



Ecclesiastes: A Critic's Look at Life Without God

July 14, 2019

Order of Worship

Sunday Gathering 10:30 a.m.
@ Arctic Rec. Center
4855 Arctic Blvd. Anchorage, AK 99503
www.kaleoalaska.org

FOR REFLECTION

In a way I quite understand why some people are put off by Theology. I remember once when I had been giving a talk to the R.A.F., an old, hard-bitten officer got up and said, 'I've no use for all that stuff. But, mind you, I'm a religious man too. I know there's a God. I've felt Him: out alone in the desert at night: the tremendous mystery. And that's just why I don't believe all your neat little dogmas and formulas about Him. To anyone who's met the real thing they all seem so petty and pedantic and unreal!'

Now in a sense I quite agreed with that man. I think he had probably had a real experience of God in the desert. And when he turned from that experience to the Christian creeds, I think he really was turning from something real to something less real. In the same way, if a man has once looked at the Atlantic from the beach, and then goes and looks at a map of the Atlantic, he also will be turning from something real to something less real: turning from real waves to a bit of coloured paper. But here comes the point. The map is admittedly only coloured paper, but there are two things you have to remember about it. In the first place, it is based on what hundreds and thousands of people have found out by sailing the real Atlantic. In that way it has behind it masses of experience just as real as the one you could have from the beach; only, while yours would be a single glimpse, the map fits all those different experiences together. In the second place, if you want to go anywhere, the map is absolutely necessary. As long as you are content with walks on the beach, your own glimpses are far more fun than looking at a map. But the map is going to be more use than walks on the beach if you want to get to America.

Now, Theology is like the map. Merely learning and thinking about the Christian doctrines, if you stop there, is less real and less exciting than the sort of thing my friend got in the desert. Doctrines are not God: they are only a kind of map. But that map is based on the experience of hundreds of people who really were in touch with God—experiences compared with which any thrills or pious feelings you and I are likely to get on our own are very elementary and very confused. And secondly, if you want to get any further, you must use the map. You see, what happened to that man in the desert may have been real, and was certainly exciting, but nothing comes of it. It leads nowhere. There is nothing to do about it. In fact, that is just why a vague religion—all about feeling God in nature, and so on—is so attractive. It is all thrills and no work: like watching the waves from the beach. But you will not get to Newfoundland by studying the Atlantic that way, and you will not get eternal life by simply feeling the presence of God in flowers or music. Neither will you get anywhere by looking at maps without going to sea. Nor will you be very safe if you go to sea without a map. In other words, Theology is practical: especially now. In the old days, when there was less education and discussion, perhaps it was possible to get on with a very few simple ideas about God. But it is not so now. Everyone reads, everyone hears things discussed. Consequently, if you do not listen to Theology, that will not mean that you have no ideas about God. It will mean that you have a lot of wrong ones—bad, muddled, out-of-date ideas. For a great many of the ideas about God which are trotted out as novelties today are simply the ones which real Theologians tried centuries ago and rejected. To believe in the popular religion of modern England is retrogression—like believing the earth is flat.

~ C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity



Welcome

We are glad you're here! We hope you find this time to be beneficial, informative, and meaningful.
May the LORD bless you.

PRELUDE

Good morning! Please use this time of instrumental music to settle in and prepare for worship.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 119:5-7

Oh that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes! ***Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments. I will praise you with an upright heart, when I learn your righteous rules.***

PRAYER & SONGS

CONFESSION

Ephesians 2:1-3

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ***in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience - among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.***
(Let us reflect on our need for a Savior)

Please silence all phones and electronic devices for the duration of the worship service.

Text in bold italics is read aloud together by the entire congregation.

Call To Worship:
Our worship begins each week with a call to worship. We are gathered here today because God, our Creator, desires to have a relationship with us. Whether we realize it or not, He is the one calling us to himself—today and every day. “Lectio Sacra” means “sacred reading.” It has been the practice of the church for thousands of years to have portions of the Bible read during worship services. The assumption behind this practice is that we are people who need to be shaped by all of God’s word.

