

WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday, January 20, 2019

For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear,
but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!”

Romans 8:15

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

ENTERING INTO WORSHIP

Greeting and Blessing*

Responsive Reading*

Psalm 113 (p. 826)

Hymn of Preparation*

“Be Thou My Vision” Hymn 642

Congregational Confession of Sin

Leader: Our God and Father, we thank you for the grace and mercy you have shown us through our Lord Jesus Christ. While we were still sinners, he died for us.

All: We confess that we have sinned against you by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

Leader: Forgive us, we pray, and grant us repentant hearts. Teach us to hate our sins, and cleanse us from our secret transgressions. Work in us by your Spirit, and enable us to do all that you teach us in your holy Word.

All: All glory be to you, O God, through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in unity with the Holy Spirit, one God, forever. Amen.

Private Confession of Our Sins

Assurance of Forgiveness

Hebrews 4:14-16

Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

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

ADORATION AND PRAISE

First Reading*

Zechariah 3

Congregational Response (Hymn of the Month) “I Am Not Skilled to Understand” Hymn 459

Confession of Faith

The Heidelberg Catechism, Lord’s Day 45

Q. 116. *Why do Christians need to pray?*

A. Because prayer is the most important part of the thankfulness God requires of us. And also because God will give his grace and Holy Spirit only to those who continually and with heartfelt longing ask God for these gifts and thank him for them.

Q. 117. *How does God want us to pray so that he will listen to us?*

A. First, we must pray from the heart to no other than the one true God, who has revealed himself to us in his Word, asking for everything he has commanded us to ask of him.

Second, we must fully recognize our need and misery, so that we humble ourselves in God’s majestic presence.

Third, we must rest on this unshakable foundation: even though we do not deserve it, God will surely listen to our prayer because of Christ our Lord, as he has promised us in his Word.

Q. 118. *What has God commanded us to ask of him?*

A. Everything we need, spiritually and physically, as embraced in the prayer Christ our Lord himself taught us.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Stewardship

Tithes and Offerings

Doxology*

Hymn 732

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. 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*

Romans 3

Congregational Response (Psalm of the Month [Ps. 95]) “Come, Sound His Praise” Hymn 118

Pastoral Prayer (based on Psalm 62:5-8)

Sermon

Pastor Ben Muresan

“The Surpassing Worth of Knowing Christ Jesus”
Philippians 3:4-9

GOD’S BLESSING ON HIS PEOPLE

Hymn of Thanksgiving*

“I Will Sing of My Redeemer” Hymn 650

Benediction*

Congregational Benediction Response*

(Hymn 115, verse 5)

Let all things their Creator bless, and worship him in humbleness, O praise him, alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son, and praise the Spirit, three in One,
O praise him, O praise him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Amen.

LORD’S DAY DEVOTION AND QUESTIONS

In his children’s book, *The Priest with Dirty Clothes*, R.C. Sproul tells a story based on Zechariah 3. The story is about Jonathan, a priest whose robes became dirty as he traveled to preach his first sermon to the royal household of a kingdom. Though he tried to clean his robes, they were stained and so he was ashamed to go before the king. Worse yet, Malus, the mean court magician, condemned Jonathan for his appearance. The turning point came when the prince exchanged robes with Jonathan, which allowed Jonathan to stand before the king, without shame and with great joy.

This is the great exchange that Martin Luther spoke about and that so many of the Reformers emphasized. Luther wrote that the doctrine of justification by faith alone is “the head and cornerstone of the Church, which alone begets, nourishes, builds, preserves, and protects the Church; without it the Church of God cannot subsist one hour.” John Calvin described this doctrine as “the principle hinge on which religion turns.” The amazing grace of the gospel is that our sins were imputed to Christ and his righteousness to us; he took our rags and gave us his royal robes. We can now, like Jonathan, stand before the King without shame and with great joy.

1. For review, read Philippians 3:1-3. What were the Judaizers teaching? Why did Paul use such strong language against them?
2. Read Philippians 3:4-6 and discuss the seven reasons Paul had for confidence in the flesh. Why did he give so much detail about his qualifications?
3. Read Philippians 3:7-8. What kind of “loss” did Paul experience upon his conversion? How does Acts 9:16 and 2 Corinthians 11:23-29 give us insight into what and why he suffered?
4. What is the difference between the righteousness that comes from the law and the righteousness that comes through faith in Christ? (Philippians 3:9)
5. Read the Westminster Confession of Faith Ch. 11 (On Justification). What is the role of Christ’s works in our justification? How is our justification tied to our election? Were believers in the Old Testament saved by their keeping of the law or by grace?
6. In preparation for next week, read through Philippians 3:10-11 and discuss the saying: “Christianity is not a religion, it’s a relationship.” Is that a good way to describe our faith?

