



# The Methodist Church

Ripon and Lower Dales Circuit

Worship at Home

Brought today by Deacon Nigel Perrott

Week beginning Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2020

*Jesus is The **Rock** of Faith  
The **Rock** of Hope  
The **Rock** of Strength  
On which we can depend*

**Welcome to worship with the Ripon and Lower Dales Methodist Circuit.**

**Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Today we declare that Jesus is Lord, we are all for Jesus, what does it mean to confess that Jesus is Lord..**

## StF 341

All for Jesus--all for Jesus,  
this our song shall ever be;  
for we have no hope, nor Savior,  
if we have not hope in thee.

All for Jesus--thou wilt give us  
strength to serve thee, hour by hour,  
none can move us from thy presence,  
while we trust thy love and power.

All for Jesus--thou hast loved us;  
all for Jesus--thou hast died;  
all for Jesus--thou art with us;  
all for Jesus crucified.

All for Jesus--all for Jesus--  
this the Church's song must be;  
till, at last, her sons are gathered  
one in love and one in thee.

Reproduced from *Singing the Faith* Electronic Words  
Edition, number 341  
W.J Sparrow (1859-1952)

## An Opening Prayer

Let us pray:  
Loving Lord, you created every part of us and

know and love us completely.  
You know our every thoughts and understand every feeling. When we turn the wrong way, you call us back to follow you. There is no escape from your presence, the darkness is not dark enough to hide from you. Lord you embrace us with your love, protecting us with powerful arms. All that you have is available to us: A loving spirit, joy peace and tranquillity and a wider vision of your amazing Kingdom.

Yet despite of our gratitude, we all so often forget your loving presence.  
Forgive us Lord  
when we need to speak and stay silent  
Forgive us Lord  
when we should stop but keep going  
Forgive us Lord  
When our neighbours become distance  
Forgive us Lord  
For all those things that do not bring you glory  
Forgive us Lord  
*Pause and bring your own confessions to God.*

In your mercy oh Lord help us to amend what we are and direct what we shall be,  
that we do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with you our God.  
We thank you now for the assurance of your forgiveness  
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

**Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

*Modern Form*

Our Father, who is in heaven,  
Hallowed be your name:  
Your kingdom come;  
Your will be done;  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our sins,  
As we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory,  
are yours,  
now and for ever **Amen.**

**Reading:** Matthew 16:13-20

## Message “Simon Peter” – The Rock

What a great little passage this is, full of thoughtful things to ponder.

We so often focus on the word rock as something on which we can depend.

However, just for a moment let's think about another view of the rock. A rock head for example, not exactly flattering! Julius Caesar, shouted at the people of Rome, “*You blocks of stone, you senseless things!*” In this account we don't think of the negative, but the positive. Do you remember the old Rocky films? Now there is a story of a poor boxer, an underdog, overcoming the impossible. Maybe Jesus called Simon the rock because of his strength and prowess, remember Gethsemane, he was certainly ready for a fight then.

Perhaps Jesus called Simon the rock because he was committed, dependable, and unstoppable in an argument? However, we cannot forget what happened when he denied Jesus can we?

Now here is a thought, perhaps Jesus chose Simon because he was someone who was strong enough so that others could depend on him. Jesus does seem to suggest this doesn't he? “*On you, my rock, I shall build my church*”.

Now here is a thought I want you to think about!

Did Jesus build his church on Simon because of his rock like foundation or is Simon's rock like foundation there because Jesus chose him? Does the rock like foundation come from Jesus or from Simon?

You may think that I have lost the plot here! But when you think about it, we are the church built on that rock. Do we need to be rocks to be a good Christian?

Now as Christians we can certainly get a lot of things wrong, we do some pretty silly things, we can be as Julius Caesar described, “*blocks and senseless things!*” We can say the wrong things and so on. However, we also capable of receiving God's wisdom, after all, we were created in his image. We can be ready to go for the Lord one minute and then in another, be feeling low because we have to deal with our own

problems, getting on with difficult people, dealing with the problems in the world. Sometimes we hold onto the wrong things, we become attached the customs, and traditions of faith but then find difficulties actually living out that faith in our lives. I think it would have been more fitting if Jesus had named Simon “jelly” rather than rock! It's sort of firm but a bit wobbly. I think that often sums me up!

