

Call to Worship:

Grace and peace to you from Him who is and was and is to come, and from the seven spirits before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has released us from our sins by His blood, who has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father—to Him be the glory and power forever and ever!

Amen

Dear Father, grant us to so learn, to see with the true eye of faith and experience in living obedience the rock-solid truth that Jesus is indeed the ruler of the kings of the earth and that I, that we are His saved and loyal subjects, to His glory,

Amen

Hymn: by William Rees

Here is love, vast as the ocean, lovingkindness as the flood
When the Prince of Life, our Ransom, shed for us His precious blood
Who His love will not remember, who can cease to sing His praise
He can never be forgotten, throughout Heaven's eternal days

On the mount of crucifixion, fountains opened deep and wide
Through the floodgates of God's mercy flowed a vast and gracious tide
Grace and love, like mighty rivers, poured incessant from above
And Heaven's peace and perfect justice kissed a guilty world in love

Let me all Thy love accepting, love Thee ever all my days
Let me seek Thy kingdom only and my life be to Thy praise
Thou alone shalt be my glory, nothing in the world I see
Thou hast cleansed and sanctified me, Thou Thyself hast set me free

In Thy truth Thou dost direct me by Thy Spirit through Thy Word
And Thy grace my need is meeting, as I trust in Thee, my Lord
Of Thy fullness Thou art pouring Thy great love and power on me
Without measure, full and boundless, drawing out my heart to Thee

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Prayers:

Confession; 'Our dear Father let me all thy love accepting'. Forgive me when I have let my heart grow cold in the face of your love. When the face of man has strained glory from me, which should be freely yours. Please keep freeing me and advancing me in your holy ways, in Jesus Name.

Adoration and thanksgiving; Dear Father, just one long stare at the beauty of sky, trees, garden, rolling ocean and the melody of singing birds thrills me at your creation wonders. Thank you for settling me in this beautiful world, drawing me to yourself to share my heart

and hear your father's wisdom to me. I shall, by your grace, keep each day sacred with gratitude and to you and honour to your Name.

In Jesus, Amen

Hymn; The thing my God doth hate, C Wesley

The thing my God doth hate, that may I no more do;
Thy creature, Lord, again create, and all my soul renew.

My soul shall then, like Thine, abhor the thing unclean,
and, sanctified by love divine, forever cease from sin.

That blessed law of Thine, Jesus, to me impart,
the Spirit's law of life divine, O write it in my heart!

Implant it deep within, whence it may ne'er remove,
the law of liberty from sin, the perfect law of love.

Thy nature be my law, Thy spotless sanctity,
and sweetly every moment draw my happy soul to Thee.

Soul of my soul remain! Who didst for all fulfill,
in me, O Lord, fulfill again Thy heav'nly Father's will!

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Scriptures:

- **Zephaniah 1:4-6, 12-13** (the folly of ignoring God)
- **1 Thessalonians 5:1-11** (an exhortation to Christians living in a world which says "God doesn't do anything, we can do as we like, there is peace and safety")
- **Luke 21:34 -36.** (What we should always keep in mind to direct and comfort us)

Prayers with our persecuted family;

Father, we lift up those in Australia who have been brought before tribunals because they have declared righteous truths; we name Lyle Shelton, David Bellow, Jareth Kok, Kirralie Smith, who are currently having to defend themselves against vicious complainants. We ask that you enable your people to oppose and tear down unjust laws in this country and to embolden your people to do righteously, in Jesus' Name.

Message; 'These days'

How often do you hear that phrase "these days"? Things have changed these days. Things are different these days. Yes we used to believe that but things have changed these days. Or it's a lot different these days from what we used to do.

These days, young people start living together and then if they want, they might get married down the track. A father knew how many children he had but these days the kids are not sure how many fathers they have. We accept sleeping around these days, when once we valued committed relationships and did the work to

The idolatry and Deceit of 'These Days' and the Liberation of Truth.

maintain them. These days, we demand adult satisfaction and material careers at the price of grieving children, when these days the marriage bond easily breaks.

