

Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone



**Prayers and Reflections
for use at home**

**Sunday 28 September 2025
Trinity 15**

Welcome to this week's prayers and reflections. This week, we have the story of the rich man and Lazarus. It is a story designed by Jesus to challenge his hearers, especially those who live selfish, comfortable, self-satisfied lives. Jesus suggests that nothing will open their eyes to God's call to love our neighbours as ourselves and no warnings will open their hearts so that they love God with every fibre of our being. It feels very apt for our modern times.

Enjoy pondering our Lord's challenge.

Every blessing,

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This week's hymn celebrates the world that Jesus came to create, one that is right-side up. It is Mary's song. Do ponder your blessings, and give thanks.



Tell out, my soul,
the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings,
give my spirit voice;
tender to me
the promise of his word;
in God my Saviour
shall my heart rejoice.

Timothy Dudley-Smith (1926-2024)

CCLI reported

**Prayers and Reflections
for use at home on Trinity 15
Attentive Living**

PREPARING OURSELVES

Take a moment to be still in God's presence and feel his love. If you are indoors, you may wish to light a candle as a sign of God's love - here, in your room. You may also wish to have a bowl of water ready for the time of letting go. When you are ready, say this opening prayer.

Lord, as I sit and wait in silence,
I place my hopes and dreams,
my fears and concerns,
into your safe and loving hands.
Enfold me with your love,
make my heart beat in time with yours;
in Jesus' name,
I pray. **Amen.**

LETTING GO

If you come to this time of prayer and reflection with any regrets, with things that you wish you had not said, done or been, offer them to God in the silence of your heart. And then, reflect on the words of this next verse.

Tell out, my soul,
the greatness of his Name!
Make known his might,
the deeds his arm has done;
his mercy sure,
from age to age the same;
his holy Name,
the Lord, the Mighty One.

Timothy Dudley-Smith (1926-2024)

CCLI reported



*If you wish, dip your finger into a bowl of water and make the sign of the cross on your palm.
Feel God's forgiveness.*

Our verse calls us back into God's presence. It is an invitation to pause, and recall who God is. He is the Greatest One! the Maker of all that is, and the one who saves us from ourselves. We should live the whole of our lives attentive to this. The life that we have, the love that we have, and the delight that we experience in life, all of these are his gifts to us. Our hearts are less than full if we fail to appreciate his love for us.

Like a car's fuel gauge, ponder how full your heart is of love and gratitude to our Lord, the Mighty One.

May this poem inspire your love and your attentive living. You may wish to read this poem in two ways. Firstly, as Jesus offering this to you as a sign of his undying love. He died and entered the tomb to save you. Secondly, this poem can be your whole-hearted response.

How will this enhance the way that you live?

The life that I have
Is all that I have
And the life that I have
Is yours

The love that I have
Of the life that I have
Is yours and yours and yours

A sleep I shall have
A rest I shall have
Yet death will be but a pause

For the peace of my years
In the long green grass
Will be yours and yours and yours

Leo Marks (1920-2001)

PRAYING TODAY'S PRAYER

(The Collect)

Across our villages and the worldwide Church, this prayer is being said today. Add your voice to this earthly circle of prayer to our God whose love is unbreakable.

Lord God,
defend your Church from all false teaching
and give to your people knowledge of your truth,
that we may enjoy eternal life
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Our prayer guides us back to our bibles. It is through his holy words that God teaches us how to live at one with him and with our neighbours, whether family and friends, acquaintances or strangers. Time and time again in the Old Testament, God tells his people off for forgetting to care for those who have little in this life. The rich should not delight in growing even richer at their expense. Jesus came to give them the very same lesson in attentive living. It is a core part of his mission.

Time and time again, through his stories, Jesus says, 'You cannot truly love God if you fail to love those who are made in his image.'

To know this... to live like this... is to experience life in all its fullness on earth even before we experience the selfless joys of heaven.



Tell out, my soul,
the greatness of his might!
Powers and dominions
lay their glory by.
Proud hearts and stubborn wills
are put to flight,
the hungry fed,
the humble lifted high.

Timothy Dudley-Smith (1926-2024)

CCLI reported

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

The rich man and Lazarus

Jesus said, 'There was a rich man who dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

'The time came when the beggar died and angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called out to him, "Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire."

'But Abraham replied, "Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us."

'He answered, "Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment."

'Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them."

"No, father Abraham," he said, "but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent."

'He said to them, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead."

Luke 16:19-end

Send Lazarus...

During his life, this unnamed rich man in Jesus' story looked down on Lazarus, the poor man at his gate. Picture him, coming out of his home and tutting every time that he saw Lazarus there. Imagine him, carefully, walking past on the far side, averting his gaze and holding his nose. Lazarus' suffering did not move him to tears or to actions. The rich man looked down on Lazarus without compassion. He who had everything, and more, that he needed in life felt no gratitude to God for his blessings, or any desire to love this poor neighbour as himself.

God's words of social justice and loving compassion via the prophets were lost to him. God's image of love, which was within him and Lazarus too, was closed to him. He was self-satisfied and selfish, so content in life but... he was missing out on so much. Even death and his suffering in Hades hasn't changed this man. Twice in the story, the rich man asks Abraham to send Lazarus to him or to his brothers. It feels very much like the type of command that this man would have given to his slaves and servants, 'Do this! Go there!' Even in his agony, this man feels superior to Lazarus. Did you notice, there is not one word of apology. He does not feel sorry. He does not ask for forgiveness from God or from Lazarus.

Think of the people today who look down on those who have little in life, who are the visible poor and outcasts. What would it take for them to sense their oneness with those who have nothing and be moved to compassionate action? Or, feel the nudges of God's Spirit within them?



Tell out, my soul,
the glories of his word!
Firm is his promise,
and his mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul,
the greatness of the Lord,
to children's children
and for evermore!

Timothy Dudley-Smith (1926-2024)

CCLI reported

OUR PRAYERS

Feel free to use one or more of these prayers and to add your own.

Lord Jesus, your story stirs my heart and my compassion,
and I feel for those who are missing out on life's blessings.
When I feel better than them, remind me that we are all God's children.
Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, you came to open the eyes of all people, to stir their hearts
to love as you love. All that we have in life is because of your Father's
providing. Open, Lord, the eyes of those who are content in life...
Lord, hear my prayer.

Lord Jesus, you reached out to the poor and the outcasts,
those who felt like Lazarus in your parable. You welcomed them
with love. Raise up, Lord, all who feel looked down on...
Lord, hear my prayer.

Offer your own heartfelt prayers and yearnings, praise and thanksgivings.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who 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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF BLESSING

A closing prayer of blessing for this week.

O God, you search me and you know me,
all my thoughts and feelings are open to your gaze,
you see the paths I will take before I take them. Guide my daily living.
Bless me and keep my loved ones safe, I pray. **Amen.**