

WORSHIP PREPARATION NOTES

Rodney Barbour

Sunday August 13, 2017

Topic: Ecclesiastes 1:1-11. Timeless: Old Testament Stories for Today--
Solomon

Prelude Music: Jesu, Joy of Our Desiring comes from JS Bach expressing a desire for a "close friend" relationship with Jesus while recognizing the Holy Trinity through musical symbolism. Listen for three beats per measure as well as a triplet figuration (three notes) on each of the three beats. Each beat of this song speaks praise to Father, Son, Spirit. Today, Ben Simpson plays this beloved song on his oboe.

Jesu, joy of our desiring, holy wisdom, love most bright; drawn by thee, our souls aspiring soar to uncreated light. Word of God, our flesh that fashioned, with the fire of life impassioned, striving still to truth unknown, soaring, dying round thy throne.

Call to Worship While these words come from Isaiah 43, they feel related to today's lesson from Ecclesiastes 1:1-11. Here's a prayer which may help you prepare for worship: *Lord, please open my eyes of faith. Help me to see the new things you are doing. Help me to let go of my past successes as well as my failures. Please do not allow me to lean on my own strength, or to use my weakness as an excuse, but help me to be fully dependent on you for this day, this hour, this moment. You can make a way through the overwhelming floods, and you can make a way through the desolate places as well. So I come to you today, Father, and I ask you to quench the thirst in my soul. Give me a drink from the spring of living water, and fill my heart, with praise. Amen.*

Leader: "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland."

People: Almighty God, apart from you there is nothing new. There is no refreshment. All things are meaningless. We are

discontented with what we have and dissatisfied with what we get. We confess our appetites and our emptiness, our frailty and our futility, our faithlessness and our failures.

Leader: But your compassions never fail. They are new every morning.

People: Open our eyes to see the new things you are doing today. Help us to forget the former things and press on toward the goal so that we may live a new life and serve in the new way of the Spirit.

Hymn of Praise Themes from Ecclesiastes 1 are found in this hymn. It's a prayer of thanks for our "heritage" and a prayer for God's continued guidance as we move towards the coming of Christ again. Jesus Christ is the one who redeems us from the "vanity" of Ecc. 1:2. Jesus is the Son of God, but nonetheless experienced the vanity of the world so He could free us from it. We are thankful that God has come in Christ to show us what life is all about and to deliver us from the quicksand of meaninglessness.

Vs1

**God of our fathers, whose almighty hand
Leads forth in beauty all the starry band
Of shining worlds in splendor through the skies,
Our grateful songs before thy throne arise.**

Vs2

**Thy love divine hath led us in the past;
In this free land by thee our lot is cast;
Be thou our ruler, Guardian, Guide and Stay,
Thy Word our law, thy paths our chosen way.**

Vs3

**From war's alarms, from deadly pestilence,
Be thy strong arm our ever sure defense;
Thy true religion in our hearts increase,
Thy bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.**

Vs4

**Refresh thy people on their toilsome way;
Lead us from night to never ending day;
Fill all our lives with love and grace divine;
And glory, laud, and praise be ever thine.**

Call to Confession We can easily slip into being delighted in what we have done, i.e. my achievements, my victories, my possessions, my family, my..my..my..my... "But what is this all worth apart from You, Holy God?" Unless God works through us, our labors will be empty. Unless we abide in God, we can do nothing that matters. Unless we do the Lord's bidding, our lives will never bear fruit that will last. Today, thinking of Ecclesiastes 1, we confess our sin, and ask for the Lord's help to live by his grace and for his glory. We ask for help to devote our lives to doing his will, with the result of treasures in heaven, treasures that will last for eternity.

Leader: It is good to confess and repent when we do wrong as God readily offers forgiveness which allows us to grow closer to him. Let us present our hearts to God as we confess our sin before him. Ask the Holy Spirit to search our hearts and reveal sin.

People: Lord remove our destructive habits and replace them with God-focused ones. (silence)

Leader: Holy Spirit, search our hearts and reveal selfishness.

People: Lord, move our hearts from self-focused to others-focused. (silence)

Leader: Holy Spirit, search our hearts and reveal sickness.

People: Lord, move our focus from physical ailments to our spiritual health. (silence)

Leader: Holy Spirit, search our hearts and reveal stress.

People: Lord, move our anxiety over things we can't control to focusing and trusting you to be in control! (silence)

Assurance of Pardon Jesus Christ binds new flesh to wounded flesh, he mends muscle split by sin's swift blade. Jesus' sacrifice for us has won this

prize. May we accept his forgiveness and grace and wear healing's holy scars as medals for the world to see---emblems of his victory!

