



Colossians 3 starts with: *"Since then you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things."* Next it points to some bad behaviour we should avoid, and then asks us to clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness and so on - verse 15: *"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and*

admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

So this morning though we can't be together doing that singing and worshipping, we can set our hearts on things above, and be filled with the peace of Christ in uncertain times and then move out into the week ahead ready to be living life "in the name of Jesus"

Introduction

**Today is the first Sunday of Advent,
looking forward to the coming of the
Christ child.**



You're rich in love and you're slow to anger
Your name is great and your heart is king
For all your goodness, I will keep on singing
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find

Bless the Lord, Oh my soul
Oh my soul, worship his holy name
Sing like never before, Oh my soul
I'll worship your holy name

And on that day when my strength is failing
The end draws near and my time has come
Still my soul will sing your praise unending
Ten thousand years and then forevermore

Bless the Lord, Oh my soul
Oh my soul, worship his holy name
Sing like never before, Oh my soul
I'll worship your holy name

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Song

The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning
It's time to sing your song again
Whatever may pass
and whatever lies before me
Let me be singing when the evening comes

Bless the Lord, Oh my soul
Oh my soul, worship his holy name
Sing like never before, Oh my soul
I'll worship your holy name

Read Psalm 40

Song

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
His goodness restores my soul.

And I will trust in You alone,
And I will trust in You alone,
For Your endless mercy follows me,
Your goodness will lead me home.

He guides my ways in righteousness,
And He anoints my head with oil,
And my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.

And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
For You are with me, and Your rod and staff
Are the comfort I need to know

Stuart Townend

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A reflection on pain

Prayer

Dear God

We confess our need of you today. We need your healing and your grace and we need hope restored. We need to be reminded that you work on behalf of those you love constantly, powerfully and completely.

Forgive us for trying to fix our own situations, in our own strength when true help and healing comes from you. Forgive us for forgetting about how much we need you above everything and everyone else.

We lay before you the places we are hurting. You see where no one else is able to fully see or understand. You know our pain, our burdens and our worries. You know when we need to be set free. We ask for your healing and grace to cover every broken place, every wound and every heartache.

Thank you that you are able to do far more than we can ever imagine and for your mighty power that acts on behalf of your children.

We reach out to you and know that you are restoring and redeeming every place of difficulty and every battle for your greater glory. Lord we love you and we need you today.

In Jesus' name, Amen

Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-5

Teaching

- If God loves us, why do we suffer?

Prayer

Dear Lord

We take comfort in knowing that you are our God, our rock, our refuge, our shield and our salvation.

We recognise that the sufferings of this present time are nothing compared to the glory that is to be revealed to us. We also recognise that Jesus endured physical and mental pain on the cross and therefore understands all that we go through.

Father we bring members of our church family who have suffered over the past few months. We also pray for those people in our hearts, in our families, neighbourhoods or workplaces who are suffering, be it physical or mental. We ask that you wrap your loving arms around them and offer them comfort, because you are our true salvation and source of healing.

In Jesus' name, Amen

When evil darkens our world, give us light.
When despair numbs our souls, give us hope.
When we stumble and fall, lift us up.
When doubts assail us, give us faith.
When nothing seems sure, give us trust.
When ideals fade, give us vision.
When we lose our way, be our guide!
That we may find serenity in Your presence,
and purpose in doing Your will.