

# HIDDEN RIVER CIRCUIT DEVOTIONAL ARTICLES

## Edition 14: OCTOBER 2025

Please take these articles week by week and read them slowly and reflectively, and may your life be enriched by God and by His Spirit who helps us understand more about God's love and presence. We welcome all of you reading this for the first time. We ask God to shower us all with blessings as we seek to rejoice in the Good News of Jesus Christ in every way we can.

Thank you to all who have contributed to this October edition

Editor: Karen Drayton ([kedrayton1@gmail.com](mailto:kedrayton1@gmail.com))

Please send any comments and thoughts you may have on any of the articles

Printer and Distributor : Richard Brinck-Johnsen ([hiddenrivercircuit@gmail.com](mailto:hiddenrivercircuit@gmail.com))

### Contact Details of Hidden River Circuit Staff:

Rev Dr Gary Hall – Superintendent Minister 07354 646277 [gary.hall@methodist.org.uk](mailto:gary.hall@methodist.org.uk)

Richard Brinck- Johnsen (Circuit Administrator) 07587 956881 – [hiddenrivercircuit@gmail.com](mailto:hiddenrivercircuit@gmail.com)

Anne Kelsall (Pastoral lay worker) – [hiddenrivercircuit.pastoral1@gmail.com](mailto:hiddenrivercircuit.pastoral1@gmail.com)

Rev Nancy Ndoho – 07852 846974 – [nancy.ndoho@methodist.org.uk](mailto:nancy.ndoho@methodist.org.uk)

Deacon Helen Webster - 01922 628723 - [helenweb2@gmail.com](mailto:helenweb2@gmail.com)

Rev Denise Yeadon – 01922 863461– [deniseyeadon@btinternet.com](mailto:deniseyeadon@btinternet.com)

### Week 1: OCTOBER 5<sup>th</sup>: WHO IS WELCOME IN GOD'S PRESENCE?

A Reflection by Sue Smith, Local Preacher

**Scripture: Psalm 15 (NIV)**

**A psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup> LORD, who may dwell in your sacred tent?  
Who may live on your holy mountain?

<sup>2</sup>The one whose walk is blameless,  
who does what is righteous,  
who speaks the truth from their heart;

<sup>3</sup>whose tongue utters no slander,  
who does no wrong to a neighbour,  
and casts no slur on others;

<sup>4</sup>who despises a vile person

but honours those who fear the LORD;  
who keeps an oath even when it hurts,  
and does not change their mind;

<sup>5</sup>who lends money to the poor without interest;  
who does not accept a bribe against the  
innocent.

Whoever does these things  
will never be shaken.

Have you ever completed one of those multiple choice market research surveys that ask how often you do something?

E.g. do you holiday in a caravan? Or: do you eat Cereal for breakfast? and the choice is..... 'Always  
*Sometimes*                      *Occasionally*                      *Never*'

Imagine if you were given a survey based on Psalm 15:

How often do you.....

- Speak the truth from the heart?
- Wrong your neighbour
- Keep an oath even when it hurts....

Would you answer: *Always, Sometimes, Occasionally, Never?*

Despite our best intentions, most of us would likely answer in the '*sometimes*' column

Psalm 15 is an entrance liturgy asking who may enter, who is welcome in God's presence?

If it were a checklist then we might be a bit dispirited because on that basis, surely no one could say that they Always do what is righteous or that they Never go back on a promise.....we are '*sometimes / occasional*' people, because we are human.

In the history of the world, only Jesus led an entirely blameless life. Perhaps our record will always have the dreaded comment '*could do better*' on it, because we always could - we are never finished works - but that doesn't mean we are hope-less.

In our humanity can we perhaps read Psalm 15 not as a checklist of absolutes by which we are condemned for falling short - but rather as a motivational text - descriptive of the way of life that those who seek God must consciously aspire to and work towards?

On the face of it a Christian lifestyle can feel counter cultural, even contradictory - we are asked to turn the other cheek; to bless those who would hurt us; to recognise and oppose injustice and yet to seek reconciliation; to go against the popular grain and yet to make peace; to put others before ourselves; to put God before everything; to be God's people in the world and to live lives worthy of that calling..... Are we really up to all that?

Maybe, this Psalm challenges us to consider how we measure up *so far*...and use our answers as a starting point for prayerfully taking a next step.

How often do we live differently because we are followers of Jesus, than we might otherwise do?

