

*Today I want to talk about how we can focus on the Holy Spirit given to us to equip us in our journey with God*

**Our first hymn - I'll praise my maker while I've breath**

**Singing the Faith 79, Hymns and Psalms 439**

**1 I'll praise my maker while I've breath,  
and when my voice is lost in death,  
praise shall possess my noblest powers;  
my days of praise are never past  
while life and thought and being last  
or immortality endures.**

**2 Happy are those whose hopes rely  
on God the Lord, who made the sky,  
the earth, the sea, the night and day;  
his truth for ever stands secure,  
he keeps his promise to the poor,  
and none who seeks is turned away.**

**3 The Lord gives eyesight to the blind,  
he calms and heals the troubled mind,  
he sends the wounded conscience peace;  
he helps the stranger in distress,  
the widow and the fatherless,  
and grants the prisoner glad release.**

**4 I'll praise him while he lends me breath,  
and when my voice is lost in death  
praise shall employ my noblest powers;  
my days of praise are never past  
while life and thought and being last  
or immortality endures.**

**PRAYER OF ADORATION - by Ellis Osabutey**

**Prayer**

O Lord, Our God, you are all-powerful and sovereign, we adore, honour and glorify you. We are privileged to be called your children. We affirm that You are our redeeming Lord. In our weakness we fall short of what

you expect from us. But as people in covenant with you through the precious blood of your son Jesus Christ, we believe that if we sincerely regret and confess our sins you will forgive us.

We are sorry when we get carried away with our busy lives and never stop to dwell on your love. We are sorry when we allow the storms of life to erode and wear away our hope. We thank you for the assurance that you will never leave us. We thank you for the sacrifices on the cross for us. We thank you for the holy spirit that pleads on our behalf when we are weak. We thank you for the church family, our own families and the lives of the young people.

Our Lord God we are faced with unprecedented Covid-19. This global pandemic is affecting everyone everywhere in the world. Educational lives stunted, for example, some of our young people are worried about what GCSE or A-level grades they will receive. Workers are constantly worried about their job security and how they may be able to meet mortgage payments and other financial commitments.

We commit this Covid-19 storm into your hands. Let us hear your voice Oh Lord. We need to hear 'fear not, for I am with you always...' Thank you that we can bring to your feet all the hurts and fears that trouble us, and leave them there, knowing that your strength and assurance are all that we require, Thank you that as we draw near in worship, we are transported from a world of concerns and fears, to a place where we can be at peace in your presence, to find healing, wholeness and refreshment.

Thank you, Lord God, for the opportunity of worship. Thank you that in worship we can put aside, the uncertainties of this world and rest upon the certainties of the Kingdom, for your promises are unchangeable. Your promises are immovable and eternal. Let the holy spirit fill everyone with the power of your grace to make this act of worship acceptable to you. Oh Lord, our God speak to us...

Let us continue this period of prayer by saying the Lord's Prayer together....

### The Lord's Prayer

## [Hymn: Will your anchor hold in the storms of life](#)

### Singing the Faith 645, Hymns and Psalms 689

**1 Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,  
when the clouds unfold their wings of strife?  
When the strong tides lift, and the cables strain,  
will your anchor drift, or firm remain?**

#### **Refrain:**

**We have an anchor that keeps the soul  
steadfast and sure while the billows roll;  
fastened to the Rock which cannot move,  
grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love!**

**2 Will your anchor hold in the straits of fear,  
when the breakers roar and the reef is near?  
While the surges rage, and the wild winds blow,  
shall the angry waves then your bark o'erflow? [Refrain]**

**3 Will your anchor hold in the floods of death,  
when the waters cold chill your latest breath?  
On the rising tide you can never fail,  
while your anchor holds within the veil. [Refrain]**

**4 Will your eyes behold through the morning light  
the city of gold and the harbour bright?  
Will you anchor safe by the heavenly shore,  
when life's storms are past for evermore? [Refrain]**

