**Sunday 18th September ‘At Home’ Worship**

**Real Life Stories**

(Sourced from Roots worship resources)

**Call to worship**

Just as we are, together and apart,
we come to worship you, Lord God,
to hear your word and sing your praise,
to acknowledge our need and share your love.
**Amen.**

**A gathering prayer**

Holy God, as we meet together,
help us to be aware of your presence.
Create in us a desire to build your kingdom,
so that, as we listen to your word and sing your praises,
we will understand how to be your people
wherever you have placed us.
**Amen.**

**We mourn the loss of our Queen Elizabeth II.**

### **A prayer on the death of Her Majesty The Queen**

We thank you, loving God, for the faithfulness, discipleship and reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth.
We thank you for the strength, wisdom and long life with which you blessed her.
We commend to your tender care her family and all who mourn her passing; may they know the truth of your promise that those who mourn shall be blessed.
Pour out your Spirit of compassion, kindness, strength and wisdom upon your servants King Charles and the Queen Consort; guide and bless them especially over the coming days.
Hear us in the name of the King of kings, even Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**Song Dear Lord and Father of mankind** [Dear Lord and Father of mankind Hymn - Westminster Abbey (with lyrics) - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b1MN3chW1Hk)

1 Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
forgive our foolish ways;
reclothe us in our rightful mind,
in purer lives thy service find,
in deeper reverence, praise.

2 In simple trust like theirs who heard
beside the Syrian sea
the gracious calling of the Lord,
let us, like them, without a word
rise up and follow thee.

3 O Sabbath rest by Galilee,
O calm of hills above,
where Jesus knelt to share with thee
the silence of eternity,
interpreted by love!

4 Drop thy still dews of quietness,
till all our strivings cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of thy peace.

5 Breathe through the heats of our desire
thy coolness and thy balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still, small voice of calm!

**Saying Sorry to God**

St Paul says

‘Be imitators of God;

love as Christ loved; do not grieve the Holy Spirit;

put away all anger and bitterness,

all slander and malice.’

So let us confess our sins to God, who forgives us in Christ. **Amen** *cf Ephesians 4.30 – 5.1*

**Assurance of forgiveness**

Through the blood of the Lamb, we are forgiven and cleansed.
Let us praise God for his Son, the Lamb,
who through the cross paid the price for our sins.
Thanks be to the Lamb of God. **Amen.**

**Prayer for the Day**

Almighty God,
whose only Son has opened for us
a new and living way into your presence:
give us pure hearts and steadfast wills
to worship you in spirit and in truth;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

**Bible passage**



# **Luke 16:1-13 New International Version**

### The Parable of the Shrewd Manager

**16**Jesus told his disciples: “There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. **2**So he called him in and asked him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.’

**3**“The manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I’m not strong enough to dig, and I’m ashamed to beg— **4**I know what I’ll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.’

**5**“So he called in each one of his master’s debtors. He asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’

**6**“‘Nine hundred gallons[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%2016:1-13&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25627a)] of olive oil,’ he replied.

“The manager told him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred and fifty.’

**7**“Then he asked the second, ‘And how much do you owe?’

“‘A thousand bushels[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%2016:1-13&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25628b)] of wheat,’ he replied.

“He told him, ‘Take your bill and make it eight hundred.’

**8**“The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light. **9**I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

**10**“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. **11**So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? **12**And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you property of your own?

**13**“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”

**Thought for the Day taken from the Roots publication**

**Children may like to do the activity sheet**

Let me tell you about Bella, someone who changed her mind about Church. She had loved everything about her church. She couldn’t wait for work to end so that she could join her Christian friends – in the choir, home group, anything. Church was everything and work was just a way of funding it. Then one day Bella realised that God had placed her in her job to bring God’s transformational love there too. This surprised her. Bella worked in Human Resources in a large company. But she decided to look for opportunities to show God’s love through her work.

One day she realised that she didn’t know any of the night workers. She asked her boss if she could spend a night working with them, and then did so. When midnight came and they stopped for their ‘lunchbreak’, Bella joined them in the basement. It was a shambles. There was nowhere for them to sit and eat – just a couple of old broken chairs and a kettle. In her mind, Bella contrasted this with the day workers’ rather plush cafeteria. In the basement, there wasn’t even a noticeboard to share news and create a sense of belonging to the company. She knew how God’s love could transform this place and her boss agreed: the night workers were given nice chairs, tables, a fridge and a noticeboard. Bella didn’t stop loving her church, but she discovered that going to church didn’t make any sense if she wasn’t looking to see how to show God’s love in the rest of her life.