*Always*                *Sometimes*                *Occasionally*                *Never?*

Discipleship *does* mean living as we might not otherwise live. As Christians we can only dare to aspire to be 'up to it' because we know we are held in God's love, blessed by moments of Grace and supported in fellowship by each other.

We are not called to an isolating self-centred pursuit of perfection - rather we are called to be courageous - both in using our gifts and in exposing our vulnerabilities - to play our tiny part in the collective body of Christ that is the worldwide church - trusting that in God's strength we can be enough.

Psalm 15, poses a question -Who may enter the Lord's presence? Who may live on His holy mountain? The answer is WE MAY -*if* we accept the invitation offered to us, and to everyone else, to come to Christ with open hearts and minds, willing to be changed, willing to grow.

Back in the 1820's a young woman called Charlotte Elliott confessed to the Swiss evangelist Henri A. Cesar Malan that she did not know how to come to Christ. He answered, "Come to him just as you are." Several years later, as a statement of faith, she wrote the hymn 'Just as I am' (Stf 556) . May we have the courage to do just that. Amen

Just as I am - without one plea,  
But that you died to set me free,  
and at your bidding, 'Come to me!'  
-O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am - though tossed about  
with many a conflict, many a doubt,  
fightings within and fears without,  
-O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, you will receive,  
will welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;  
because your promise I believe,  
-O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am - your love unknown  
has broken every barrier down;  
now to be yours, yes, yours alone,  
-O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am - of that free love  
the breadth, length, depth, and height to prove,  
here for a time and then above,  
-O Lamb of God, I come!

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## WEEK 2: OCTOBER 12<sup>th</sup> : WHO IS WELCOME IN OUR COUNTRY?

### A Reflection by Karen Drayton, Local Preacher

*If God had a fridge – your photo would be on it*

*If God had a wallet – your photo would be in it*

*He sends you a sunrise every morning and flowers everyday*

*When you want to talk to him, he's there ready to listen*

*He could live anywhere in the universe – and he chose – your heart!*

*"We will never be more loved than we are today"*

*So lets sing and praise our wonderful God as we remember his love for us, his huge, amazing, never ending, unconditional Love*

### Hymn 443 Come let us sing of a wonderful love By Robert Walmsley

1. Come Let us sing of a wonderful Love,  
Tender and true  
Out of the heart of the Father Above,  
Streaming to me and to you  
Wonderful Love,  
Dwells in the heart of the Father above.

2. Jesus this Saviour this gospel to tell  
Joyfully came;  
Came with the helpless and hopeless to dwell,  
Sharing their sorrow and shame;  
Seeking the lost,  
Saving, redeeming at measureless cost.

3. Jesus is seeking the wanderers yet;

Why do they roam?

Love only waits to forgive and forget;

Home weary wanderer home!

Wonderful love,

Dwells in the heart of the Father above.

4. Come to my heart, O Thou wonderful  
love

Come and abide

Lifting my life , till it rises above,

envy and falsehood and pride;

Seeking to be

Lowly and humble a learner of Thee.

### **Scripture: Luke 15. Verses 1-3**

*One day when many tax collectors and other outcasts were listening intently to Jesus, the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law started grumbling; “This man welcomes outcasts and even eats with them!” So Jesus told them three stories, The Lost Sheep, The Lost Coin, and the Prodigal Son.*

Jesus spent a lot of time talking to and eating with disreputable people, outcasts, so-called sinners: prostitutes, and tax collectors get the biggest mention in the Bible, but the Pharisees were masters at separating people into those who were good and those who were not, and making it hard for ordinary people to get close to God. Their sinners and outcasts included people who were unpure in their eyes – the blind, the lame, the deaf, in fact any kind of differently abled, it also included illiterate people, women because of their purity laws, foreigners, especially people they had disagreed with for centuries, and those who collaborated with the oppressing force, the Romans, so that included the tax collectors.

They created so many rules, that no one could keep them all, and it made it hard for people to get close to God, which in turn made Jesus very angry. He came to earth to try and get people closer to God, and yet the so-called “religious” people in the temple were the very ones to push them away!

As human beings, we are very good at creating Us and Them.

Galileo was made an outcast for insisting the earth revolved around the sun (until 359 years after his death! -When the Catholic Church finally agreed he was actually right in 1992!)

Dr Semmelweiss got put in a mental asylum for saying that doctors should wash their hands before helping a woman in childbirth.

Einstein didn’t speak till he was 4, didn’t read till he was 7 and got expelled from school.

Walt Disney was fired from his job in 1919, they claimed he lacked imagination and had no good ideas.