**Bible Reading : Ephesians 3:7-21**

**[Hymn: I the Lord of sea and sky](#)**

**Singing the Faith 663**

**I, The Lord Of Sea And Sky,  
I Have Heard My People Cry.  
All Who Dwell In Dark And Sin,  
My Hand Will Save.  
I Who Made The Stars Of Night,  
I Will Make Their Darkness Bright.  
Who Will Bear My Light To Them?  
Whom Shall I Send?**

**Refrain**

**Here I Am Lord, Is It I, Lord?  
I Have Heard You Calling In The Night.  
I Will Go Lord, If You Lead Me.  
I Will Hold Your People In My Heart.**

**I, The Lord Of Snow And Rain,  
I Have Borne My People's Pain.  
I Have Wept For Love Of Them, They Turn Away.  
I Will Break Their Hearts Of Stone,  
Give Them Hearts For Love Alone.  
I Will Speak My Word To Them [Refrain]**

**I, The Lord Of Wind And Flame  
I Will Tend The Poor And Lame.  
I Will Set A Feast For Them,  
My Hand Will Save  
Finest Bread I Will Provide,  
Till Their Hearts Be Satisfied.  
I Will Give My Life To Them,  
Whom Shall I Send? [Refrain ]**

## **Sermon**

**Hello My name is Stephen Appiah (for those who don't know me) and it is a privilege to be sharing worship with you today. Our challenge today is to discuss an important aspect of Christian life - how we get equipped as Christians**

**The passage we have just read encourages us to approach God with confidence and in freedom and recognise that the love of Christ for us is deep.**

### **How deep is Christ's Love?**

- **I love the story of the two men standing on a bridge across an ocean. One of them said, look at all that expanse of water and the other said, yes, and just think that is just the surface.**
- **The surface view of God completely underestimates the depth of God's power and omnipotence.**
- **Paul prayer is for us to get an understanding of how deep, how wide and how high is the Love of Christ.**
- **Our inability to comprehend the depth of God's omnipotent power tends to make us unsure about our expectations in times of difficulty.**
- **Covid 19 has introduced all sorts of issues to some people. Some people have been impacted so badly that they are tired of groaning all night to God,. For others, it has left them feeling exposed to anxiety, about their business or job.**

- **The first assurance here is to appreciate that we have a God with deeper understanding of our nature, and our challenges and therefore able to respond to our situations.**

Our focus this morning however is on the 2 verses that say ...

**Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, <sup>21</sup> to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.**

**Let's first simplify it**

- ***Every generation and every church must give God the glory because God is able to give immeasurably over and above what we ask for according to the working of his power in you."***

**To illustrate the provisioning of God and the His power at work in us I am going to take the story of Moses to clarify the verse**

**God appears to Moses and assigns him an impossible task.**

**Go rescue the people of Israel from the most powerful kingdom on earth at that time - Egypt. Simply use the power I will put in you and nothing else, just trust the power I am putting in you. Don't go forming coalition forces with the countries around Egypt, go single handed in my power I am putting in you.**

**He admitted before God, this is impossible task, but everything proceeded according to plan and soon, about a million people were walking out of Egypt following one man. Moses knows the depth of the omnipotence of God**

**The first challenge: Lesson 1**

**1. when they came to the Red Sea. And it seems they had not planned how they were going to cross. And then they realised that the Egyptians were pursuing them.**

**Immediately, Pandemonium broke out, the whole mission seemed to lack planning. Moses probably panicked a bit and decided to put the people in a lockdown position: **BE STILL** - he told them, everybody be still.**

**Moses reached out to God and the response from God was quick – something**

**like .. the power you need is already at work in you. My power in you is sufficient to deal with the situation you are in. Use your staff**

**So Moses touched the sea with his staff and a new passage was opened to his people but not to their enemy**

### **Object lesson 2**

**Logistic nightmare – the people became hungry and angry! There was no food in the desert. They soon realized God had made provision for their journey. Every morning, there were manna and quails everywhere.**

**That was for food, but have you asked the questions**

- 1. Where did they get new clothes and sandals**
- 2. How did they get medicines?**
- 3. How were they able to walk day after day in the heat?**

