



## Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

Walker C. Smith, 1867

Traditional Welsh hymn melody

1. Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise, in light in - ac -  
 2. Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing and si - lent as light, nor want - ing nor  
 3. To all life thou giv - est to both great and small; in all life thou  
 4. Great Fa - ther of glo - ry, pure Fa - ther of light, thine an - gels a -

ces - si - ble hid from om - ni eyes, most bless - ed most glo - rious, the  
 wast - ing, thou rul - est in might; thy jus - tice like moun - tains high  
 liv - est the true life of all. We blos - som and flour - ish as  
 dore thee, all veil - ing their sight; all praise we would ren - der, O

An - cient on Days, al - might - y vic - tor - ious, thy great name we praise.  
 soar - ing a - bove thy clouds which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.  
 leaves on the tree, and with - er and per - ish, but naught chang - es thee.  
 help us to see 'tis on - ly the splend - dor of light hid - den thee.

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## Gathering Prayer

Pat Shearer

Great and holy God, we worship you in awe and humility. You have revealed your glory to us in Jesus Christ, yet often we fail to comprehend your ways. Transforming Light, shine upon us today to illumine the shadowed areas of our lives. Let us hear your word with an awe that moves us to listen with our whole being. Change us from one degree of glory to another, so that we may respond to your truth not just on the mountaintop, but also in the valleys where you call us to serve. Amen.

## Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.  
 As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, reign without end. Amen, amen.

## Scripture

Exodus 34:29-35

Pat Shearer

This passage follows the events around the idolatry of the ‘golden calf’, in which Moses destroys the stone tablets in condemnation of Israel. Earlier in this chapter, in conjunction with the promise to replace the tablets that Moses had destroyed, God further explains that not only is “God merciful and faithful, God is also a God of justice. The tablets are replaced, the covenant is renewed, and three national feasts are established to solidify Israel’s relationship with God and with each other. When Moses’s face shines at the end of this story (today’s reading), it is an affirmation of the renewal of the covenant and Moses distinct place as God’s servant and leader of Israel. Moses uses the veil whenever God’s word is communicated, unveiling himself (being open and receptive) before God to receive instruction and unveiled (open, honest and trustworthy) before the people when declaring God’s word.

<sup>29</sup> Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. <sup>30</sup> When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. <sup>31</sup> But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. <sup>32</sup> Afterward all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. <sup>33</sup> When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; <sup>34</sup> but whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he would take the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, <sup>35</sup> the Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of his face was shining; and Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

Luke 9:28-36

Rosemary Dawson

Matthew, Mark and Luke all place the story of the transfiguration immediately after Peter’s confession of Jesus as the Messiah and Jesus’ first prediction of the passion. This gives the transfiguration a strategic importance parallel to Jesus’ baptism. In both events Jesus receives God’s confirmation as the Son of God and his role as Messiah. Here there is an additional emphasis that the passion to come is according to God’s purpose. The presence of three disciples emphasizes that now the followers of Christ are enlightened to this revelation.

<sup>28</sup> Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. <sup>29</sup> And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. <sup>30</sup> Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him.

<sup>31</sup> They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. <sup>32</sup> Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. <sup>33</sup> Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said. <sup>34</sup> While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. <sup>35</sup> Then from



literally, they are talking about Jesus' Exodus. With the glory of God surrounding them Jesus, Moses and Elijah were wrestling with the challenge of God's vision for his creation and his awesome mission for his Son- the crucifixion that was awaiting Jesus in the city of God.

Perhaps that is why Jesus went to this mountain to pray. Perhaps he needed to meet with God yet again, to find direction like Moses on Sinai, and courage like Elijah on Horeb; to reaffirm his baptismal call and feel again the weight of glory. Because from there Jesus comes down into the valley, and makes his way to Jerusalem; and to an exodus that will lead his people out of slavery to sin and into the new kingdom of God, just as God had designed so long ago. And perhaps this is why the disciples were there too. Because they also needed to see the glory of Christ so that they would have the strength to follow him, to stand below the hill of Calvary and trust in God's holy purposes even when they did not see it clearly. Perhaps they needed those moments so that they could see, not just Christ's glory, but the world's need, and answer the call to "take up your cross and follow me."

Isn't that what all of Jesus' disciples really need? We may not have scaled mountains, or had a sacred encounter, (few of us ever do), but all of us need hope and strength, and a vision to live by. We need to see Jesus' divinity shining through his humanity. And we need to know that God is able to fill our ordinary lives with heavenly purpose, so that his glory can shine through our service. That is what it means to be a disciple of Christ. We need an inspiring vision and a clear call, so that we can accomplish God's purposes for us, in our lives and in our community.

