**Tuesday 16th June**

Psalm 34: 1 – 3

I will extol the Lord at all times;

his praise will always be on my lips.
**2**I will glory in the Lord;

let the afflicted hear and rejoice.
**3**Glorify the Lord with me:

let us exalt his name together.

One of the things that I am missing about being able to gather in church for services is the times of sung worship. There is something so significant that happens when together we extol the Lord! It changes the spiritual atmosphere and when we sing together we encourage one another in faith and in praise. This is more than the ‘feel good factor’ that is rightly recognised as a benefit from singing together. In worship, we are declaring truths and spurring each other on to come up higher. King David set us a brilliant example in worship. Here he demonstrates a lifestyle of worship – ‘I will extol the Lord at all times’. That in itself can be challenging. Some times are easier than others for worship. It is certainly easier when we can be together! But God is worthy of our worship at *all* times because of His unchanging character. First and foremost, we worship because God is worthy of all the praise we could ever bring, and we were created to give Him glory. In the second verse, we discover that there is a contagious element to praise! Just as laughter and yawning are catching, so is rejoicing! David suggests that when those that are suffering hear the praises of God proclaimed, they are encouraged and spurred on, to the extent that they rejoice. How can this be? I think part of the answer is in the way that worship lifts our eyes beyond the problems and pain that we face in the immediate. Worship helps us to see things from an eternal perspective. Worship reminds us of the goodness and faithfulness of God. Worship fills our hearts and minds with truth. Worship encourages us that we are not alone in this journey of discipleship, but that our brothers and sisters are alongside us. And worship is a part of the spiritual weaponry that we are given to send the enemy packing! So until such a time as we are able to stand side-by-side to extol the Lord, keep worshipping! Extol the Lord at all times. We may not be physically together, but we are united in our praise of the one who is worthy.

<https://youtu.be/QZW4_8_zCBE>

*Lord, we give you praise and honour today. We lift our hearts and voices to worship you. Lord you are so good and we have seen your love and faithfulness demonstrated in our lives. As we look forward to the day when we can be physically together to worship, help us to learn a lifestyle of praise so that we can say with the Psalmist ‘I will extol the Lord at all times’. We pray for those that we know today that are suffering. We ask that you would comfort them with your Presence. We pray that you would inject hope into every heart. As the people of God continue to worship you in lockdown, we pray that we would be a sign to those around that don’t know you yet, and that the spiritual atmosphere would shift. In Jesus name, Amen*