edith McNeil

Let us pray together

Lord, you are steadfast in your love and infinite in your mercy, you welcome sinners and invite them to be your guests. We confess our sins, trusting in you to forgive us.

We have yielded to temptation and sinned: Lord, have mercy.
We have turned from our neighbours in their need: Christ, have mercy.
Almighty God has granted us mercy, forgiven our sins and kept us in eternal life for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ.
We accept His forgiveness. **Amen.**

Today's Gospel Reading: Luke 4:1-13
Full of the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan, and for forty days he wandered in the wilderness, led by the Spirit, and tempted by the devil.

The Temptation of Jesus

4 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, ² where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. ³ The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." ⁴ Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"

⁵ Then the devil^[a] led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶ And the devil^[b] said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. ⁷ If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." ⁸ Jesus answered him, "It is written,

'Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.'"

⁹ Then the devil^[c] took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, ¹⁰ for it is written,

'He will command his angels concerning you,
to protect you,'

¹¹ and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"

¹² Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ¹³ When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

Time to Reflect

If something is said to be 'beyond a shadow of a doubt' the speaker is certain that it is true, with no possibility of ambiguity. Jesus has just been baptised by his cousin, John. The heavens have opened, and the Holy Spirit has descended on him like a dove. The Father's voice comes from heaven, 'You are my beloved Son; in you I delight' (Luke 3:22). There is no doubt of the identity of Jesus! Beyond a shadow of a doubt indicates that something is not merely without doubt but without even the smallest, most insubstantial scrap of doubt. Have you ever been so sure of something and then someone casts a shadow of doubt over the surety? There are times when

a person can be so convincing that we even begin to doubt in what was otherwise a strong belief.

Jesus is full of the Holy Spirit, but the devil approaches him as He is wandering in the wilderness, hungry and tired. Just over a month before, Jesus heard His Father's voice. Now another voice was emerging out of the wilderness, trying to penetrate Jesus' core. Two times, the devil uses the phrase, 'If you are the Son of God?' Deep down, Jesus knows that He is the Son of God and because He knows that He is the Son of God, He would be able to turn the stone into bread and throw himself down from the parapet of the temple. But this is a power play situation. Jesus has the power, but it's not God whose asking Him to display His power. In fact, the glory would not go to God but to the tempter if Jesus succumbed. Jesus knows that temptation does not come from God, the Father (James 1:13-15). He stands firm and replies with the wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

The devil wants the glory and the worship. Jesus knows that worship belongs to God alone. I like that the Revised English Bible has Jesus referring to 'the Lord your God' when speaking with the devil. Because the devil's power is limited, and the Lord God is omnipresent (everywhere present), omniscient (all knowing), and omnipotent (all powerful).

There is a verse in Isaiah that I have always appreciated. It is this, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him" (Is. 59:19b). As

believers in Jesus Christ, we have an enemy, and he is the same enemy that confronted Jesus in the wilderness. But Jesus defeated the enemy with the words of Holy Scripture and finally the greater victor at the cross when Jesus lay down His life for you and me. I believe the standard lifted up against the devil was and is the perfect Son of God.

When you feel in danger of giving in to the lies of the devil, for he is called the 'father of lies' and he 'comes to steal, to kill, and to destroy.' When you feel in danger of giving in, stand firm and ask for wisdom from the Holy Spirit. In CS Lewis's, *The Screwtape Letters*, we find these words, "Indeed the safest road to Hell is the gradual one—the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts..."

However, for the believer in Christ, we have a signpost. We have a standard and we have an example. Hebrews 2:18 in the New Living Translation puts it this way, "Since (Jesus) he himself has gone through suffering and testing, he is able to help us when we are being tested."

As yourself when you have been tempted or tested lately. How have you dealt with this? When you feel that you might doubt yourself or doubt the goodness of God, remember that without a shadow of a doubt, **Jesus is the Son of God** and Jesus set the example of how to reply in wisdom when doubts crowd in. Remember the devil was up to his old tricks way back in the Garden of Eden, "Did God really say?" (Genesis 3.1a). The devil is all about tempting us to doubt. Doubt

God. Doubt the Bible. Doubt Jesus. And if all else fails ... he wants you to doubt your faith.

Let us pray

Loving God, when I am tempted, fill me with Your Spirit. When I am doubting, assure me of Your love. When I am questioning, teach me Your truth. When life is hard and even when it's not, help me to seek you first to see what you want for me, one day at a time. **Amen.**

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

Intercessions

Lord, we pray for this broken world that groans through years of abuse and bad stewardship. We know that we have not looked after the earth's resources properly. We have not cared for this planet. Lord forgive us. We worship you alone.

Lord, we pray for broken people. Those who have been hurt and damaged through no fault of their own. We pray for those who have suffered much at the hands of others. Lord forgive us. We worship you alone.

We recall the materialism and greed of our society. As individuals we have so much, yet we take it for granted. We even worship material things, technology, phones, televisions, and cars. Our worship extends to celebrities. Lord forgive us. We worship you alone.

We pray that we might show forth fruits that are worthy of you and your name. We pray that we will understand

fully when you say that we do not live on bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. Lord forgive us. We worship you alone. We ask that your Holy Spirit work in our lives until we meet You face to face. We ask for your strength to resist evil and to follow the Spirit of Love. Lord forgive us. We worship you alone.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: Listen to

[Create in Me a Clean, Clean Heart w/ Lyrics \(Rend Collective\) - YouTube](#)

A prayer of blessing

We go in the assurance that Jesus has won the victory over the enemy. We go knowing that we do not live on bread alone, and all the glory goes to God.

Amen.

Original Materials by Heather Wilson

All

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Local Churches CCCLi 363610

We are grateful to all the Ministers and Local Preachers from around the Connexion who have contributed to Worship at Home. This resource is administrated by Ministries: Vocations and Worship in the Connexional Team.

For more worship resources see

[The Bible \(methodist.org.uk\)](http://methodist.org.uk)
[Singing the Faith Plus \(methodist.org.uk\)](http://methodist.org.uk)