

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

Notes from Rodney L. Barbour

February 21, 2010

Theme: Pastor Alan writes: *Through the centuries, the Lord's Prayer has stood as a secure lighthouse in the midst of turbulent times, and a rock upon which we can build our lives. Simple enough for a child to memorize, it is profound enough to build one's life philosophy around. During the six weeks leading up and concluding the Sunday following Easter, we'll look at each of six petitions in depth to learn what we can about our Lord's Prayer.*

Preparation for Worship: Psalm 148 says: young men and women together, old men and children! Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted! It is good to have our children in the Cherub Choir call us to worship today, and for the children in Joyful Noise to offer a song of praise in the service as well!

Call to Worship: Pastor Alan's teaching today is from the first two words of The Lord's Prayer: "Our Father". This Call to Worship focuses on several attributes of God the Father for which we offer our praise and adoration.

Leader: Father in heaven, you are Lord of all. Your will is perfect, and you provide generously for all of your creatures.

People: You cleanse us from all our sins. You lead us in paths that are safe and right.

Leader: Your kingdom is to be desired above all else; your power is the greatest force in the universe; your glory radiates from every corner of creation.

People: We praise and adore you, Heavenly Father, for all that you are and for the amazing grace and forgiveness you have extended to us.

Hymn of Praise: Our opening congregational hymn continues a listing of attributes as well as heartfelt praise. As you sing, think of your life this week. Have you felt ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven? Have you felt God's favor in distress? Is the image of God as Father one which is easy for you to relate to? Is there any grace or forgiveness which you have or which you need to experience? The last verse reminds us as we sing we join with God's heavenly angel choir who are continuously praising Him.

Vs1

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven, to his feet your tribute bring;
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven, evermore his praises sing.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise the everlasting King!

Vs2

Praise Him for his grace and favor to all people in distress.
Praise him, still the same forever, slow to chide and swift to bless.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Glorious in his faithfulness!

Vs3

Father-like, he tends and spares us; all our hopes and fears he knows.
In his hands he gently bears us, rescues us from all our foes.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Widely as his mercy flows!

Vs4

Angels, help us to adore him, you behold him face to face.

Sun and moon bow down before him; all who dwell in time and space.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise with us the God of grace!

Confession: Seeing how good God is can only lead us to seeing how much we are wrapped up and affected by sin. Use this time to corporately and then privately confess what the Spirit would lead you to bring to God today.

Leader: God of peace, Father of Mercy, God of all comfort: we confess before you the evil of our hearts. We acknowledge that we are too inclined toward anger, jealousy, and revenge, to ambition and pride, which often give rise to discord and bitter feelings between others and us. Too often have we thus both offended and grieved you.

People: Forgive us this sin and permit us to partake of the blessing you have promised the peacemakers, who shall be called the children of God. Though Jesus Christ, our Lord, hear our confessions.

Assurance of Pardon: The Assurance of Pardon reminds us that Christ has come to earth to bring healing and restoration to each person through his blood on the cross. Feel comforted by these words.

Leader: Hear the good news! Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ, and Christ died for us, Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for us. Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old life has gone; a new life has begun. Know that you are forgiven, and be at peace.

People: Thanks be to God!

A quick note: Sometimes, a time of corporate confession is simply too short or not exactly what you need to experience the healing of God's grace. If today's words prompt you to feel a need to go deeper, please speak to our Pastor, or one of the Staff Members or Elders for additional assistance.

Scripture/Sermon Be sure to read Luke 11:1-4 before coming to worship today. Notice the order of Jesus' words. First he praises God; then he makes his requests. Praising God first puts us in the right frame of mind to tell him about our needs. Too often our prayers are more like shopping lists than conversations.

Offertory: The choir responds to "Our Father" and His great love for us by singing "*How Deep the Father's Love for Us*" which reminds us of what Jesus has accomplished on our behalf. Here are some of the words: "*How deep the Father's love for us, how vast beyond all measure, that He should give His only Son to make a wretch His treasure...I will not boast in anything, no gifts, no pow'r, no wisdom; but I will boast in Jesus Christ, His death and resurrection.*"

Song of Response: We prepare to go into the world and be witnesses as we sing one final song today, "*Great is Thy Faithfulness*". Here are a couple of lines:

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father, There is no shadow of turning with thee;
Thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not; as thou hast been thou forever wilt be.
Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed thy hand hath provided great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

See you in Worship this Sunday! Rodney Barbour