



Sunday 24 May 2020 – Ascension Sunday

Final Instructions

Join us online if you can at 11am. Website: <http://www.christianworldmedia.com/livesite/BasingstokeSalvationArmy>.

Facebook - www.facebook.com/BasingstokeSalvationArmy/live.

YouTube - www.youtube.com/robwestwoodpayne/live.

Listen on any phone – dial 01256 679888 (from around three hours after the service).

Song – Hail the day that sees him rise, Alleluia!

Hail the day that sees him rise, Alleluia!
To his throne above the skies; Alleluia!
Christ, the Lamb for sinners given, Alleluia!
Enters now the highest Heaven! Alleluia!

2 There for him high triumph waits; Alleluia!
Lift your heads, eternal gates! Alleluia!
He hath conquered death and sin; Alleluia!
Take the King of Glory in! Alleluia!

3 Lo! the Heaven its Lord receives, Alleluia!
Yet he loves the earth he leaves; Alleluia!
Though returning to his throne, Alleluia!
Still he calls mankind his own. Alleluia!

4 See! he lifts his hands above; Alleluia!
See! he shows the prints of love: Alleluia!
Hark! his gracious lips bestow, Alleluia!
Blessings on his Church below. Alleluia!

5 Still for us he intercedes, Alleluia!
His prevailing death he pleads, Alleluia!
Near himself prepares our place, Alleluia!
He the first fruits of our race. Alleluia!

6 Lord, though parted from our sight, Alleluia!
Far above the starry height, Alleluia!
Grant our hearts may thither rise, Alleluia!
Seeking thee above the skies. Alleluia!

7 There we shall with thee remain, Alleluia!
Partners of thy eternal reign, Alleluia!
There thy face for ever see, Alleluia!
Find our Heaven of heavens in thee. Alleluia!

Charles Wesley (1707-1788) and Thomas Cotterill (1779-1823)

Prayers of Intercession

Loving God, creator of the universe and all living beings. We pray for your world, broken and fragile. Give us a sense of reverence for your creation and respect for each other. We pray for those whose lives are devastated by natural disasters and incurable diseases. We pray for those facing war and conflict at this time: disperse the enemies of human happiness and build up all that reflects your beauty, courage and love. Loving God, you called men and women to share your good news with the whole world. Give us lips that can proclaim your praise. We pray for your Church throughout the world, especially our own church. Help us to use the power you give us to reach out to the ends of the world. We remember especially persecuted Christians throughout the world. Give them the strength they need to persevere. Loving God, master of the sea and the winds, we can reach the world with the touch of a button. We pray that you may lead us to reach out to those around us. We hold especially those who are in any kind of need. Make us bearers of your love and your healing touch. Loving God, you put the words in the mouth of your prophets. Give us the language that we need to be able to speak of your truth. We pray for those whose language we cannot speak: the young ones, the old ones, those who cannot speak verbally, and those who came from afar seeking refuge and security. Give us a heart that understands and arms that can embrace. Loving God, you made us in your own image to reflect your glory. Help us to accept those who are different from us as our own brothers and sisters in Christ. We pray especially for asylum seekers and refugees, and for those who are discriminated against for reasons such as their ethnicity, gender, sexuality, language, or abilities. Give us a loving heart that we may be able to welcome them in your name. Lord of creation, may your will be done. **Amen.**



Song – Before the throne of God above

Before the throne of God above,
I have a strong, a perfect plea,
A great High Priest whose name is Love,
Who ever lives and pleads for me.
My name is graven on his hands,
My name is written on his heart;
I know that while in Heaven he stands
No tongue can bid me thence depart,
No tongue can bid me thence depart.

2 When Satan tempts me to despair,
And tells me of the guilt within,
Upward I look and see him there
Who made an end to all my sin.
Because the sinless Saviour died,
My sinful soul is counted free;
For God the just is satisfied
To look on him and pardon me,
To look on him and pardon me.

3 Behold him there! the risen Lamb,
My perfect, spotless righteousness;
The great unchangeable I Am,
The King of Glory and of grace!
One with himself I cannot die,
My soul is purchased with his blood;
My life is hid with Christ on high,
With Christ my Saviour and my God,
With Christ my Saviour and my God.

Charitie Lees Bancroft (1841-1923)

Bible Reading: Acts 1:6-14 (New Living Translation)

The Ascension of Jesus

⁶So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, “Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?”