We are so good at judging others as different. We always create outcasts in every society.

We have always been like this as humans, but it seems to have gone to a different level today – with people being so extreme in their views, and not listening to others. The availability of so much information and communication doesn’t seem to have helped – even with so much information we only listen to one side, and communication has become more vicious and quickly becomes nasty,

hiding behind all our clever technology. Instead of increasing our use of artificial intelligence, maybe it would be better to try and improve our natural human intelligence?! The recent killing of Charlie Kirk is a terribly extreme response to people we don't agree with.

Today the flags being put up around our towns is creating outcasts, with its underlying message of getting rid of illegal immigrants – saying enough is enough. While it is peaceful, and valid, it is saying we can't have unlimited immigration, as it does change the nature of our country. As long as it is not personal and vitriolic, it seems an OK thing to do. But we need to be careful not to create outcasts and we need to listen to those with different points of view, to address their concerns and discuss the issues from both sides. As Christians we know Jesus asks us to welcome everyone, especially the stranger and the outcast. We are asked to offer hospitality to the stranger in case we will be entertaining angels. You could argue that Jesus lived in a different time, and many issues are much more complex now. We could ask why so many people want to come here, and how can we work to help people stay in their own countries? It is usually true people would prefer to stay in their own countries and culture when possible. But we don't like sharing what we have, we forget that we stand on the shoulders of giants from the past, who worked and fought for what we have today in our country, and that we have to stand up for the values that have made us a great country.

We like people like ourselves, and dislike others who we don't understand, or who do things differently from us, or look different from us. Having just come back from living in India on and off for 3 years, I know it is incredibly hard to live with people from different cultures, but there is good and bad in all cultures. Eating dinner at 830-9 pm is incredibly late for us British people. Hot and spicy food every meal is difficult for us who like blander but more varied diets. The traffic in India is so noisy with so many rule breakers – but it is slower, to accommodate the cows, water buffalo, dogs chickens and all kinds of vehicles on the road, and there is rarely and road rage. Society is arranged differently - there are so many good things – you are never alone, as people live in big extended families, and there are hardly any old people's homes. Indian people invariably love foreigners – they are always curious – Where do you come from? What is your name? They even especially love British people – despite our ruling them colonially for 200 years, even stealing their Koh-i-Noor diamond.

As people travel to other countries, we notice differences in the culture, eating and sleeping and different ways of doing things, I'm sure you all have your own examples. We are very good at noticing what is different about others, people who are different from ourselves. We believe our way of living, our culture, is good and right and the best, and we judge others as inferior, creating outcasts of the others.

Yet the “outcasts” here paid huge attention to what Jesus said – they “listened intently”! They wanted to be included, to know that God loves them, that they have a valued place in God's world. This is the Good News that we have to share. That God has enough Love for everyone. That the world has enough resources for everyone. That no one should be outcast, no one should feel lost and afraid. We can delight in our differences, learn to live together and share the best of our cultures, in our country and in the world. We can try and make policy decisions without being personal, and inciting hatred and division. We need to keep loving people different from ourselves, our neighbours, as God asks us too.

### **Prayers:**

Lord we thank you for this wonderful world you have put us in

For all the different ways of living in it – for all the cultures that have developed, different ways of eating and working and living, in different climates and histories.

We thank you for those places we have travelled to, and seen on tv – the colour of the sea and sky, the colour and fabric of clothes, the different vegetables and recipes people use to eat, the different ways of farming, the variety of landscape.

We thank you for different languages and faces and skin colours – for the whole wonderful variety of life.

Help us always be willing to learn more about our neighbours, to live together and celebrate your love.

Help us to listen to every side, to seek to work out solutions of living together peacefully in your world.

Help us to be brave, to stand up for what is right, and good and true and lovely.

Help us to be more like you.

Forgive us for when we don't follow you closely enough.

When we go with the flow, when we don't stand up for what is right, when we become overwhelmed with all the problems in the world and lose faith in prayer and your goodness and sovereignty in the world.

Keep us faithful – believing in You who created the world, who cares about what is going on in the world, who did so many miracles in the Bible and in our own lives.

Keep us believing that you want the best for all of us, and that no problems in this world are too big for you to handle.