Leader: Finish then, your new creation. Pure and spotless let us be. Let us see Thy great salvation, perfectly restored in Thee.

People: Thanks be to you, God of the new creation! You forgive our sins, and give us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

Scripture-Sermon: Read Ecclesiastes 1:1-11 ***What profit has one from all his labor in which he toils under the sun?"***

Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes after he had tried everything and found that nothing apart from God made him happy. Solomon's goal was to show that earthly possessions and accomplishments are ultimately futile. Only the pursuit of God brings real satisfaction. We should include him in all we say, think and do.

Offertory: ROCK MUSIC AT CRESTVIEW!????? Ha-Ha, the Men's ensemble reminds us that God is our Rock—the solid foundation of our faith! Here's some bible verses about this, followed by the text of the anthem.

GOD as my fortress

1. Psalm 18:1-3 I love you, Lord; you are my strength. The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my savior; my God is my rock, in whom I find protection. He is my shield, the power that saves me, and my place of safety. I called on the Lord, who is worthy of praise, and he saved me from my enemies.

2. 2 Samuel 22:2 He said: "The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation. He is my stronghold, my refuge and my savior— from violent people you save me.

3. Psalm 71:3 Be my rock of refuge, to which I can always go; give the command to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress.

4. Psalm 62:7-8 My honor and salvation come from God. He is my mighty rock and my protection. People, trust God all the time. Tell him all your problems, because God is our protection.

5. Psalm 31:3-4 Yes, you are my Rock and my protection. For the good of your name, lead me and guide me. Save me from the traps my enemy has set. You are my place of safety.

6. Psalm 144:1-3 Of David. Praise be to the LORD my Rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle. He is my loving God and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield, in whom I take refuge, who subdues peoples under me. LORD, what are human beings that you care for them, mere mortals that you think of them?

No rock like God.

7. Deuteronomy 32:4 He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.

8. 1 Samuel 2:2 There is no holy God like the Lord. There is no God but you. There is no Rock like our God.

9. Deuteronomy 32:31 For their rock is not like our Rock, as even our enemies concede.

10. Psalm 18:31 For who is God besides the LORD? And who is the Rock except our God?

Praising and calling on the Lord

11. Psalm 18:46 The LORD lives! Praise to my Rock! May the God of my salvation be exalted!

12. Psalm 28:1-2 To you, LORD, I call; you are my Rock, do not turn a deaf ear to me. For if you remain silent, I will be like those who go down to the pit. Hear my cry for mercy as I call to you for help, as I lift up my hands toward your Most Holy Place.

13. Psalm 31:2 Turn your ear to me, come quickly to my rescue; be my rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me.

14. 2 Samuel 22:47 "The LORD lives! Praise be to my Rock! Exalted be my God, the Rock, my Savior!

15. Psalm 89:26 He will call out to me, 'You are my Father, my God, the Rock my Savior.'

Chorus: My God is a rock in a weary land, a weary land, a weary land. My God is a rock in a weary land, a shelter in a time of storm. (repeat chorus). Now stop and let me tell you 'bout chapter one, the Lord God's work has just begun. Now stop and let me tell you 'bout chapter two, the Lord's gonna keep his eye on you. Chorus: My God is a rock in a weary land, a weary land, a weary land. My God is a rock in a weary land, a shelter in a time of storm. (repeat chorus). Now stop and let me tell you 'bout chapter three, the Lord he died on Calvary. Now stop and let me tell you 'bout chapter four, the Lord he visit among the poor. Chorus: My God is a rock in a weary land, a weary land, a weary land. My God is a rock in a weary land, a shelter in a time of storm...weary, weary, weary, land. God is a rock (weary), God is a rock (weary) in a weary land...Chorus: My God is a rock in a weary land, a weary land, a weary land. My God is a rock in a weary land, a shelter in a time of storm.

Song of Response: These words from Psalm 90 echo in Ecclesiastes 1. King Solomon has reminded us today, that if we are chasing after happiness, we will never find it. If we are seeking after God, we will find endless joy, past, present and eternal future.

Vs1

**O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home!**

Vs3

Before the hills in order stood, or earth received her frame,

From everlasting thou art God, to endless years the same.

Vs4

**A thousand ages in thy sight are like an evening gone;
Short as the watch that ends the night, before the rising sun.**

Vs6

**O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Be thou our guide while life shall last, and our eternal home!**

See You in Worship This Sunday