

# Worship at Home

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## Call to worship (based on Psalm 69 v 18-20)

We turn to you, O Lord, for your love is kind.

**In your great compassion, turn to us**

Be swift and answer us, for we are in distress.

**Draw near to us and redeem us.**

## StF 250: Jesus calls us o'er the tumult

Jesus calls us o'er the tumult  
of our life's wild, restless sea;  
day by day his voice is sounding,  
saying, "Christian, follow me!"

As of old the apostles heard it  
by the Galilean lake,  
turned from home and toil and kindred,  
leaving all for Jesus' sake.

Jesus calls us from the worship  
of the vain world's golden store,  
from each idol that would keep us,  
saying, "Christian, love me more!"

In our joys and in our sorrows,  
days of toil and hours of ease,  
still he calls, in cares and pleasures,  
"Christian, love me more than these!"

Jesus calls us! By your mercies,  
Saviour, may we hear your call,  
give our hearts to your obedience,  
serve and love you best of all.

Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)

## Prayers

We come to you, God of every generation.  
We worship you for your kindness, your compassion  
and your love.

We see you in all the beauty you have created.  
We find you waiting here for us, ready to listen to our  
prayers, to heal our wounds, to come near to our  
hearts.

We come to hear your word for us, and seek a better  
knowledge of you, our God, the one Jesus calls "our  
heavenly Father".

As we worship, help us to follow Jesus. Receive our  
prayers and set our feet on right paths. We confess  
to you, loving God, that we need your health and  
redemption. We wander far from you and fall and  
fail. Forgive us, we pray, and by your Spirit make us  
new. **Amen**

## The Lord's Prayer

**Reading: Matthew 10: 24-39.**

## Message

There are some passages in the Bible that are a joy to  
preach on and a joy to hear. This is not one of them.  
This passage from Matthew leaves us feeling  
uncomfortable at best and a quivering wreck at  
worst.

Jesus is preparing his disciples before sending them  
out, so that they can do everything that he is doing  
such as preaching, healing, casting out demons and  
preparing the way for the coming of the Kingdom of  
God. Basically, he's warning them this is going to  
cause them a lot of problems. It's going to ruin their  
reputations, it's going to make them fall out with  
their families, and if you read all of Matthew Ch. 10,  
you'll find that Jesus had more to say which is a  
whole lot worse.

The fact is that taking up the cross rather than the  
sword is not accepted by some today. Many people  
find it far easier to point the finger at others and  
judge, forgetting that when they do, there are three  
fingers pointing back at them. It is so much easier to  
judge others rather than ourselves and yet  
Christianity calls us to work on our own behaviour  
and view others as God sees them.

We are called to meet people where they are and to  
love them as we love ourselves. That is as  
countercultural today as it was when Jesus spoke.

When we live the way Jesus teaches, showing radical  
hospitality to strangers, amazing love to our enemies  
or compassion and mercy to the sick and the poor,  
then we are going to offend people who have a  
vested interest in keeping the downtrodden  
oppressed and those who have nothing, poor.

God calls us to a radical change in our lives when we  
come to faith. Our Christian journey will not always  
be an easy one. When we pick up the cross, we are  
embracing the probability of opposition, oppression  
and just like the disciples, the possibility that we too  
may face threat.

God calls us to strength in faith and that often means  
standing up for Christ during ridicule for it, whether  
that comes from stranger, family or friend. It means  
spending time in God's word so that we are fed  
spiritually and can talk about our faith with courage  
and conviction.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer puts it this way in *The Cost of  
Discipleship* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc.,  
1937), 99.

*"The cross is laid on every Christian. The first Christ  
suffering which every man must experience is the  
call to abandon the attachments of this world. It is  
that dying of the old man which is the result of his  
encounter with Christ. As we embark upon  
discipleship, we surrender ourselves to Christ in  
union with his death—we give over our lives to death.  
Thus, it begins; the cross is not the terrible end to an  
otherwise god fearing and happy life, but it meets  
us at the beginning of our communion with Christ.  
When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.  
It may be a death like that of the first disciples who  
had to leave home and work to follow him, or it may  
be a death like Luther's, who had to leave the  
monastery and go out into the world. But it is the  
same death every time death in Jesus Christ, the  
death of the old man at his call".*

Paul saw his life as a daily death to himself. He  
expressed this understanding to the church elders of  
Ephesus: "I do not account my life of any value nor as  
precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and  
the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to  
testify to the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24).