Confession & Assurance
Confession of sin happens within the context of relationship, both with God and each other. We confess together, in community, before a gracious God who has given us himself. Confession both acknowledges our need for mercy and celebrates its abundance in Christ.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
(1 John 1:9)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Ephesians 2:4-6

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ***even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ-by grace you have been saved-and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus...***

NEW CITY CATECHISM Q28

What happens after death to those not united to Christ by faith? ***They will be cast out from the presence of God, into hell, to be justly punished, forever.***

John 3:16–18, 36

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. . . . Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

newcitycatechism.com

SONGS

ANNOUNCEMENTS & SENDING OF CHILDREN

Faith & Repentance

...as it is written:
None is righteous, no, not one... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God... For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord... if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved... For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved... For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life... And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.
(Romans 3:10, 23; 6:23; 10:9-10, 13. John 3:16. Acts 4:12.)

New City Catechism

is a joint adult and children's catechism, adapted by Timothy Keller and Sam Shammas from the Reformation catechisms. One question and answer for each week of the year. Adults and children are asked the same questions. ***The children's answer is shortened and appears in blue. See the online app.***

SCRIPTURE

Ecclesiastes 2:12-26

SERMON

“The vanity of finding meaning in effort.”
Patrick Matthew, Kaleo Church Elder

COMMUNION

1 Corinthians 11:23-26
For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

SONGS OF RESPONSE

BLESSING & SENDING

Psalm 119:73-74
Your hands have made and fashioned me; give me understanding that I may learn your commandments. Those who fear you shall see me and rejoice, because I have hoped in your word.
Amen.

Prayer of Belief
Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever before believed, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

Communion
also called the Lord's Supper is the family meal of Christians. We invite all followers of Jesus Christ who acknowledge their sins against God and their neighbors and confess their need for the grace of Christ to partake of this meal. Please also use this as a time of reflection, application, and prayer.

Baptism
If you are a Christian and haven't been baptized, please talk with an elder. We would be honored to baptize you.

Seeking
We hope this time has been helpful to you as you consider your relationship with Jesus Christ and with his people, the church. Our pastors and elders are available for any questions you might have.

NOTES

(Draw a picture as you listen to the sermon)

What is the sermon about?

What did you learn about God and about yourself in the sermon?

How does what you have learned today make you feel?

Is there something you could do about the truth you have learned?

What are you thankful for today? Lift your thanks to the LORD.

Pray and talk to God about how you feel and what you have learned.



KALEO
CONNECT

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

I would like to...

- ☐ Meet with a pastor
- ☐ Be baptized
- ☐ Find a K-Group (small group)
- ☐ Learn more about serving
- ☐ Join this church family

I'm a...

- ☐ First time guest
- ☐ Returning guest
- ☐ Regular attendee

Please drop this card in the offering boxes located on the back tables.

NOTE OR PRAYER REQUEST

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CLOTHING DRIVE FOR THE HOMELESS

Now through July 26 - UAA student organized clothing drive for the homeless. Please drop off any adult sized, gently used, clothing to: The Arctic Rec. Center/Kaleo Church
9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday, Wednesday-Friday.
10:30 - 8 p.m. on Sunday's.
4855 Arctic Blvd. 99503.
Contact Ginger Price (907)726-7479.

SUMMER TIME KALEO KIDS

We need help staffing our classes! If you are able to help out this summer please go to [**kaleoalaska.org**](http://kaleoalaska.org) and fill out the volunteer form on our home page at the "Serve" link.

WOMEN'S RETREAT SAVE THE DATE

November 1-2: More information TBA.

READ THROUGH THE BIBLE THIS YEAR

Join us this year as we read through the Bible using the Discipleship Journal Plan. By reading from four separate places in the Scriptures every day, you will get a better grasp of the unity of the Scriptures. And you can begin at any point of the year. Printed copies are available on the back tables and a link to a PDF is available at [**kaleoalaska.org**](http://kaleoalaska.org). It is also available on the YouVersion Bible app as one of their reading plans.