⁷He replied, “The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

⁹After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. ¹⁰As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. ¹¹“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!”

Matthias Replaces Judas

¹²Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, a distance of half a mile. ¹³When they arrived, they went to the upstairs room of the house where they were staying.

Here are the names of those who were present: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James (son of Alphaeus), Simon (the zealot), and Judas (son of James). ¹⁴They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus.

Song – Lord, I lift your name on high

Lord, I lift your name on high;
Lord, I love to sing your praises.
I'm so glad you're in my life;
I'm so glad you came to save us.

*You came from Heaven to earth to show the way,
From the earth to the cross, my debt to pay.
From the cross to the grave, from the grave to the
sky,
Lord, I lift your name on high.*



Rick Founds

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Bible Message: Final Instructions

Instructions are Important

Almost nothing we buy these days comes without instructions. And as we heard in our Bible reading this morning, before Jesus returned to heaven, he had some final instructions for his followers.

The first of Jesus' final instructions to his followers is Wait:

Acts 1:4 NLT

Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, "Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before.

Have you ever been in a car with a small child asking you every 100 yards or so, "Are we nearly there yet?" That's pretty much what the disciples' response to Jesus was:

Acts 1:6 NLT

So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?"

We are not great at waiting, are we? But despite these questions, our passage tells us they all joined together constantly in prayer:

Acts 1:14 NLT

They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus.

Prayer is a great theme of Acts. It's mentioned thirty-one times. And the apostles prayed together. That word united in Greek literally means "with one mind or passion." They were with one mind in prayer. They were united. They were in union together as a praying community.

Pray for Revival

The apostles were keen to know when things were going to change. Does that sound familiar? When are things going to change? When are we going to be out of lockdown? When will we be able to meet together again? Jesus' response was that it was not the disciples' job to know when things were going to change. His final instruction to them was that they would have to learn to wait.

Like the apostles, we are being asked to wait. But not passively. The disciples' example is that we should be praying for the revival we long for. After all, as J. Edwin Orr once wrote:

No great spiritual awakening has begun anywhere in the world apart from united prayer—Christians persistently praying for revival.

If that's the "new normal" we're longing for, then we should be praying for it.

Jesus' other final instruction to his followers was:

Acts 1:8 NLT

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."



BASINGSTOKE SALVATION ARMY

quarantine worship

What does it mean to be a witness? It means to proclaim and demonstrate Jesus' leadership in our own lives. I see that witness in you every day. And did you notice the direction of travel for this witnessing? Jesus' followers are to be his witnesses, first and foremost, "at home," in Jerusalem. Before we take his message further afield, before we think about taking his message to those who are not part of our community, we are being sent home to bring others home. Many of the early day Salvationist converts began their witnessing in their homes. In this time of lockdown, we can do the same.

Song – Who is on the Lord's side?

Who is on the Lord's side?
Who will serve the King?
Who will be his helpers
Other lives to bring?
Who will leave the world's side?
Who will face the foe?
Who is on the Lord's side?
Who for him will go?

*By thy grand redemption,
By thy grace divine,
We are on the Lord's side;
Saviour, we are thine.*

2 Not for weight of glory,
Not for crown and palm,
Enter we the army,
Raise the warrior psalm;
But for love that claimeth
Lives for whom he died;
He whom Jesus nameth
Must be on his side.

3 Jesus, thou hast bought us
Not with gold or gem,
But with thine own lifeblood
For thy diadem.
With thy blessing filling
Each who comes to thee,
Thou hast made us willing,
Thou hast made us free.

4 Fierce may be the conflict,
Strong may be the foe,
But the King's own army
None can overthrow.
Round his standard ranging,
Victory is secure,
For his truth unchanging
Makes the triumph sure.

*Master, thou wilt keep us,
By thy grace divine,
Always on the Lord's side,
Saviour, always thine.*

Frances Ridley Havergal (1836–1879)

Benediction: Hebrews 13:20-21 (NLT)

²⁰ Now may the God of peace—
who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus,
the great Shepherd of the sheep,
and ratified an eternal covenant with his blood—
²¹ may he equip you with all you need
for doing his will.
May he produce in you,¹⁴
through the power of Jesus Christ,
every good thing that is pleasing to him.
All glory to him forever and ever! Amen.