We used to assume there were two genders, male and female, but these days you're never sure how many there are. It used to be wrong to kill a baby, but these days it is acceptable to kill even a baby who could, with care, survive and thrive outside the womb, as might be killed by lethal injection.

If you needed a lawyer, it was reasonably straightforward to find a solicitor to assist you, but these days the price of justice is totally prohibitive except for the large corporation.

Most people used to attend church, hear the Gospels read and imbibe the values of Jesus Christ, but these days, fewer people attend, and ignorance of the Way that brings peace grows.

If somebody or a family left a church, it was because they were moving to live in a new area. They took a certificate of transfer to show the pastor of the new church they would be attending in their new area. These days, people shop around till they find a church that satisfies their aesthetic leanings.

When you made purchases at the shops, you paid the fair price of cost plus value added plus a profit margin. These days, you never really know what margins are and how fair they are.

Doctors used to visit your home when you were sick and needed medications. These days, medicine is corporatised and often impersonal.

Societies do not uniformly improve. That only happens when there is a general revival of faith and biblical understanding.

So what is changing? One thing is sure. The days don't change; there is no such thing as 'these days'. Days don't change; people change. Most importantly, God does not change. And he doesn't forget.

Once we lived with a healthy fear of God. Now we are stricken with the same illnesses that were known three thousand years ago by the Hebrew prophets. *They have lied about the LORD; they said, "He will do nothing! No harm will come to us; we will never see sword or famine."* And Amos declares the arrogance of the secular-minded who disobey God; *'Disaster will never draw near or confront us.'*ⁱ

'These days' is like a gigantic social rug under which we sweep the dust and dirt of rejected values and beliefs of nobler times.

Not only does this happen in whole societies, but in individuals, too. Maybe some reading this remember past disciplines, past ways which you have let slip and eventually lose. You have followed the majority who make up the current 'these days'.

We forget, and maybe you have forgotten where you once were. But God does not forget.

Unaddressed backsliding will eventually pay back. Our judicial system can apply deeds done a generation ago and have them arraigned in court charges. And God doesn't forget. Sins committed a century ago are as bright before him as if a second ago.

The idolatry and Deceit of 'These Days' and the Liberation of Truth.

False witness, arrogance, refusal to soften one's heart towards God and love him truly, murder, mockery of Christ's church, blasphemy, all these ills that are excused under the majority approval of 'these days' are sins that are not forgotten before the face of God.

There is a way they can be removed. God himself gave His Son into death, where that death was the way of saving and redeeming sinners. And the only way of accessing the peace of mind is through repenting of wrongdoing, that hard heart toward God, believing His warning and trusting His cleansing and new life. There is no other way.

Prayer:

Dear Father in heaven, your Name is Holy. Forgive me for being persuaded by those who say 'these days are different, now'. The deception of saying 'We do things differently, and the new decision makers know best'. Cleanse my heart and will in Jesus' Name. Please help me return to the sacred path and to learn and follow the life of your Son, my Saviour and Lord, to be a light to those around me, to speak up for what accords with your commands and refuse to compromise with the spirit of the world.

In His Name.

Hymn: by C Wesley

A charge to keep I have, a God to glorify,
A never-dying soul to save, and fit it for the sky.

To serve the present age, my calling to fulfill:
Oh, may it all my powers engage to do my Master's will!

Arm me with jealous care, as in Thy sight to live;
And O Thy servant, Lord, prepare a strict account to give!

Help me to watch and pray, and on Thyself rely,
Assured, if I my trust betray, I shall forever die.

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Benediction:

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ

This service prepared by Rev Ian Clarkson for HopeNet SA

ⁱ Jeremiah 5.12. A common theme amongst even God's people ,see Ezekiel 13.10-16, Zephaniah 1.12, Amos 9.10.