



First Christian Reformed Church of Lynden
From Generation to Generation for the Glory of God

God's precious and exceedingly great promises in hard times

Colossians 3:16 *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,
teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom,
singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,
with thankfulness in your hearts to God.*

Scripture

Psalm 107:20 *He sent out his word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction.*

II Chronicles 7:13-22

¹³ When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain [drought and fires in Australia], or command the locust to devour the land [locust swarms in Africa in January], or send pestilence among my people, ¹⁴ if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land. ¹⁵ Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayer that is made in this place. ¹⁶ For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that my name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time. ¹⁷ And as for you, if you will walk before me as David your father walked, doing according to all that I have commanded you and keeping my statutes and my rules, ¹⁸ then I will establish your royal throne, as I covenanted with David your father, saying, 'You shall not lack a man to rule Israel.'

¹⁹ "But if you turn aside and forsake my statutes and my commandments that I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them, ²⁰ then I will pluck you up from my land that I have given you, and this house that I have consecrated for my name, I will cast out of my sight, and I will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples. ²¹ And at this house, which was exalted, everyone passing by will be astonished and say, 'Why has the Lord done thus to this land and to this house?' ²² Then they will say, 'Because they abandoned the Lord, the God of their fathers who brought them out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods and worshiped them and served them. Therefore he has brought all this disaster on them.'"

Song

Psalm 59:16 *But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning. For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress.*

[You can Google the hymn to hear it if you would like to sing along.]

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

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 splendor of light hideth Thee.

Prayer

Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Father, At our best moments, by your grace, we are not sleeping in Gethsemane. We are awake and listening to your Son's prayer. He knows, deep down, that he must suffer. But in his perfect humanity, he cries out, "If it is possible, let this cup pass."

In the same way, we sense, deep down, that this pandemic is appointed, in your wisdom, for good and necessary purposes. We too must suffer. Your Son was innocent. We are not.

Yet with him in our less-than-perfect humanity, we too cry out, "If it is possible, let this cup pass." Do quickly, O Lord, the painful, just, and merciful work you have resolved to do. Do not linger in judgment. Do not delay your compassion. Remember the poor, O Lord, according to your mercy. Do not forget the cry of the afflicted. Grant recovery. Grant a cure. Deliver us—your poor, helpless creatures—from these sorrows, we pray.

But do not waste our misery and grief, O Lord. Purify your people from powerless preoccupation with barren materialism and Christless entertainment. Put our mouths out of taste with the bait of Satan. Cut from us the roots and remnant of pride and hate and unjust ways. Grant us capacities of outrage at our own belittling of your glory. Open the eyes of our hearts to see and savor the beauty of Christ. Incline our hearts to your word, your Son, and your way. Fill us with compassionate courage. And make a name for yourself in the way your people serve.

Stretch forth your hand in great awakening for the sake of this perishing world. Let the terrible words of Revelation not be spoken over this generation: "Yet still they did not repent." As you have stricken bodies, strike now the slumbering souls. Forbid that they would remain asleep in the darkness of pride and unbelief. In your great mercy, say to these bones, "Live!" And bring the hearts and lives of millions into alignment with the infinite worth of Jesus. In Jesus's name, amen.

[Prayer by John Piper from his new book, *Coronavirus and Christ*, available as a free download at DesiringGod.org or at this link or by cutting and pasting this link into your browser:

https://www.crossway.org/articles/coronavirus-and-christ-by-john-piper/?utm_source=Crossway+Marketing&utm_campaign=1781616072-20200408+-+General+-+Free+Book+COVID-19+John+Piper&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0275bcaa4b-1781616072-283406429