

Preparing for Worship

Notes from Rodney Barbour

Sunday February 19, 2012

Worship Theme: Pastor Alan writes: *There are many ways to look at life, and Jesus sits down to teach about that to his disciples. The result is what we call the beatitudes—taken from the first word in a number of intriguing teachings Jesus offers up to his disciples...to us. Between now and Easter, we're going to check them out, and see what they suggest...and whether they might not lead to a "blessed life."*

Preparation for Worship Inspired by the Psalms, the Choir sings these words to focus our attention on God: *Oh shout, shout to God, and call His name aloud. For He is our Lord and our Maker. He made the earth and gave the sea its birth: Oh shout, shout to God all ye people! Oh sing, sing to God, sing praises aloud, Oh sing to the Lord our Maker. The God above is the God of love, Oh sing, sing to God, all ye people! Oh pray, pray to God, seek help from Him above, from the One whose name is glorious. He saved you and me: Come to Him on bended Knee; Oh pray, pray to God, all ye people!*

Call to Worship In Psalm 22:22-25 we read: *I will praise you to all; I will stand up before the congregation and testify of the wonderful things you have done. Praise the Lord, each one of you who fear him. Each of you must fear and reverence his name. Let all Israel sing his praises for he has not despised my cries of deep despair; he has not turned and walked away. When I cried to him, he heard and came. Yes, I will stand and praise you before all the people. I will publicly fulfill my vows in the presence of all who reverence your name. The poor shall eat and be satisfied; all who seek the Lord shall find him and shall praise his name. Their hearts shall rejoice with everlasting joy. The whole earth shall see it and return to the Lord; the people of every nation shall worship him.*

Leader: If you are spiritually weary and in search of rest, if you are mourning and you long for comfort, if you are struggling and you desire victory, if you recognize that you are a sinner and need a Savior, God welcomes you here in the name of Christ.

People: In the midst of the congregation, we will praise you.

Leader: Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous, and give thanks to God's holy name!

People: We will extol you, our God and King, and bless your name forever and ever. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; God's greatness is unsearchable.

Song of Praise "How Great Thou Art" is one of the very few hymns where we sing directly to God, not just about God! It reminds us of God's unlimited power and love in creation and redemption. Take time to think once again about the unfathomable greatness of God and His wonderful redeeming love for each of us.

Vs1

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder consider all the worlds thy hands have made.

I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder, thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee: how great thou art, how great thou art!

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee: how great thou art, how great thou art!

Vs2

When through the woods and forest glades I wander and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees,

When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur, and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze.

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee: how great thou art, how great thou art!

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee: how great thou art, how great thou art!

Vs3

And when I think that God, his Son not sparing, sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,

That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing, he bled and died to take away my sin. Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee: how great thou art, how great thou art!

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee: how great thou art, how great thou art!

Vs4

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!

Then I shall bow in humble adoration, and there proclaim, "My God, how great thou art."

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee: how great thou art, how great thou art!

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee: how great thou art, how great thou art!

Call to Confession In today's worship, Pastor Landes will introduce us to a series of sermons on the beatitudes. These words of confession are reflective of some of this language found in the Beatitudes.

Leader: God blesses those who realize their need for him, for the kingdom of heaven is given to them. But we have been proud is spirit, inflated with pride in our own self-sufficiency. We have forgotten how needy we are.

People: Lord, have mercy upon us in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full redemption. He himself will redeem his people from all their sins.

People: In Jesus Christ our sins are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

From the Word Before Sunday be sure to read: Matthew 5:1-13. The Beatitudes are a standard of conduct for all believers. They contrast kingdom values and worldly values. They show how the Old Testament expectations will be fulfilled in the new kingdom. They describe what we should be like as Christ's followers. With Jesus' announcement that the Kingdom was near, people were naturally asking, "how do I qualify to be in God's Kingdom?" Jesus said they must live differently than their leaders had been telling them. They must seek benefits and rewards far different from those the Pharisees and Sadducees were pushing. Many people seek happiness, but it easily fades. Fewer seek God's joy, which never fades. Do our attitudes mirror the world's selfishness, pride, and lust for power or do they reflect the ideal to which Jesus called us?

Hymn of Response Jesus calls us, strengthens us, and equips us to go into the world and minister to those who are poor, to those who mourn, to those who are lost. As we leave this time of worship and go into the world, be empowered by Jesus' words: "I will be with you always, to the very end of the age!"

Vs1

***Christ for the world! we sing; the world to Christ we bring with loving zeal
The poor and them that mourn, the faint and overborne, sin-sick and
sorrow-worn, for Christ to heal.***

Vs2

***Christ for the world! we sing; the world to Christ we bring with fervent
prayer
The wayward and the lost, by restless passions tossed, redeemed at
countless cost from dark despair.***

Vs3

***Christ for the world! we sing; the world to Christ we bring with one accord
With us the work to share, with us reproach to dare, with us the cross to
bear, for Christ our Lord.***

Vs4

***Christ for the world! we sing; the world to Christ we bring with joyful song
The newborn souls whose days, reclaimed from error's ways, inspired with
hope and praise, to Christ belong.***

See you in worship this Sunday!