

'How lovely is your dwelling place' Psalm 84:1

'When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father' Matthew 6:6

You are Invited

I am dissatisfied,
The world offers me nothing.
Products of plastic,
Material with elastic.
Low signal, low battery,
Advertising flattery.
It's all so dissatisfactory.

And don't get me started on my job,
The things I do just to earn a few bob.
My boss watching over me to point out when I fail,
My colleague sending me yet another email.
And what does it achieve, this salary?
This credit, cash and currency?
More plastic, more elastic,
Everything the world says is 'fantastic'.

And then I found a card,
Nothing special, nothing smart.
Simply saying: 'You are invited'
Not gonna lie, I felt a little bit excited.
But to what? To where?
For a moment I just stare,
I look around...no-one there.

This curious invitation,
Starts to give me palpitations.
I want to know!

Where should I go?!
To what pleasure do I owe?

I place the paper on the side,
And consider what meaning I can derive.

Then suddenly by chance,
I catch a slight glance,
Of a Bible resting by my plants.
It happens to be open at Matthew six,
A passage I know my wife often picks!

I notice in there a request from Jesus,
To go into our room where our Father sees us.¹

Hm! What a strange proposal.
How unproductive, what a waste of resources at our disposal.

Why would the God of Creation,
Invite us to a very simple station?

I pause, and check my question,
I remember the card with the humble suggestion,

“You are invited.”

It couldn't be God that's inviting me.
Surely not His hand that's writing to me.

But here it is, right here in the book.

I turn and take a second look.

What if He is really asking?
For me to come into His presence basking?

¹ Matthew 6:6

He, inviting me?
Does He desire me, even more than I He?

The idea of God just waiting on,
As a Father waits for a son!²

The wind blows in and turns the pages,
Turning time back through the ages,
To the Psalms, the songs,
That Israel always sung in throngs.
The words soon I come to face,
'How lovely is your dwelling place.'³

My eyes drop down,
To see the sparrow has found,
A home, a nest,
A place to rest.
By the altar,
Says the psalter.⁴

God, this writer longs for You.
In your presence is much value.
Better is one day in your court,
A thousand elsewhere is still too short.⁵

And He invites me,
The thought, perhaps, excites me.
That the King of Love would request my presence,
Even me the lowliest of peasants!

² Luke 15:20

³ Psalm 84:1

⁴ Psalm 84:3

⁵ Psalm 84:10

Should I go?

Or just say, 'No'?

The world entices to build our wealth,
But the invite of prayer is to know God Himself.

The world promises stuff to hoard,
But the invite of prayer is to know God more.

I turn back to the Book, one more glance,

Let me give it one final chance.

'The Lord God is a sun and shield;
Favour and honour His people yield'⁶

He blesses His people generously,

Yet I mull over this strenuously!

Why is this a struggle to choose?

How is this an invite I can refuse?

God wants me,

I should come confidently.⁷

He wants you to come,

All of you, not just some.

He's waiting for your reply,

So that He can draw nigh.

'But what do you get out of it?' People will enquire.

No! Spending time is all we require.

That is exactly God's desire.

When man and wife go on a date,

We don't say "what's the economic mandate?"

The important question is about the heart rate.

Prayer is simply quality time,

With our Maker, our Father, our Lord Divine.

⁶ Psalm 84:11

⁷ Ephesians 3:12

Christians talk of 'a life of prayer',
When actually it's an invite beyond compare.
The God of the universe wants to be with you,
He sent His Son so that it could be true!
Let me repeat that rhyme if you'd allow me to:
'This is eternal life, that they know You,
The only God, the one that is true.'⁸

We talk of prayer in various ways,
We have lists and troubles, but nothing outweighs,
The thought that we're invited,
His love not unrequited!

Prayer is the place where the life of God can nourish,
The secret place where His people flourish.
It changes the world and it changes me,
It takes us into the realms of eternity.
This is the place your faith will thrive,
This is the place we come fully alive.
Your soul cries out for something deeper,
To not walk about as a waking sleeper.⁹

But if you really want to know how to shine,
Remember: my use is His concern, not mine.
It is His life that is the light of man,¹⁰
What is my life, my deeds, my plan?
If I really want to be effective,
I need to be under God's directive.
Seek first the kingdom and His righteousness,
And God Himself will deal with all the rest.¹¹

⁸ John 17:3

⁹ Ephesians 5:14

¹⁰ John 1:3

¹¹ Matthew 6:33

You don't need the words,¹² just give him space,
A time and place to seek His face.
And, the more we see Christ in prayer,
The more we see Him everywhere.
The more we see his Hand, His works, His power,
His love that He longs to shower.
And it all starts in a life of prayer,
How on earth could we not care?

But I often don't,
I say that I won't.
I have so many jobs and things to do,
Prayer won't put the washing through!
But I suppose that's the whole point of trust,
When God says, then I must.
After all, I have this invite.
To pray, to seek, to delight.
And I suppose also...to fight!

I join with God in the fight against evil,
With simple words I join the Great Retrieval:
To win back the lost whatever the cost,
To believe in the power of Pentecost!
I battle for revival,
Not just hope for survival.
I take hold of the armour,
Won for me by my Father.
With my shield of faith and sword of the Spirit,¹³
My God can do so much with it.

¹² Romans 8:26

¹³ Ephesians 6:16-17

You see, prayer isn't just a nice feeling,
A few words just spoken to the ceiling.
It's a war against the spiritual forces,¹⁴
We don't trust in chariots and horses,¹⁵
Programmes or courses,
But in Jesus the King! The mighty warrior!
Who heals the sick and cares for the worrier.
He turns the rebellious into the righteous,
The impossible to the 'might-just',
He puts the worst into reverse,
The last, he says, are first.¹⁶
The war we wage is not for destruction,
But winning hearts and reconstruction.

Why not now? Yes, today!
He promised His Spirit would stay,
Yesterday, today, forever the same!
He promised His power would remain.¹⁷
The same power that conquered the grave,¹⁸
The same life to us, the church, He gave.

So when I fight the good fight¹⁹ while on my knees,
I must remember, please, please, please.
The Lord will fight for you, yes He will,
You need only to be still.²⁰

So, what to do with this request?
What action of mine might be best?

¹⁴ Ephesians 6:12

¹⁵ Psalm 20:7

¹⁶ Matthew 20:16

¹⁷ Matthew 28:20

¹⁸ Romans 8:11

¹⁹ 1 Timothy 6:12

²⁰ Exodus 14:14

I could say a prayer,
Here and there.
Or I could make it a habit,
Find an opportunity and grab it.
To remember I'm invited,
And never be short-sighted.
To trust in that prayerful place
And never see it as a waste.

Not to consider the things I'd rather,
But treat them as loss²¹ and run to the Father.²²

In times of distraction,
May Jesus be my only reaction.
It really doesn't take much,
Just the hem of His garment to touch.²³
I don't want my life to bleed anymore,
To give me life is what He came for.²⁴

So, one thing's for sure,
And this decision I must endure.
I have resolved I simply must pray,
In His presence I really must stay.
The invitation I shan't put aside,
For in Him, I am satisfied.

²¹ Philippians 3:8

²² Philippians 3:14

²³ Luke 8:44

²⁴ John 10:10