

St Nicholas Church, Sighthill

2nd August 2020

'Cast your burdens on Jesus'

God is good... all the time

Opening Hymn: I heard a voice of Jesus say, come unto me and rest

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74kyfROS4q8>

I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto me, and rest. Lay down, thou weary one, lay down thy head upon my breast." I came to Jesus as I was, weary, and worn, and sad. I found in Him a resting-place, and He has made me glad.

Call to worship

Remembering when we could gather as a congregation, we worship now in our own homes.
Remembering how Jesus drew the crowds, we worship knowing he draws us still in solidarity.
Remembering how Christ fed the hungry, we worship now for food for the soul, each solitary one of us a part of that glorious noisy throng.

Opening Prayer

God of miracle and God of everyday, may we see you now; healing, feeding, teaching, serving, through ordinary people, whom you call to be your body in the world today. We thank you that you reveal your love in those around us, and that you even enable us to step up to be Christ for one another.

Lord, forgive us for the times we cannot be bothered, the times we look to our own comfort first, and forget that your command is to love one another. Forgive us and help us to do better.

God, in Jesus you gave us a perfect example. May we keep on learning from him, and may we become imitators of him, until we too are sought out by others, as people of peace and of love in the name of God, who is love. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

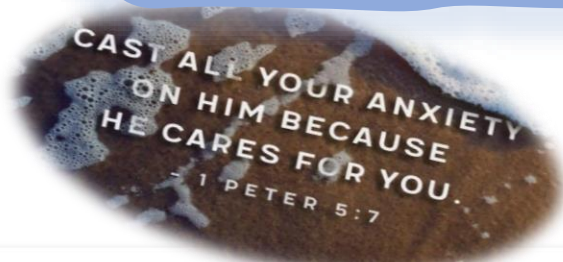
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Matthew 6: 9-13 (NKJV)

Psalm 55:22; 145:8-9, 14-21

Cast your burden on the Lord, And He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.

The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The LORD is good to all, and His compassion is over all that He has made. The LORD upholds all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down. The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food in due season. You open your hand, satisfying the desire of every living thing. The LORD is just in all His ways and kind in all His doings. The LORD is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth. He fulfils the desire of all who fear Him; He also hears their cry and saves them. The LORD watches over all who love Him, but all the wicked He will destroy. My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD, and all flesh will bless His holy name for ever and ever.



Poem: Cast your cares upon Jesus

Cast your cares upon Jesus,
direct your soul His way
give Him all your worries
find true peace for the day.

Hold and keep not a burden,
let Him ease the strain
give Him all of your fears
and His peace you will gain.

Cast your concerns upon Him,
your every want and need
to His leading and guiding
let your heart be willing to cede.

Grasp and hold onto Jesus,
let not pride get in your way
for Satan is alive and well
and wants to ruin your day.

Cast your cares upon Jesus,
is something you must do
for Jesus has promised . . .
to take your cares from you!

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Reflection

'Cast your burden on the Lord, And He shall sustain you'

The two Psalms of David we heard earlier highlight the source of David's help during his times of trouble. David had many victories, but also many troubles, including the betrayal by his friend and trusted adviser, Ahithophel (2Samuel 15:31–37). Ahithophel was greatly renowned for his sagacity. He betrayed his friend David, leaving him heavily burdened and broken-hearted. It was during times of trouble like this that David turned his eyes on the Lord to **cast his burdens upon Him**. He believed that God would sustain him through every difficulty and, as He had promised, not allow him to be shaken.

Psalm 55:22 teaches us many things on the subject of 'casting our burdens to the Lord. I will mention three. First, the word 'cast' paints a powerful picture of giving one's burdens to God. We often use this word to describe the things we do well or gently like; casting a shadow, casting doubt, casting a vote and casting a fishing rod. But the word in the original Hebrew language translated in most English versions of the Bible as cast, is anything but gentle. It means 'throwing', 'hurling' or tossing. So, the phrase '*cast your burdens on the Lord*' invites us not just to hand over our concerns nicely to God, but to hurl them upon Him. It's as if we're shouting, 'I've had it with this burden. I can't handle it myself anymore. Here, Lord, you take it!' And in throwing our burden to the Lord, we, in effect, let go of them. Once we've tossed them to Him, they are gone. They are no longer ours to carry.

