



ENTER God's presence

Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. The LORD works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.

Psalm 103:1-16

Father God, you sent your Son into this world to light our Way back to You. Lord Jesus, you are the only trustworthy Truth in this life. Holy Spirit, through the waters of baptism, you have filled us with the Life of Jesus our Messiah. May Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life be so deeply imbedded in our souls that we may live as your creative children to show the Way, the Truth, and the Life to others. Amen.



SHARE life together

- 1. Where have you seen God's creative power at work in your life or the world this last week?**
- 2. Share how you went with your living purposefully from last time?**
- 3. What do you think is the most amazing/weird/beautiful and creative act of God that you have witnessed in this world?**
- 4. What makes you an original (don't sell yourself short)?**

A public psychologist I admire and follow, on YouTube, has said that not everyone is creative, and that creativity is reserved for a special few. God disagrees. Perhaps he was speaking from a particular perspective that I didn't understand, never-the-less I maintain that in some unique ways, everyone is creative. We may think that creativity is a special genius that only the very bright and very blest have, but if we stop for the briefest of moments and pay attention with an open heart to the people around, we will notice creativity in a multitude of ways.

I've had the opportunity to be blest by those whom many would call simple and whom society so often overlooks, those with Downs Syndrome. Many Downs Syndrome people show

Week beginning:
Sunday 17th October 2021

Worship series:
ANCIENT CREED: LIVING FAITH
(#2 in series)



VERSE for the week

When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon, and the stars, which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?

Psalm 8:3-4



REMEMBER this week

You are at your creative best when you live as if His life in you, matters.

creativity in all forms but if you have ever looked one of these beautiful people in the eyes, you would have been delighted by the most wonderful of smiles and perhaps even embraced with a wonderful bear hug. Everyone has been created in the image of The Creator, to be creative. A smile that glows, creates a change of atmosphere in the receiver and therefore, in the room.

No exceptions. If you are unsure, take a pen and paper and go off alone and ask Jesus what your creative gifts are. Don't be in a hurry. Stay put for a good length and listen. Do it more than once, at different times, over a week or two. He will speak to you from your innermost self. Then, confirm his words to you with friends and family and allow for their creative insights also.



LISTEN attentively

Read Matthew 6:25-34

- 5. What key words/thoughts/ideas/questions arise for you as you hear this text?**
- 6. What do you hear this scripture saying to you right now?**
- 7. What part has 'worry' played in your life? What part may it have played in your health?**

The Greek word (*merim-naho*) that Matthew uses to translate 'worry', is more literally understood as 'distraction that establishes anxiety'. Jesus wants us to understand that anything that distracts us from Him and his Good News, will eventually cause us anxiety. Distraction, especially the negative kind, is consciously used by all forms of media because it is addictive. All addictions are false Gods, and distractions from Jesus and the joy and fulness of life that he gives to everyone that keep him close.



GROW deeper

Read Matthew 6:33-34 again.

'Kingdom' and 'righteousness' are key themes throughout the Old and New Testaments. Both are God's gifts to us. Righteousness is our new nature in Christ. It appears as Godly thinking, speech, and behaviour. Right thinking, right speaking, right action. God's Kingdom is to be found where Jesus reigns, full of grace and truth. Jesus says that the Kingdom is at hand and near you. He even says that it is within you. How awesome is that! Reasons for thanksgiving and praise.

- 8. Most of us know what it means to be a sinner, constantly missing the mark (Jesus) that God has set for us in relationships (see the Ten commandments) but do we understand what it means to be a saint, someone with the righteous mind of Christ? Discuss.**
- 9. Start from the text and then go further into Scripture, if you wish, to describe how being a saint in Jesus changes us.**

Let me give a more direct translation the last verse, especially considering our new understanding of 'worry'.

³⁴ Therefore do not be anxiously distracted about tomorrow, for tomorrow will have enough distractions and anxiety of its own. Each day has enough 'shit' of its own.

Wow! Jesus used that word! Well, it's how we often feel isn't it and Jesus, the tradie, had enough of his own to deal with and his heart was also for others who suffer. Say it as it is and be real. Same shit different day. It may not be the language we would use when being polite, but it is the language we use. The word is 'kakos' and my Greek friends have used it to describe a baby's nappy to me. There is enough of that for each day without us multiplying it by becoming distracted from Jesus.

Older translations use the sanitised form, 'evil' for the NIV's word 'trouble'.
I've smelt some evil nappies in my time. 😊

10. Now would be a good time to talk about your highs and lows (*evil*) for this week and discuss how things may have been different if your focus had been consciously on Jesus? How may the outcomes have been different?

REMEMBER: You are at your creative best when you live as if His life in you, matters.



LIVE purposefully

It's our unhealed emotional insecurities that keep us slaves to the mundane. It's our concerns over what other people think of us, our need to keep our heads lower than the rest of the herd in case the 'tall poppy syndrome' comes to chop them off, that keeps us from our unique creativity. How freeing it would be to faithfully stand out among the crowd and declare the individual uniqueness of all God's human creatures. Not just me, but you, also.

- 1. When God created human beings, you, we are told he looked at us and said, "Behold it is very good". That can also be translated as "This is very beautiful". What difference would it make to your life to remember daily that God thinks you are very beautiful.**
- 2. How can your life add beauty to the world and point to the Creator? Can we ask the question, 'What value can I add to your life?'**



PRAY intentionally

- Praise God for his creation and for the Godly wisdom to steward it righteously.
- Intercede for all those who put their own health and safety on the line, our teachers, healthcare workers, police officers, emergency service workers and defence force personnel.
- Pray that God will inspire immunologists worldwide to find therapies for all kinds of diseases that go yet, untreated.
- Pray for those who have lost loved ones in any circumstance. Ask that they would receive comfort and a deep knowledge of God's grace as he sits with them, sharing in their grief.
- Thank God for all his good gifts. Ask for a thankful heart even when things look difficult or unfair.
- Ask God to reveal the creative people in your congregation to you and give you the words to encourage and affirm them.
- Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest. (*This has become known as the Luke 10:2 prayer*)



BLESS one another

You might like to address one person in your group and make the sign of the cross in the air as you say...

[Name], you are a beautiful, creative work of God. Amen.