**They were already equipped for the journey and the details of their journey had been catered for.**

**God wanted them to know that they have to learn to trust him and that they were walking with a God who is able to give over and above what they needed**

**We live in an unprecedented times? Uncharted territory, we don't have previous data to guide us, no previous experience, we cannot model with certainty? Where does it leave us?**

**How do Christians prepare for uncharted territory?**

**There is so much that we can prepare for. Don't forget in flesh we were born into weakness but in Christ, we have been born again into strength and in that strength is the Holy Spirit who equips us.**

**We go through bad episodes in life and whenever our world falls apart we have to turn to God for strength to cope – I must say it seems to us that God's grace is insufficient in our difficulties. Bible assurances become insufficient when things are practically difficult.**

**In practice, It's one thing to believe in God's ability when everything is going well for you, but it can be quite difficult when, you've lost everything and your**

**world is falling apart and you are waiting on God to put you together and restore you again.**

**From Moses' story, Lesson number 1; God's power in us is always sufficient to deal with the situation we find ourselves in. His power in you is sufficient for you. It took me a long time to realize that.**

**Lesson 2: Jesus knows that it is better to equip a Christian with God's power than to repair and heal a Christian as a broken person in their journey with God. Jesus is ahead in planning our lives just as he did with the Israelites in the desert.**

**It does not bring honour to Jesus to see Christians become broken men and women. He is aware that in this world there are tribulations, there is evil, proximate evil all around us. His first priority is for God, our Father, to equip us with his own Holy Spirit as we go through a world of tribulations and pandemic.**

**The same Holy Spirit can provide over and above what we ask for and He is sufficient Power to support us in every situation.**

**And that is the point Paul is making.**

**May God fill us with his power in these difficult times. Amen**

**[Hymn let every Christian pray](#)**

**Singing the Faith 388, Hymns & Psalms 305**

**Let every Christian pray,  
This day, and every day,  
Come, Holy Spirit, come!  
Was not the Church we love  
Commissioned from above?  
Come, Holy Spirit, come!**

**The Spirit brought to birth  
The Church of Christ on earth  
To seek and save the lost:  
God never has withdrawn,  
Since that tremendous dawn,  
The gifts of Pentecost.**

**Age after age, he strove  
To teach her how to love:  
Come, Holy Spirit, come!  
Age after age, anew,  
She proved the gospel true:  
Come, Holy Spirit, come!**

**Only the Spirit's power  
Can fit us for this hour:  
Come, Holy Spirit Come!  
Instruct, inspire, unite;  
And make us see the light:  
Come Holy Spirit, come!**

### **Prayer of intercession and blessing**

Our Father who is eternal, all powerful, and omnipotent,

our Lord Jesus, the Eternal Son of the Father, Redeemer of the world and

the Holy Spirit, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, the Spirit of love and truth, of wisdom and understanding,

our God who is the creator of our universe,

we acknowledge your presence in our homes and in our world

We lift before your throne of Grace the plight of humanity in our age. The painful damage of the pandemic to life, businesses and jobs and damage to various economies in our world.

We approach your throne of Grace to intercede for the people whose lives are shattered by the pandemic. Lord out of your tender mercies we pray for restoration and renewal

We lift before you the people of Beirut, Lebanon, and areas torn by war and disaster. Sovereign Lord of the Holy Spirit, we pray that you repair the lives of people shattered by all types of disasters, hunger, poor sanitation and lack of water.

We pray for the people at the forefront of the fight against the pandemic, the various laboratories working to find treatment and vaccines, Holy Spirit give them insight and open the pathway to enable them succeed in their effort to find treatment.

We pray for your church and local churches, your ministers, your congregation, the people of God, that by your grace you will keep us safe, you will keep us calm us in this storm

Now we will focus the sick among us.

The Spirit who adopted us as the children of God, We pray that you release your power of healing to the people of God who feel unwell , healing us spiritually and let it manifest physically and enfold us in your peace We ask all these in the name of your Son. Amen.

**Blessing: He who is able to give over and above what we request or ask according to his power at work in us, may he bless you and keep you , may he lift his face towards you and His peace be with you. Amen**