Secondly, note that God promises in this portion of scripture - not to take care of burdens (although this is implied), but to take care of His people. The psalmist has an unwavering trust in God. He has found Him 'gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love' (Psalm 145:8). This why he writes (and indeed reminds God's people), toss your past and present heavy loads, disappointments, pains, hurts, frustrations, abuse or mistreatments on the Lord Himself and He will take good care of you. Apostle Peter, writing to the suffering saints in the early church who were going through extreme persecution, said 'no matter what you are going through, all of your worries and anxieties can be thrown on the Lord, because He cares for us' (I Peter 5:7).

Again, this is what the psalmist meant when he wrote, "Cast your burdens on the Lord, and He shall sustain you. He shall not permit the righteous to be moved'. Jesus Christ repeats these words, but changes them into an invite for all to go to him with our burdens, and find rest. He does not ask us to 'lay our burdens down', then go to him or even to give them to Him then 'walk away'. No! He says, 'Come to Me with your heavy burdens, and I will give you rest'. He promises not only to lift our heavy burden of guilt and hopelessness, but also to

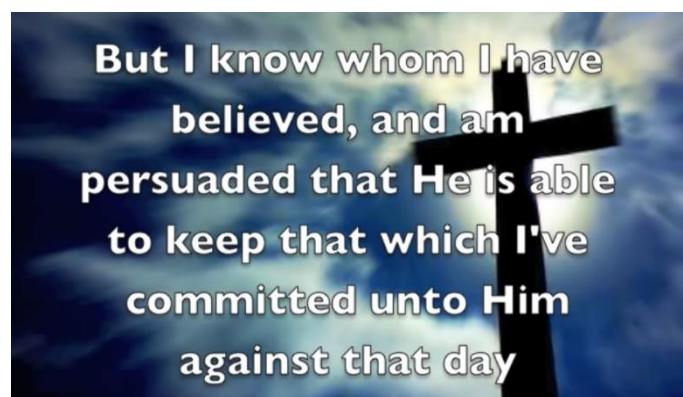
sustain and nurture us and to give us true rest in Him. We can only rest well in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ when we 'throw our burdens' on Him as, to use the analogy of John Mason Neale, "a ship in a storm casts her burden on the anchor, 'which anchor holds on to its sure fixing place'".

On Tuesday, I read the brief reflection (in Old English) by Rev Samuel Blackerby (1619-1674) on Psalm 55:22. I found it helpful and felt it would serve us well, as a closing part of this reflection. Here it is and I hope and pray that you too will be helped and blessed by it.

The best way to ease thyself is to lay thy load upon God; He will take it up and also carry thee. There is many a man would be willing to go of himself if another would but carry his burden for him; but if you throw your burden upon God He will not only carry that, but will also carry you. He cares not how much weight a Christian layeth on his back; a true Israelite may ease himself, and best please his God at once. God delights not to see tears in thine eyes, or paleness in thy countenance; thy groans and sighs make no music in His ears. He had rather that thou wouldst free thyself of thy burden by casting it upon Him, that He might rejoice in thy joy and comfort. Now, true confidence in God, and resting upon God, will both free thee of thy burden and also bring in the strength of God to sustain and bear thee up from falling. Wouldst thou, therefore, own God as thy strength, and fetch strength from God to thy soul? Rest upon God, roll thyself upon Him... in time of greatest weakness, in time of greatest service [and] in times of greatest trials'. Amen.

Closing Hymn: I KNOW WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lygm0ZeOtGA>



Final blessings

Lord, you are there for us. When life leaves us parched or hungry, anxious or weary, direct us to you - the source of Holy food. Reveal yourself as the giver of all that we need. Physical need is met in what you make ready for us, and intend to make available for all. Spiritual need is met in the giving of yourself for us, and for all people. With the knowledge of such love and generosity, let us go into the world restored and renewed.

God is good all the time