Keep us grateful – for all that is good, for all that we have received, for all the countless blessings you have showered upon us. Amen

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### **WEEK 3: OCTOBER 19<sup>th</sup>: JUDGEMENT and JOY**

#### **A Reflection by Karen Drayton, Local Preacher**

##### **Scripture: Luke 15. 1-32**

So Jesus was mixing with outcasts – again! - talking to them, eating with them, and it made the Pharisees grumble loudly enough so Jesus heard. “Why are you talking to these people – who are not worth anything??... Why aren't you talking to **Us**, because we are the obvious Godly people.. :grumbling, grumbling, grumbling, always finding something to grumble about.

So Jesus told them three stories – the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin and the Lost Son.

The traditional take on these stories is that **God** is the Good Shepherd who leaves the 99 and goes to find the one, that **God** is the Woman who hunts high and low for the missing coin and that **God** is the Father of the two sons.

But – what if this wasn't the point of the stories?

Because actually these three central characters were really quite negligent:

- 1) The shepherd wasn't actually looking after the sheep properly in the first place – how did one get lost?

- 2) The shepherd who left the 99 sheep to their own devices to find the one– imagine if he got back with the 1 to find the 99 had all scattered and were now lost!!
- 3) The woman who lost her valuable coin out of the set of 10 could be called careless to have lost it (but as someone who is always losing things I can't say much about that!)
- 4) The Father who let his son have his inheritance prematurely, and waste it in his wild and dissipated life without any advice could also be called a lax father.
- 5) And when the prodigal son came home – the father completely ignored the elder son who had been faithful and hardworking for all those years. They didn't even invite him to the party – he heard the music and the noise and came to find out what was happening!!

So maybe Jesus was actually addressing his audience of grumblers.

Pharisees – YOU have losses to attend to

YOU think you are the mouthpiece of God on earth – how did YOU lose these people you now call outcasts and sinners? How do you keep creating more and more outcasts?

YOU have work to do to forge connections – to make sure none are lost from your flock, that no treasure is lost from your storehouse, that no member of your family feels unwanted.

YOU need to find ways to rekindle those relationships.

Maybe Jesus was challenging the Pharisees to include the outcasts, those they called “sinners” to stop making barriers between them and God, to stop pushing people away.

Maybe Jesus is also challenging us to make sure all are welcome, that none feel so bad that they don't feel loved by God.

There is a quote from a prostitute invited to church by a well meaning Christian, in the book “What's so Amazing about Grace? by Philip Yancey. The prostitute said “Why would I want to go to Church? – I already feel bad enough about myself”.

I think we have made great strides in the UK to welcome everyone to God's sanctuary of love, even though we are not perfect. In the past, people – especially Church people - used to condemn people who had children and were not married, now it is not even an issue. We have welcomed people in same sex marriages, transgender people, we have apologised to those of a different colour who were turned away so rudely and inhumanely in the past. Our church buildings have hearing loops, disabled access, safeguarding policies.... Safety and welcome is a priority.

But we are obviously not perfect – we still have a long way to go – we are always **judging** others, we are always doing it.

There is a cartoon I saw on Facebook recently – it was the story of the woman being stoned after being caught in adultery. Jesus draws in the sand.

He says - Anyone who hasn't sinned themselves, feel free to stay and stone her. They put down their stones. Jesus said, “Go and sin no more”. We often assume he was talking to the woman, but perhaps he was talking to **all** the people there who had brought the woman (and not the man) convicted of adultery. Perhaps he was saying to them all - go and sin no more – stop judging others! Stop creating sinners and outcasts! Check the log in your own eye before finding specks in others' eyes!

We all judge others don't we? My wise mother always used to say, "We're all different" when we wanted her to agree with our judgemental attitudes. We need to stop being so self-righteous, so arrogant that we alone are right, that we alone know how to behave, that your life circumstances haven't put you in this or that position.

Perhaps the real sin is – judging others?

Perhaps the real sin is – making outcasts? Yes, we have a problem with immigration.

Let's sit down and talk about it. Let's use the wisdom of the ages to improve the world for everyone. Let's join the dots to see that climate change, poverty, war, corruption and unemployment make people leave their own country behind and try another one, like humans have been doing for centuries. Let's sort this problem without judging or fighting or hurting or shooting people.

It's not easy, and I have no easy solutions, but in these three stories, Jesus seems to want his group, his people to be together – all 100 sheep gathered in one flock, no one separated, alone, or in trouble. All 10 coins on the necklace, all able to shine and serve their purpose. One happy family... yes this is difficult, but God seems to want us to be together, working out our differences, trying to be reconciled with all, understanding and being tolerant, rather than being judgemental and unforgiving.