Jesus told the story of a manager whose boss had been told that he wasn’t up to scratch. We don’t know whether he was guilty or not. What we hear is how he chose to act when the boss came to check. In those days, the owner told his manager how much he wanted from each tenant. The manager’s cut was the commission he charged on top. Realising his job was on the line, he decided to forgo his commission – the tenants would pay less but the owner still got everything he was expecting. Everyone was happy and no one could criticise the manager – they were all pleased with him. He was the only one to lose out.

In Jesus’ day the religious people thought that only some things were holy. Everything else made you ‘unclean’. Jesus taught his disciples that it doesn’t have to be like that. He demonstrated it by not being discriminatory about who he ate with. But he taught it too – in the ‘lost’ parables and in this story. Jesus challenges them to consider not what something is but how we use it. If we’re not faithful, using the ordinary and everyday things of life in a way that show’s God’s love, then how can we be trusted with the heavenly things? Jesus shows that being holy is about transforming the communities where we live and work into places where people can experience God’s love – not as something separate from ordinary life but as part of it. Bella discovered a whole new way of building community and showing God’s love – can we?

## **Song** [How Deep The Father's Love For Us (lyrics) by Selah - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmLNqs4QPoo)

How deep the Father’s love for us,
How vast beyond all measure,
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure.
How great the pain of searing loss –
The Father turns His face away,
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory.

Behold the man upon a cross,
My sin upon His shoulders;
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers.
It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished;
His dying breath has brought me life –
I know that it is finished.

I will not boast in anything,
No gifts, no power, no wisdom;
But I will boast in Jesus Christ,
His death and resurrection.
Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer;
But this I know with all my heart –
His wounds have paid my ransom.

## ****We pray for others****

## ***Take time to silently pray for people and situations which are on your heart.***

### Prayers of intercession

As our nation remembers Queen Elizabeth II, we call to mind her role in the services and we pray for all those in our own country and overseas who serve in the military and all those whose lives are shattered by the war which is going on around them. We hold before you the leaders and people of Ukraine and pray for peace in that troubled land.

As the nation recalls the faithful service of Queen Elizabeth II, we call to mind her compassion and we give thanks for the hundreds of charities to which she was connected. We pray for them and those whom they seek to serve. We commend to you the people of Pakistan as they seek to rebuild their lives after the devastating flood and all the various aid agencies working there.

As the nation grieves the passing of Queen Elizabeth II, we pray for her family who mourn a mother and grandmother and we remember all those who at this time are saddened as a result of the passing of a loved one those who have suffered a recent bereavement, those for who it is a time of anniversary and those for whom the pain is constant. May they know your comfort and  peace.

As we prepare to celebrate the life of Queen Elizabeth II and commend her to your eternal care, we pray for our nation that as we have been united by grief, we may be united by commitment to serve one another. Bless King Charles III and the Queen Consort, give them strength and wisdom that above all things they may serve you in the roles to which you have called them.

Loving God as we remember your faithful servant, Queen Elizabeth II, we thank you for her faith and for the wisdom and strength with which you blessed her. Bless us and all your children that we may follow her example, live in peace and unity and serve each other’s needs.

In the name of Jesus.
**Amen.**

**Song**

## Immortal invisible God only wise 234 Walter C Smith

## [Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise with Lyrics by Jaron and Katherine Kamin - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fff2xQETe1c)

## Immortal, invisible, God only wise,

## In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,

## Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,

## Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

## Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,

## Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;

## Thy justice like mountains high soaring above

## Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

## To all life Thou givest, to both great and small;

## In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;

## We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,

## And wither and perish, but nought changeth Thee.

## Great Father of Glory, pure Father of Light

## Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;

## All laud we would render, O help us to see:

## ’Tis only the splendour of light hideth Thee.

## Immortal, invisible, God only wise,

## In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,

## Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,

## Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise

## A sending out prayer

 We want to be the body of Christ,
longing to bless the world with love,
and transforming society, here and now.
Holy Spirit, we offer you
all that we are, all that we do.
Take us, and our gifts and talents,
and help us be signs of your kingdom today.
**Amen.**

## ****Go with God 24/7**** We look to put our faith into action

 All music and digital material covered by the following licences:

HTS – CCL & MRL 21033, Streaming 930014, CVL 640919, PPL 1641113, CLA 640902, PRS 640892

SMLT – CCL & MRL 42256, Streaming 930111, PPL 1660620, CLA 2119754, PRS 148198

Prayers and reflections © ROOTS for Churches Ltd (www.rootsontheweb.com) 2002-2021.

Reproduced with permission