

WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday, January 5, 2020

And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”

Mark 2:17

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

ENTERING INTO WORSHIP

Greeting and Blessing*

Responsive Reading*

Psalm 136 (p. 835)

Hymn of Preparation*

Hymn 172

Let Us Love and Sing and Wonder

Let us love and sing and wonder, let us praise the Savior's name!
He has hushed the law's loud thunder, he has quenched Mount Sinai's flame;
He has washed us with his blood, he has brought us nigh to God.

Let us love the Lord who bought us, pitied us when enemies,
Called us by his grace, and taught us, gave us ears and gave us eyes:
He has washed us with his blood, he presents our souls to God.

Let us sing, though fierce temptation threaten hard to bear us down!
For the Lord, our strong salvation, holds in view the conqueror's crown:
He who washed us with his blood soon will bring us home to God.

Let us wonder; grace and justice join and point to mercy's store;
When through grace in Christ our trust is, justice smiles and asks no more:
He who washed us with his blood has secured our way to God.

Let us praise, and join the chorus of the saints enthroned on high;
Here they trusted him before us, now their praises fill the sky:
“You have washed us with your blood; you are worthy, Lamb of God!” Amen.

* *Congregation is requested to stand, if able.*

Congregational Confession of Sin

Leader: Heavenly Father, we do love and sing and wonder when we think about your grace to us in the Lord Jesus: that while we were still sinners, you loved us and sent your only Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

All: Yet we confess that we have sinned and done what is evil in your eyes. This past week we broke all of your commandments and failed to love you and our neighbors with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Leader: Forgive us, we pray, and grant us repentant hearts. Help us, O Lord, to lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and strengthen us to run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at your right hand.

All: All praise, honor, glory, and power be to you: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Private Confession of Our Sins

Assurance of Forgiveness

Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

ADORATION AND PRAISE

First Reading*

Exodus 20:1-17; Romans 13:8-10

Congregational Response (Hymn of the Month)

Hymn 103

Holy God, We Praise Your Name

Holy God, we praise your name;
Lord of all, we bow before you;
All on earth your scepter claim,
All in heav'n above adore you.
Infinite your vast domain,
Everlasting is your reign.

Hark, the loud celestial hymn
Angel choirs above are raising;
Cherubim and seraphim
In unceasing chorus praising,
Fill the heav'ns with sweet accord:
"Holy, holy, holy Lord."

Lo! the apostolic train
Join your sacred name to hallow;
Prophets swell the glad refrain,
And the white-robed martyrs follow;
And from morn to set of sun,
Through the church the song goes on.

Holy Father, Holy Son,
Holy Spirit, Three we name you;
While in essence only One,
Undivided God we claim you,
And adoring bend the knee,
While we sing this mystery. Amen.

Confession of Faith

The Westminster Shorter Catechism

Q. 101. *For what do we pray in the first petition?*

A. In the first petition, which is, "Hallowed be thy Name," we pray that God would enable us, and others, to glorify him in all the means by which he makes himself known, and that he would arrange all things to his own glory.

Q. 102. *For what do we pray in the second petition?*

A. In the second petition, which is, "Thy kingdom come," we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed, and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it, and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened.

Q. 103. *For what do we pray in the third petition?*

A. In the third petition, which is, "Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven," we pray that God, by his grace, would make us able and willing to know, obey, and submit to his will in all things, as the angels do in heaven.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Stewardship

Tithes and Offerings

Gloria Patri*

Hymn 734

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, amen.

Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come.
Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

Second Reading*

2 Corinthians 4

Congregational Response (Psalm of the Month [based on Psalm 136])

Hymn 3

Give to Our God Immortal Praise

Give to our God immortal praise;
Mercy and truth are all his ways:
Wonders of grace to God belong;
Repeat his mercies in your song.

Give to the Lord of lords renown;
The King of kings with glory crown:
His mercies ever shall endure,
When lords and kings are known no more.

He built the earth, he spread the sky,
And fixed the starry lights on high:
Wonders of grace to God belong;
Repeat his mercies in your song.

He fills the sun with morning light;
He bids the moon direct the night:
His mercies ever shall endure,
When suns and moons shall shine no more.

He sent his Son with pow'r to save
From guilt, and darkness, and the grave:
Wonders of grace to God belong;
Repeat his mercies in your song.

Through this vain world he guides our feet,
And leads us to his heav'nly seat:
His mercies ever shall endure,
When this vain world shall be no more. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer (based on Psalm 47)

Sermon

“He Must Increase, but I Must Decrease”
John 3:22-30

Pastor Ben Muresan

GOD'S BLESSING ON HIS PEOPLE

Hymn of Thanksgiving*

Hymn 660

O God Beyond All Praising

O God beyond all praising,
we worship you today
and sing the love amazing
that songs cannot repay;
for we can only wonder
at every gift you send,
at blessings without number
and mercies without end:
we lift our hearts before you
and wait upon your word,
we honor and adore you,
our great and mighty Lord.

Then hear, O gracious Savior,
accept the love we bring,
that we who know your favor
may serve you as our King;
and whether our tomorrows
be filled with good or ill,
we'll triumph through our sorrows
and rise to bless you still:
to marvel at your beauty
and glory in your ways,
and make a joyful duty
our sacrifice of praise. Amen.

LORD'S DAY DEVOTION AND QUESTIONS

The first question of the Westminster Shorter Catechism helps us frame the purpose of our existence: *What is the chief end of man?* Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever. We learn from this question and answer and from the Bible that this is not just a purpose we must fulfill, but we will only enjoy life when we make much of God. We were designed to worship God and to enjoy him forever; anything that falls short of that leads to frustration and ruin. John the Baptist had the correct view when he was confronted by some envious followers. John insisted that the focus needed to be taken off of him and placed on Christ; Christ needed to increase, but John needed to decrease.

Much of our culture is "me-centered." Through the use of social media, people are seeking attention and fame. The Christian life, however, requires a completely different perspective. We live to put the focus on Christ and not on ourselves. William Carey (born in 1761) was a missionary to India. As he lay dying, he turned to a friend and said, "When I am gone, don't talk about William Carey; talk about William Carey's Savior. I desire that Christ alone might be magnified."

1. For review, read John 3:1-21. How would you summarize what Jesus taught Nicodemus about regeneration? About God's love?
2. Read John 3:22-26. Why were John's disciples envious? Why is envy such a dangerous sin?
3. Read John 3:27-28. What does John the Baptist reveal by his response? According to John 1:19-34, what did John the Baptist understand his role to be in redemptive history?
4. Read John 3:29. What does John the Baptist teach his disciples through this illustration?
5. Read John 3:30. How do you think John's disciples reacted to these words? Why is this saying so contrary to our sinful nature?
6. In preparation for our next study through this gospel, read John 3:31-36. What do you think these verses teach in the context of chapter 3?