And at the heart of all these stories is JOY – deep pure JOY – the deep JOY of finding what was lost. Rejoicing and parties. Have we forgotten to celebrate? Do we forget to be grateful? Are we so busy worrying and saving that we forget to enjoy what money can bring – joy and feasting, togetherness and fun. Let's celebrate our many cultures and all that is good in each. Let's celebrate knowing the Love of God.

Let us celebrate being lost and found. Let us celebrate our faith in a God who loves us beyond measure, who helps us through the tricky problems of life today. Let us be ready to share all we have with those who have so much less.

Let us thank God for his love of parties and celebrations, for his love of all people.

1. I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart  
Where? Down in my heart  
Where? Down in my heart.  
I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart, Glory to His name.
2. I've got the peace that passeth understanding down in my heart  
Where? Down in my heart  
Where? Down in my heart  
I've got the peace that passeth understanding down in my heart  
Glory to his name.
3. I've got the love of Jesus, love of Jesus down in my heart  
Where? Down in my heart  
Where? Down in my heart.  
I've got the love of Jesus, love of Jesus down in my heart  
Glory to his name



## Week 4: OCTOBER 26<sup>th</sup>: THE WORLD, THE FLESH AND THE DEVIL

A Reflection by Mike Smith, Local Preacher

**Scripture:** Colossians ch 1 vv 9-20 and ch 2 vv 6-15

Most Christians today will be aware that the first generation of churches adopted the fish as one of the symbols of their faith; some will be aware that the Greek word for fish is *ichthus* – and was for those early Christians an acronym spelling out their faith:

**I** esous – Jesus

**CH** ristos – Anointed, King

**TH** eou – God's

**U** ios – Son

**S** oter – Saviour

The Churches' Creeds which followed were more detailed but conveyed essentially the same points of belief shared by all followers of Jesus; and it is the last word of this original, ingeniously simple formula which we will try to explore here: What do we mean when speaking about Jesus as "Saviour"? Specifically, what is it from which we are "saved"?

The passages above, from Paul's letter to the circuit of churches at Colossae, Laodicea and Hierapolis, in what is now Turkey, are helpful in interpreting the saving work of Christ, given that we need first to understand the mythologies of the time. Orthodox Judaism (Hear, O Israel; the LORD is our God, the LORD our one God) will be largely absent from a community of mixed Jewish expatriates and native Asians, so the background of belief would be that of the Greeks: ancient stories of gods and goddesses whose actions often reflected both the best and the worst in *human* behaviour! It was common belief that these deities had a controlling influence on the fate of human beings, with sometimes good or sometimes evil consequences. It is important to understand that Paul does not deny these presences: he uses phrases like "power of darkness", "spiritual powers", "spiritual rulers and authorities" – his words for the sinister and unsettling forces beyond our power to understand or control. And despite our modern knowledge of psychology and the advances in our understanding of human behaviour, it is not far from the truth to recognize the existence of nightmarish, dark forces. In the Litany of the Book of Common Prayer of 1559 we find: "*From all the deceits of the world, the flesh and the devil, Good Lord, deliver us.*" Despite the present-day complacency and scorn often directed at the "quaint" language of the past, I believe the language of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, taken seriously, still resonates with our experience today.

Let's begin with "**the world**". We all start from the same place – childhood – and we grow by learning from what other people tell us, by word or example. This works well in the context of a loving family or a caring community, but we all know that life is seldom that well ordered. People, especially the young, easily "get into bad company" and are led into mischief (or something much worse) by "peer group pressure": petty crime, drug dependency, knife- carrying gangs, radicalised people driven by falsehoods and fanatical hatred to commit atrocious acts of terrorism against the innocent. Not only that, but it may not take much to persuade even normally civilised people, in a community increasingly faced with problems of poverty, delayed justice, collapsing health and social services, widespread corruption in the corridors of power, to abandon honesty, good manners and neighbourliness and

simply fight dirty for their own interests. Clearly, unless we listen to the Saviour and “keep awake and pray”, we may be unable to avoid being shaped by the tides of the times we live in, to our wellbeing or our destruction, and it may be a hard thing sometimes to think for ourselves and swim against the tide.