You know, Jesus knew all this, he named Simon, Peter because Simon Peter had acknowledged who Jesus was. Simon, who had denied Jesus, had run away and messed up, but he became Simon Peter, the rock, the leader of the disciples and martyr for Christ. It was his admission that Jesus was the son of God that made him into a rock. Jesus made the rock, he gave the rock like foundation that we too can stand firm on.

We may be a bit wobbly at times, more like jelly than rock, but our testimony that Jesus is the Son of God is sufficient for us to become rock like!

**Amen**

Well, Jesus is certainly our rock, he is our Anchor, and our next hymn also talks of being strong.

### StF No. 645

Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,  
when the clouds unfold their wings of strife?  
When the strong tides lift, and the cables  
strain, will your anchor drift, or firm remain?

*We have an anchor that keeps the soul  
steadfast and sure while the billows roll;  
fastened to the Rock which cannot move,  
grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love!*

Will your anchor hold in the straits of fear,  
when the breakers roar and the reef is near?  
While the surges rave, and the wild winds  
blow, shall the angry waves then your  
bark 'erflow?

Will your anchor hold in the floods of death,  
when the waters cold chill your latest breath?  
On the rising tide you can never fail,  
while your anchor holds within the veil:

Will your eyes behold through the morning  
light the city of gold and the harbour bright?  
Will you anchor safe by the heavenly shore,  
when life's storms are past for evermore?

### Prayers of intercession

Loving, listening and Understanding God,  
we bring before you today, the needs of our  
world and our communities.

Today we continue to remember those still  
coming to terms with life in Beirut. We pray  
that the world comes together in love and  
support for all those in need in that place. We  
pray for a just government to take control and  
that they exercise wisdom and care. We  
remember all those who mourn and we ask  
that they feel your comfort and love.  
Lord we pray for our world, for all who live  
with hunger, fear, and anxiety. We ask that  
those in positions of power speak and act  
with justice, we do indeed pray that your will  
be done and that your kingdom comes.

Lord, here at home we pray for all our  
schools: the parents, the teachers and pupils.  
And as they prepare to return to school in  
uncertain times, we pray, they too, feel the  
certainty of your love.

We pray for our churches, as they too, begin  
to see new ways of working in their buildings.  
We pray, help us to break off the shackles of  
rigidity and continue to see new ways in  
which we can be a worshipping and missional  
community.

We bring before you those in our church  
family who have lost loved ones, may they  
find comfort in your presence and healing in  
your spirit.

*We pause in a moment of silence now to bring our  
own prayers to God.*

*Loving God please accept these prayers  
through our loving saviour Jesus Christ  
**Amen.***

### Closing Hymn

**StF 440** – Amazing Grace

It is by Grace we are saved, we sing together

- 1 Amazing grace — how sweet the sound —  
that saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
was blind, but now I see.
- 2 God's grace has taught my heart to fear,  
his grace my fears relieved;  
how precious did that grace appear  
the hour I first believed!
- 3 Through many dangers, toils and snares  
I have already come;  
God's grace has brought me safe thus far,  
and grace will lead me home.
- 4 The Lord has promised good to me,  
his word my hope secures;  
he will my shield and portion be  
as long as life endures.
- 5 And, when this heart and flesh shall fail  
and mortal life shall cease,  
I shall possess within the veil  
a life of joy and peace.
- 6 When we've been there ten thousand years  
bright shining as the sun,  
we've no less days to sing God's praise  
than when we first begun.

John Newton (1725–1807) (*alt.*)  
Reproduced from *Singing the Faith* Electronic Words  
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As we close our time together, I have a  
closing thought:  
*How can we be better rocks? How can we  
best support others and be an example?  
Why not have a read of Romans 12, here  
Paul have writes some great examples...why  
not have a read this week.*

### We close with the Grace...

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ

And the love of God,

And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit

Be with you all, now and forever  
Amen