

In the Stillness: Music for the Journey to the Cross

An evening of musical reflection, led by
Revd Dr Rowan Williams, Canon Chancellor
Peterborough Cathedral
with James Parsons (organ)

Welcome and opening prayer

Introduction

Psalm 51

- ¹ Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
- ² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin.
- ³ For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
- ⁴ Against you, you alone, have I sinned,
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you are justified in your sentence
and blameless when you pass judgement.
- ⁵ Indeed, I was born guilty,
a sinner when my mother conceived me.
- ⁶ You desire truth in the inward being;
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.
- ⁷ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- ⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.
- ⁹ Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.
- ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.
- ¹¹ Do not cast me away from your presence,

- and do not take your holy spirit from me.
- ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in me a willing spirit.
- ¹³ Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.
- ¹⁴ Deliver me from bloodshed, O God,
O God of my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.
- ¹⁵ O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.
- ¹⁶ For you have no delight in sacrifice;
if I were to give a burnt-offering, you would not be pleased.
- ¹⁷ The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.
- ¹⁸ Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem,
- ¹⁹ then you will delight in right sacrifices,
in burnt-offerings and whole burnt-offerings;
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

Revd Dr Rowan Williams and James Parsons: Reflection I
ending with Diderik Buxtehude (1637-1707)
Ciacona in E minor BuxWV 160 5'30"

It has been suggested that the 31 variations of this E minor Ciacona follow the praying of the Rosary - with some patterns most credibly illustrating the Scourging of our Lord, his Agonies and his Rising in Glory.

Revd Dr Rowan Williams and James Parsons: Reflection 2

ending with C.H.H. Parry (1848-1918)

Rockingham

Here is a beguiling Edwardian miniature born of the melody to which we usually sing the Passiontide hymn '*When I survey the wondrous Cross*'.

Hymn

When I survey the wondrous cross,
on which the Prince of glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
save in the death of Christ my God;
all the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down;
did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
or thorns compose so rich a crown?

His dying crimson like a robe,
spreads o'er his body on the Tree;
then am I dead to all the globe,
and all the globe is dead to me.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were an offering far too small;
love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.

Words: Isaac Watts (1674–1748)

Tune: Rockingham

Revd Dr Rowan Williams and James Parsons: Reflection 3

ending with J S Bach (1685-1750)

Alle Menschen müssen sterben ('All men must die ...') BWV 643

Fugue in C minor BWV 537b

Death, to which we all shall come, holds no terrors for the Christian; in Bach's brief setting of this Lutheran chorale; the major key and the repetitive pedal pattern, redolent of a rocking cradle, welcome the believer to rest in Christ.

The C minor Fugue, following-on tonight, is assertive and aspirational - grounded and firm in the faith of the Resurrection.

Closing prayers

Most merciful God,
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ
delivered and saved the world:
grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross
we may triumph in the power of his victory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Blessing

Christ crucified draw you to himself,
to find in him a sure ground for faith,
a firm support for hope,
and the assurance of sins forgiven;
and the blessing ...