We have been on a journey with God, throughout our lives, seeking to be faithful to God's call. And we have diligently sought to discern where God is now inviting us to follow Christ in service here in Northfield. In a few minutes we will be taking that next step of the journey, to hear and respond to the possibilities that lay before us. It is a mission rooted in a vision of God's heart and seeks to embody God's ways, so that all people can know the goodness and glory of God.

I think it would make a great bucket list. How about you?

Amen.

# 206 We Thank Thee, Lord

FIELD. 10. 10. 10. 10.

CALVIN W. LAUFER, 1874-

CALVIN W. LAUFER, 1874-

1. We thank Thee, Lord, Thy paths of serv - ice lead  
 2. We've sought and found Thee in the se - cret place  
 3. We've felt Thy touch in sor - row's dark - ened way  
 4. We've seen Thy glo - ry like a man - tie spread

To bla - zoned heights and down the slopes of need;  
 And mar - veled at the ra - diance of Thy face;  
 A - bound with love and sol - ace for the day;  
 O'er hill and dale in saf - fron flame and red;

They reach Thy throne, en - com - pass land and sea,  
 But of - ten in some far - off Gal - i - lee  
 And, 'neath the bur - dens there, Thy sov - reign - ty  
 But in the eyes of men, re - deemed and free,

And he who jour - neys in them walks with Thee.  
 Be - held Thee fair - er yet while serv - ing Thee.  
 Has held our hearts en - thralled while serv - ing Thee.  
 A splen - dor great - er yet while serv - ing Thee. A - MEN.

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## **Joys and Concerns**

### **Prayers of the People**

Holy, Glorious God, we thank you and praise you for all your goodness to us. We thank you for Jesus Christ, who embodied your glory, revealed your truth, and fulfilled your will for the sake of the world. We thank you also for your Spirit who, for your glory, opens our eyes to the wonders of your grace, fills us with awe, and directs us in your service.

And so we pray for your church and for this congregation. May we sense your presence with us, hear your truth, and respond with faith and hope. Grant us a clear vision for our ministry, and the strength so see it through, so that all people may know your goodness and grace. We pray for our world and all its leaders. Grant them a clear vision of your will for peace and guide them with wisdom as they seek to fulfill your purposes in bringing justice and blessing to all people. We pray also for all you need your care today. Grant your healing touch to the ill, your comforting presence to the burdened, and your refreshing aid to the needy. We especially lift up... and we thank you for...

We exalt you, Awesome God, for your majesty and power, faithfulness and grace, revealed to us through Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray...

### **The Lord's Prayer**

#### **Choral Response**

Remember Me

### **Offering**

God's glory is revealed in the face of Christ. God's wonders are extolled by all who have encountered his grace. Our offerings are a token of our worship and a witness of our lives. May this service enliven a new vision among us, and empower a fresh ministry in our world. Let us dedicate our gifts in faith.

We glorify you, O God, through these gifts and our lives. May they be used to reveal your glory in ways which proclaim Jesus as your chosen and beloved Son and transform the world in the light of your kingdom. Amen.

### **Doxology**

(choose the one that is best for your faith)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, praise him all creatures here below,  
praise him above ye heavenly hosts, praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures here below  
Praise God for all that Love has done; Creator, Christ and Spirit One. Amen

# Be Thou My Vision

Dallan Forgaill  
arranged by Eleanor H. Hull

1. Be Thou my Vi - sion, O Lord of my heart; Naught be all  
 2. Be Thou my Wis - dom, and Thou my true Word; I ev - er  
 3. Be Thou my bat - tle Shield, Sword for the fight; Be Thou my  
 4. Rich - es I heed not, nor man's emp - ty praise, Thou mine In -  
 5. High King of Heav - en, my vic - to - ry won, May I reach

6

else to me, save that Thou art; Thou my best Thought, by  
 with Thee and Thou with me, Lord; Thou my great Fa - ther,  
 Dig - ni - ty, Thou my De - light; Thou my soul's Shel - ter,  
 her - i - tance, now and al - ways: Thou and Thou on - ly,  
 Heav - en's joys, O bright Heav'n's Sun! Heart of my own heart,

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day or by night, Wak - ing or sleep - ing, Thy pres - ence my light.  
 I Thy true son; Thou in me dwell - ing, and I with Thee one.  
 Thou my high Tow'r: Raise Thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.  
 first in my heart, High King of Heav - en, my Treas - ure Thou art.  
 what - e'er be - fall, Still be my Vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

**\*Common Commission**

**Let us go forth into the world in peace, being of good courage, holding fast to that which is good, rendering to no one evil for evil, strengthening the faint-hearted, supporting the weak, helping the afflicted, honoring all persons, loving and serving the Lord, and rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.**

**\* Benediction**

Go now into the world

and may the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:6, adapt.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Amen.

**Postlude**

“The Solid Rock,” by William B. Bradbury. Arr. by Mark Hayes

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music provided by Chris Harris and Lynne Walker