This 'dying to self' empowered Paul to face  
unimaginable suffering and many persecutions for  
the sake of the gospel.

When Paul said, “*I die daily*,” he reminded the church that he faced the possibility of death every time he strode into a new synagogue and proclaimed Christ to those who didn’t want to hear (Acts 17:2–5; 18:4). In 2 Corinthians 11:24–28, Paul lists some of the dangers he had faced that threatened death, yet he was undeterred. Acts 14:19–21 records Paul being stoned and left for dead. But miraculously, he survived, got up, brushed himself off, and went to the next town to preach.

Matthew 10 offers some stark words for us to digest, but it also provides beautiful words of comfort. It tells us that every hair on our head is counted and reassures us of how loved we are as followers of Christ. Let us never forget, that the journey we make with God is not one we travel alone but with Him. Furthermore, we don’t travel in our own strength, but in God’s.

Like Paul we do not fear physical death because we have already reckoned ourselves “crucified with Christ” (Galatians 2:20).



### **StF 673: Will you come and follow me...**

**Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?  
Will you go where you don’t know and never be the same?**

**Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known, will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?**

**Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?**

**Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?**

**Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare? Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?**

**Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?  
Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same?**

**Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as this unseen, and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?**

**Will you love the ‘you’ you hide if I but call your name?**

**Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?**

**Will you use the faith you’ve found to reshape the world around, through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?**

**Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.**

**Let me turn and follow you and never be the same. In your company I’ll go where your love and footsteps show. Thus I’ll move and live and grow in you and you in me.**

John L Bell (b 1949) & Graham Maule (b 1958)

### **Prayers of intercession**

God of all mercy, our loving heavenly Father, we bring our prayers to you.

Father, hear us: **You alone can help and save us.**

We pray for those who feel their life is lost in deep water and great darkness.

For those trapped in debt or addiction.

We pray for all who love and serve those who feel lost.

Father, hear us: **You alone can help and save us.**

We pray for those who fear the deep will swallow them up.

For those facing bullying or oppression.

For those undergoing medical tests or treatment.

We pray for those who speak out for justice and kindness.

Father, hear us: **You alone can help and save us.**

We pray for those whose distress leads them to feel that your face is turned against them.

For victims of natural disaster and those who find themselves in the midst of war.

For those struggling with lack of self-worth.

For those with poor mental health.

We pray for all who support and encourage vulnerable people.

Father, hear us: **You alone can help and save us.**

We pray for those who need to know that you, Loving God, draw near to them.

For those whose lives have just begun, or whose lives have changed dramatically.

For those nearing death

We pray for all those who accompany others and bring hope.

Father, hear us: **You alone can help and save us.**

Loving God, save us, lift us up, hear us, draw near to us.

That our prayers may be heard and answered, and we and all your children know your love more deeply.

Father, hear us: **You alone can help and save us.**

We pray in Jesus’ name and in the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

### **StF 164: Your words to me are life...**

**Your words to me are life and health;  
They fortify my soul,  
Enable, guide, and teach my heart  
To reach its perfect goal.**

**Your words to me are light and truth;  
From day to day they show  
Their wisdom, passing earthly lore,  
As in their truth I grow.**

**Your words to me are full of joy,  
Of beauty, peace, and grace;  
From them I learn your blessed will,  
Through them I see your face.**

**Your words are perfected in One,  
Yourself, the living Word;  
Within my heart your image print  
In clearest lines, O Lord.**

George Currie Martin (1865-1937)

### **Blessing**

May the love of the God whom Jesus called Father care for us in each challenge and carry us through each day and may the grace of Jesus Christ our Lord and the strength of the Holy Spirit be with us today and always. **Amen.**