

Preparing for Worship

Notes from Rodney Barbour

Sunday June 18, 2017

Theme: *Timeless---Old Testament Stories for Today---* "Be strong and courageous; do not be afraid or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Preparation for Worship: Today we discuss Joshua—a brilliant military leader and a strong spiritual influence. The key to his success was his submission to God. When God spoke, Joshua listened and obeyed. Joshua's obedience served as a model for the Israelite nations. As a result, Israel remained faithful to God throughout Joshua's lifetime. Joshua underscored the importance of obedience to God in his final message to the people "Be very careful to keep on loving the Lord...and decide today whom you will obey...but as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord." As we remember Joshua, it would be a perfect time to make a fresh commitment to obey God and follow him wherever he leads and whatever it costs. And, as our song suggests, know that his eye is on you, watching, guiding and caring for you.

*Why should I feel discouraged, Why should the shadows come,
Why should my heart be lonely, And long for heaven, heaven
and home, When, when Jesus is my portion, My constant
Friend is He; Oh, his eye is on the sparrow, and I know He
watches me!*

Call to Worship Philippians 4:13 *I can do all things through Christ you strengthens me.* The Apostle Paul knew how to be content whether he had much or little. The secret was Christ's power in his life. Do you have great needs, are you discontented because you don't have what you want? Learn to rely on God's promises and Christ's power to help you be content. He will supply all your needs in a way that he knows is best for you. And, your focus can be on worship---praise, thanksgiving, adoration!

Leader: Thank you Lord, that you are always moving forward--- never static, always dynamic. You are the constant one. Your servants come and go, but you are always with us.

People: We praise you that even for us today, your awesome promise holds true: "As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Leader: Almighty God, again and again you say: "Be strong and courageous." You remind us that fear of anything or anyone but you is unfit for us. You and you alone are to be feared, and your word is the compass that will guide us into the way of life.

People: We thank you for the courage we draw from your mighty presence and for the wisdom and direction your word provides. Apart from you, we can do nothing, but we can do everything through Christ who gives us strength.

Hymn of Praise: This is a hymn of praise to the Trinity! We praise God for his creation, mercy, for giving us life and planning for our restoration from sin. We praise Jesus for being our Savior, for offering himself and a sacrifice for our sins, for his grace and love. We praise the Holy Spirit for interpreting and empowering God's word in our lives, for helping us bond with God, for protecting and guiding us.

Vs1

**Sing praise to the Father, Creator and King,
whose mercy has taught us a new song to sing;
Who made us, and loved us tho' rebels and lost,
And planned our redemption at infinite cost.**

Chorus

**Bless the Lord, bless the Lord, bless the Lord, O my soul,
For the grace that redeems, for the love that makes whole;
O come and adore him, his glories proclaim,
And worship before him---the Lord is his name!**

Vs2

Sing praise to the Savior, Redeemer and Friend,

**For grace past all telling, for love without end;
Who stripped off his glory, put on mortal sin,
And died in our stead, full atonement to win. *(Chorus)***

Vs3

**Sing praise to the Spirit, the gift of God's love,
Who quickens our hearts with new life from above,
Who woos us, subdues us, and seals us his own,
And faultless presents us before the White Throne. *(Chorus)***

Vs4

**Sing praise to the Father, sing praise to the Son,
Sing praise to the Spirit, great God Three in One;
The God of salvation, of glory, of grace,
Who wrought our redemption---my soul, sing his praise!
*(Chorus)***

Confessing Sin: As stated above in the hymn, we are grateful for the presence of the Holy Spirit who empowers God's word in our lives, which helps (convicts) us be aware of the sin in our lives when we fall from doing what God would have us do. Allow the Holy Spirit to lead you into confession today.

Leader: Generous God, you send us the Spirit of courage, but we have been afraid. You send us the Spirit of truth, but we cling to our illusions. You send us the Spirit of healing, but we cannot let go of our hurts.

**People: Holy Spirit of forgiveness, come to us again;
shake our hearts, set our souls on fire with your love;
send us out into the world rejoicing in your power. We
hold out to you all our particular burdens of guilt and
sin, and we ask for your help to live the way of your
justice and love.**

Assurance of Pardon These words are from Ezekiel 36. God promised to restore Israel not only physically, but spiritually, giving them a new heart for following him. To accomplish this, God would put his Spirit within them. The new covenant is promised ultimately to be fulfilled in Jesus Christ. No matter how impure your life is, God offers you a fresh start. You can have your sins washed away, receive

a new heart for God, and have his Spirit within you—if you accept God’s promise.

Leader: I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees. You will be my people, and I will be your God.”

People: In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, we are united with Christ and given a new spirit. Let us live in the joy and peace of this assurance.

Scripture/Sermon: Before Sunday, take time to read Joshua 1:1-9. Activities in our lives can be a challenge, without God some things can be frightening. With God they can be a great adventure. Just as God assured Joshua he would be with him, he is with us as we face our daily challenges. We may not conquer nations, but every day we face situations, difficult people, and temptations. However, God promises that he will never abandon us or fail to help us, regardless of how we feel. By asking God to direct us, as Joshua did, we too can conquer many of life’s challenges.

Offering Song: The Crestview Ringers offering is “Amazing Grace”. Read Ephesians 2: 4-7. *Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions---it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.* Here is a prayer: *While I was a sinner, lost, and hopeless, without purpose or value, you save me! I did nothing to earn this salvation. It was only by your power and for your pleasure that you save me. You crafted me into a new creation full of divine purpose and value. I have been transformed from death to life, for hopelessness to purposefulness, from ashes to beauty, and all by the power and prerogative of your grace. What can I do in response but*

to thank you for living in me and to seek with all my heart to live in you.

Final Song: This traditional hymn from Isaiah picks up themes from Joshua 1:1-19 *"I will be with you...I will not leave you or forsake you...Be strong and courageous...be careful to do according to all the law that Moses commanded you...this book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night...be careful to do according to all that is written in it...do not be frightened and do not be dismayed...for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go"*.

Vs1

**How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say than to you he hath said,
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?**

Vs2

**Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.**

Vs 4

**When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.**

Vs5

**The soul that on Jesus still leans for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake!**

See you in Worship this Sunday!