



## The Timeless Psalms

by Joan Stott

### **A Call to Worship**

**Psalm 116: 1-2, 12-19, Maundy Thursday Year B 2012**

Listening God, we praise you for teaching us about your listening ear, and how to love and serve you.

**We gather this day in response to the way you hear our prayers, and we offer our sacrifice of thanksgiving.**

Holy God, we praise you for teaching us about worship and reverence of you, and how to love and serve you.

**We gather this day in response to your warm welcome to everyone, and we offer our sacrifice of joyous praise.**

Love-engendering God, we praise you for teaching us about love and loving, and how to love and serve you.

**We gather this day in response to your tender care, your attentive listening, and for your generous actions—and we offer to you our sacrifice of renewed commitment. Amen.**

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### **Prayers of Thankfulness**

**Psalm 116: 1-2, 12-19, Maundy Thursday Year B 2012**

Grace-giving, grace sharing God, we gather today to praise and thank you, to worship, honour and revere you because you are the God who understand us; who comes near to us in our needs, and who accepts us, even when we have failed everyone that is dear to us.

Loving God, we want to respond to you in ways that express our gratitude and thankfulness for the patient and loving mercy of God, that we experience each day.

Yet, what can we really offer to God that is a fitting and suitable sacrifice of praise when we are here present with so many people, when it is often our very personal needs that have been met by God? All we can do in response, is to rejoice in the fact that we are precious to God, and that God has a lively and living involvement with us, and in what we offer to God as a personal and joint sacrifice of praise.

Inspirational God, we give thanks that you do accept our flawed and often inadequate worship and praise; and that you encourage us in our growth in understanding of God and God's holy ways, so that we can indeed lift of the cup of praise and thankfulness to the honour and glory of our God. Amen.

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### **A Personal Meditation**

#### **Psalm 116: 1-2, 12-19, Maundy Thursday Year B 2012**

Listening God, I am so grateful that you are always near me, ready to receive my offerings of worship and praise. Like those people who follow the ancient practice of literally raising their cup as a symbol of thankfulness and praise, I, too, lift up my cup in a toast to God's saving mercy and grace. These ancient followers of God raised their cup after reading special records from holy scriptures about God's creative powers, and they recalled God's saving actions of past generations. I raise my cup in thanksgiving before God and before God's people, for God's gifts to me that have given my life purpose, meaning, dignity and value in service.

Creative pause: I lift up my cup to God's saving mercy and grace.

Responding God, it has been suggested by learned scholars that 'crying' or 'calling' on the name of the Lord actually means yelling at God. Somehow, to me that does not seem very reverent or worshipful to yell at God, and yet I believe that people often yell at God in their anguish and pain! Perhaps I have never walked in their shoes, or suffered their deep torments, for which I am so grateful. I am reminded by the Psalmist that God's people are very precious to God, and that their welfare is important to God. I hope and pray that as I worship God in private and within a community, that I am able to honour and serve God in ways that are appropriate and bring honour to God's name.

Creative pause: Is yelling at God reverent or worshipful?

Accepting God, I offer to you, privately and amongst my community of colleagues and friends, a commitment to regularly raising the cup in praise and thankfulness for all God's loving mercy and grace, and for giving me this life of worship, witness and service - with all its human mistakes, weakness and fallibility - but with a heart and mind that desires to love and serve my Lord for of all my remaining days.

Creative pause: A commitment to raise the cup in praise and thankfulness.

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