

Sunday Worship Service

December 6, 2009

Call to Worship

God Summons Us; We Come

Church: O Come All Ye Faithful (243), first and last verses

Pastor: *There is one body and one Spirit, as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

Let us worship the Triune God.

Merciful God, who sent Your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation:

Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may joyfully celebrate the Incarnation of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with You, and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Confession and Assurance of Pardon

We Confess; God Cleanses Us

Pastor: The way back into the Garden of Eden was blocked by an angel with a flaming sword; upon entering the Tabernacle or the Temple the worshipper would first encounter the altar of burnt offering, where an animal would be cut in pieces and set on fire on his behalf. Under the terms of the New Covenant, Christ has entered the heavenly Tabernacle before us, and by offering His body once for all, He has cleansed us forever. We who are clean, as Christ told Peter at the Last Supper, need only to wash our feet, and this reminds us of our need to confess our sins.

Church: Oh Lord God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps Your covenant and faith with those who love You and keep Your commandments, let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to this prayer your servants offer before You for our nation:

We confess the sins we have committed against you; we have acted very wickedly toward you; we have not obeyed the commandments you have given us. We know that you are a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate You, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love You and keep Your commandments. You have been kind to us and blessed our nation; you have given us freedom and wealth by your great power and your strong hand.

O Lord we pray, please let your ear be attentive to our prayers and the prayers of your servants who desire to fear your name.

Pastor: READ PSALM 32

Pastor: You have confessed your sins honestly before the Lord. God delights to forgive, and He has done so. He has cleansed you from all unrighteousness; he no longer imputes any sin to you; therefore I tell you on the authority of the Word of God that you are righteous. *Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous; shout for joy, all you upright in heart.*

Church: "To God be the Glory" first verse

Consecration

We Offer Praise, Thanks & Petition; God Equips Us

Pastor: With our hearts right before God, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to Him, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.

Church: SING “Doxology” (437)

“God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen” (234)

“Hark the Herald Angels Sing” (236)

“Joy to the World” (240)

Pastor: Jeremiah said, *Then I said, “I will not make mention of [God], nor speak any more in His name.” But His word was in my heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary of holding it back, and I could not.* Let us confess our faith together.

Church: I believe in God the Father Almighty; Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the virgin, Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into Hades. On the third day He rose again from the dead, ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Pastor: *Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him?*

Church: Our Father in heaven,

We confess that we do not know how to pray as we ought. We are conscious of our sins and limitations, and we know that You need no counsel from us on how to run the world.

Nevertheless we lift up these petitions before You as You commanded in the strong name of Jesus, and we are confident that You will accept them because You have accepted Him.

We ask that You grant...

- faithfulness to our marriages and cohesion to our families, that spouses would love and honor one another and parents would see their children as a gift from You, to be loved and nurtured rather than feared, neglected, and killed,
- prosperity and blessing to your faithful churches, that they might minister more effectively, and repentance to those that are unfaithful,
- protection and comfort to our persecuted brothers around the world,
- freedom and skill to our evangelists, missionaries and various ministries, that the proclamation of Your Word may not be hindered
- wisdom to our government officials, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life

- Your protection to the men and women of our armed forces, who daily risk their lives for ours,
- skill, kindness and integrity to our entrepreneurs and businessmen in all honorable labors, that our nation may prosper,
- comfort and healing to the sick, and repentance to those for whom sickness is Your loving discipline,
- aid and opportunity to the poor and care to orphans and widows,
- a creative and righteous vision to our media figures, filmmakers, writers, artists, scientists and other influencers of culture—and the cunning to communicate it effectively in a climate that is hostile to You,

...and that You would grant all these requests in such a way that Your name is lifted up and glorified and the world learns the difference between You and all their idols.

We ask these things in the strong name of Jesus Your Son, who taught us to pray that Your will would be done on earth as it is in heaven,

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Pastor: Hear the Word of the Lord.

READING: Gen. 1:24-31, Psalm 8, Acts 18:15

SERMON

Communion

God Feeds Us At His Table; We Eat and Drink

Pastor: Paul said, *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."*

Lord God, we would not presume to come to Your table trusting in our own righteousness, but in the sacrifice of Your Son, the Bread of Life, whose body was broken for us, which we now eat with thanksgiving. Amen.

Let's eat together.

Paul continues, *In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."*

Lord, we thank You for this cup of blessing, the blood of Christ shed for us, through which we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins, and become grafted in as partakers of the New Covenant. As we drink with thanksgiving, we anticipate the day when we will share this cup with Jesus at the coming of Your Kingdom. Amen.

Let's drink together.

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

Commission

God Sends Us Out Into the World; We Go

Pastor: You are a metaphor for God; sanctification is the process of becoming a better metaphor day by day, the better to represent God and with fewer dissimilarities. Love God's creation as He loves it. Care for it as He cares for it. Govern it in His stead, as His agent.

In other words, God has given you hands: use them in such a way that when someone reads "the Lord brought you out of Egypt with a strong hand" this is a positive and accurate association rather than a negative one, so that they cheer when they read those words rather than flinching.

And in doing this, remember that it is a process of growth, which means that you dare not be a perfectionist. Your efforts are received because of Christ; your sanctification is simply doing the next thing you can do, the thing God has put before you today, to offer Him a gift that is worthy of the reception He has already promised to give it.

Church: SING "All Creatures That on Earth Do Dwell" (139)

Pastor: *Jesus said, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.*