



April 2021



Opening

Bobbing and weaving: two blackbirds,
caught in an ages old fight for
territory, battle on the shed roof.

Dark feathers flash in the light; bright
yellow beaks raised in determination.
It must be hard to fight when your
eyes are in the side of your head.

Prisoners of instinct: slaves to
impulses that they will live without
recognising, the birds strut and flutter.

We smile at their posturing, and yet
how quickly we copy them: we who
seem to know better.



Song

[Study War No More – Pete Seeger](#)

I'm gonna lay down my sword and
shield,

Down by the riverside (x3)

I'm gonna lay down my sword and
shield,

Down by the riverside

Study war no more

I ain't gonna study war no more

Ain't gonna study war no more

Ain't gonna study war no more (x2)

I'm gonna walk with that Prince of
Peace,

Down by the riverside (x3)

I'm gonna walk with that Prince of
Peace,

Down by the riverside

Study war no more

I ain't gonna study war no more

Ain't gonna study war no more

Ain't gonna study war no more (x2)

I'm gonna lay down that atom bomb
Down by the riverside (x3)
I'm gonna lay down that atom bomb,
Down by the riverside
Study war no more
I ain't gonna study war no more
Ain't gonna study war no more
Ain't gonna study war no more (x4)

Reading

What is the price of two sparrows—
one copper coin? But not a single
sparrow can fall to the ground
without your Father knowing it.

[Matthew 10:29](#)

Reflection

We see ourselves reflected back
at ourselves;
Light and angles distort, giving
perspective some work to do.
We hear our voices reflected back in
the voices of others;
Careless at times, or complimentary,
flattering to deceive perhaps.

Rumours of Glory – devotional resources April 2021. Simonjcross.com

If we're honest.

And honesty is hard, in and on
reflection. The cold light that refuses
to flatter and serves instead to tell us
the truth, which perhaps we already
know.

Not my will but yours be done,
perhaps the most honest and hardest
thing one can pray.

Prayer



Reading

Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

“Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

“Blessed are you who are hungry
now,
for you will be filled.

“Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

“Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

[Luke 6: 20-23 \(NRSV\)](#)

Quote

“...the restoration of the church will surely come only from a new type of monasticism which has nothing in

common with the old but a complete lack of compromise in a life lived in accordance with the Sermon on the Mount in the discipleship of Christ. I think it is time to gather people together to do this...”

[\(Dietrich Bonhoeffer\)](#)

Prayer

O God, early in the morning I cry to you.

Help me to pray

And to concentrate my thoughts on you;

I can't do this alone.

In me there's darkness,

But with you there's light;

I'm lonely, but you don't leave me;

I'm feeble in heart, but with you there's help;

I'm restless, but with you there's peace.

In me there's bitterness, but with you
there's patience;

I don't understand your ways,

But you know the way for me.

O Heavenly Father,

I praise and thank you

For rest in the night;

I praise and thank you for this new
day;

I praise and thank you for all your
goodness

and faithfulness throughout my life.

You have granted me many blessings;

Now let me also accept what's hard
from your hand.

You will lay on me no more than I
can bear.

You make all things work together for
good for your children.

Lord Jesus Christ,

You were poor and in distress, a
captive and forsaken as I am.

You know all man's troubles;

You abide with me when all men fail
me;

You remember and seek me;

It's your will that I should know you
and turn to you.

Lord, I hear your call and follow;

Help me.

O Holy Spirit,

Give me faith that will protect me
from despair, from passions, and
from vice;

Give me such love for God and men
as will blot out all hatred and
bitterness;

Give me the hope that will deliver me
from fear and faint-heartedness.

Amen.

(Dietrich Bonhoeffer)