... **“the flesh”?** The one difficult thing about being human is being two different persons in one: part angel and part ape. In the New Testament the word “flesh” is used to describe the less angelic side of our nature; buried deep in the Unconscious are energies we inherit from our hunting ancestors who survived by their animal instincts. Those primitive energies are still there, and though we usually control them, part of us enjoys dominating others, as prey or as sexual objects. Writing about his mental journey from atheism to belief in Christ, C.S. Lewis, with remarkable frankness, confessed, *“For the first time I examined myself with a serious purpose, and there I found what appalled me: a zoo of lusts, a bedlam of ambitions, a nursery of fears, a harem of fondled hatreds.”* (Surprised by Joy, 1955). Strong language, but, there again, a stern look in the mirror of the soul will not necessarily show any of us to be as angelic as we sometimes think we are. We may need to be saved from *ourselves*, contrasted against the pattern of Jesus Christ.

... **“and the devil”?** We may safely do away with the medieval image of the figure with horns and hooves, carrying a trident for the roasting of souls in Hell; but the reality may be something much worse: a dark, malignant force intent on denying happiness and fulfilment to us as the children of God – in Hebrew, a *satan*, an enemy of God. One experienced practitioner in psychology, religion and healing, Dr. Leslie Weatherhead, writes, *“It has been the fashion for years to regard the Devil as a symbolic name for the ignorance, folly and sin of man, and to regard belief in “evil spirits” as old-fashioned, outmoded and disproved by science. I am not so easily persuaded to dismiss these ancient beliefs... Christ’s own attitude is very interesting. It would seem that he believed in angels. He appears to have believed in evil spirits also. I find it hard, in the light of Christ’s language, to exclude demonology of the New Testament as nonsense.”* (The Christian Agnostic, 1965)

Faced with these evils, we are in need of a Saviour: is there someone who could offer a way of escape from these chains? Well, the story of Jesus recorded in Mark’s first chapter has a narrative which we might call “a day in the life of Jesus” - a day in Capernaum which reveals what Jesus is all about. A Sabbath sermon in the synagogue makes a deep impression on honest folk seeking God’s truth; a deranged man is released from his mental confusion; a sick mother is healed; the word gets round, and many desperate people are set free from a whole range of afflictions– all through the astonishing gifts of the stranger from Nazareth. What drives him is a determination to fight against the activity of evil in whatever form the attack may come. Later, when the apostles returned joyfully from a successful mission of preaching and healing, Jesus told them “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven!” – a real sense of victory over the forces that conspire to rob humanity of happiness.

In his letter to the Colossians Paul makes five important statements about who Christ is and what he came to do:

- He is an eternal being, sharing the divinity and creativity of the Creator;
- He is a reflection, an image of what God is like;
- His incarnation, ministry, death and resurrection are a challenge to the forces of evil;
- He lives on to enable the life of the Church;
- He is the Saviour, who defeats the powers of evil and brings humanity back to God.

It is important for us to believe that we are not the playthings of fate, and we have a strategy for dealing with the sorrows and hardships of life; this lies not within our own resources but in the sovereign power of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the one who, when taken by faith, turns the bad person into a good

one and the good person into a better one: “Come to me, all who are weary and whose load is heavy; I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humbled-hearted, and you will find rest to your souls.” And he is faithful on the level of society at large too: historic evil may appear to thrive, re-inventing itself into a new form after each defeat; but history shows that in the economy of God there can be no ultimate victory for the enemies of truth, peace, justice and reconciliation. “The world will make you suffer, but be brave! I have defeated the world!”

### **A Personal Testimony**

I was a stricken deer, that left the herd long since. With many an arrow deep infixt  
My panting side was charged, when I withdrew to seek a tranquil death in distant shades.  
There was I found by One who had Himself been hurt by th’ archers. In His side He bore,  
And in His hands and feet, the cruel scars. With gentle force soliciting the darts,  
He drew them forth and healed, and bade me live.

*William Cowper*

Methodist Hymn Book 691:

1. Saviour, again, to Thy dear name we raise  
With one accord, our parting hymn of praise  
We stand to bless Thee, ‘ere our worship cease  
Then, lowly kneeling, wait Thy word of Peace.
2. Grant us Thy peace upon our homeward way;  
With Thee began, with Thee shall end the day  
Guard thou the lips from sin, the hearts from shame,  
That in this house have called upon Thy name.
4. Grant us Thy peace, Lord, through the coming night  
Turn thou for us its darkness into light  
From harm and danger keep thy children free  
For dark and light are both alike to Thee.
5. Grant us Thy Peace throughout our earthly life  
Our balm in sorrow, and our stay in strife  
Then, when Thy voice shall bid our conflict cease,  
Call us, O Lord, to Thine eternal Peace.

*(John Ellerton 1826-93)*

