

WORSHIP PREPARATION NOTES

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Sunday September 24, 2017

Topic: Distinct: Living Above the Norm---My Relationships--

Matthew 5:27-33

Preparation and Call to Worship Today our topic is relationships. Our personal relationship with God should be the model for our earthly relationships. Both today's opening music and call to worship (*based on Psalm 8*) help us reflect on our relationship with God. Majesty combined with intimacy characterizes our relationship with God. On one hand, we can relate to Isaiah, who witnessed the holiness of God: "Woe to me!" he cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty" (Isaiah 6:5) On the other hand, God wants us to approach his throne with confidence so that we may receive mercy and find grace (Hebrews 4:16). That the Sovereign of the Universe desires a close, personal relationship with me is almost beyond comprehension. He is my heavenly Father, and I am his child.

When I gaze into the night sky and see the work of Your fingers. The moon and stars suspended in space. But what is man that you are mindful of him? You have given man a crown of glory and honor and have made him a little lower than the angels. You have put him in charge of all creation. The beasts of the field, the birds of the air, the fish of the sea. Oh, what is man, oh, what is man that you are mindful of him? O Lord, our God the majesty and glory of your name transcends the earth and fills the heavens. O Lord, our God little children praise Him perfectly and so would we, and so would we. Alleluia, alleluia the majesty and glory of your name. Alleluia, alleluia the majesty and glory of Your Name. Alleluia!

Leader: O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

People: Everything we see reminds us of your power and glory because you made everything out of nothing.

Leader: You made the sun and the moon, the land and the sea, the birds and the fish and all the animals, and you made us to love you and take care of your creation.

People: We praise you for all your gifts and for helping us take care of your world. Thank you for your creativity and your love. O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Hymn of Praise: Today's hymn reminds us of the common blessings of life that many of us often take for granted---the beauties of nature, our parents, family, friends, church. The lyrics direct our "grateful praise" to God himself, the giver of every good and perfect gift.

Vs. 1

**For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth over and around us lies;
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.**

Vs. 3

**For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's delight,
for the mystic harmony, linking sense to sound and sight;
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.**

Vs. 4

**For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth and friends above, for all gentle thoughts and
mild;**

Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.

Vs. 6

**For thyself, best Gift Divine, to the world so freely given,
for that great, great love of thine, peace on earth, and joy in
heaven:**

Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.

Confession and Pardon: Words from Samuel Johnson—*Of him that hopes to be forgiven it is indispensably required that he forgive. It is therefore superfluous to urge any other motive. On this great duty eternity*

is suspended; and to him that refuses to practice it, the throne of mercy is inaccessible, and the Savior of the world has been born in vain.

(unison) **Lord, I confess there are broken relationships impeding my progress in my walk with you. Forgive me for the times I have hurt others. Forgive me for allowing wounds to fester and for holding hatred and vindictiveness in my heart. Jesus taught if I hate my brother in my heart I might as well be a murderer. Strengthen me to go ---today--to make peace with those I have wronged. Then bring me back, renewed and rejoicing, to worship you without hindrance.**

Assurance of Pardon Words from Gloria Gaither: ***"I then shall live as one who's been forgiven; I'll walk with joy to know my debts are paid. I know my name is clear before my Father: I am his child, and I am not afraid. So greatly pardoned, I'll forgive another; the law of love I gladly will obey."***

Leader: Jesus loved sinners while they were sinning against him. Jesus prayed for sinners while they were sinning against him. Jesus gave his life for sinners while they were sinning against him. This was the way of his Father. Lord, let this be our way too.

People: We have received God's mercy in Jesus Christ. In Jesus, we are forgiven, redeemed, and made to be a community united in faith. Thanks be to God.

Scripture and Sermon: Before Sunday, be sure to read: Matthew 5:27-32. We sometimes tolerate sins in our lives which will eventually destroy us. It is better to experience the pain of removal (getting rid of a bad habit or something we treasure, for instance) than to allow the sin to bring judgment and condemnation. Examine your life for anything that causes you to sin, and take actions to remove it.

Song of Response: Here are some thoughts to help process the words, teaching and prayers offered today: *God, your love for me is fierce,*

soaring above sentiment. It is the mightiest force in the universe, whispering, roaring, creating, redeeming, and taking delight in me. Thank you for your Word that offers me this simple measure of Godly love: If I am impatient; if I am unkind; if I do not protect; if I delight in another's trouble; then I am not loving with your love. But thank you for empowering me to love by your standard---my will washed in submission, ever rejoicing in heaven's best for the sake of others.

- 1. When love is found and hope comes home,
sing and be glad that two are one.
When love explodes and fills the sky,
praise God, and share our Maker's joy.**
- 2. When love has flowered in trust and care,
build both each day, that love may dare
to reach beyond home's warmth and light,
to serve and strive for truth and right.**
- 3. When love is tried as loved-ones change,
hold still to hope, though all seems strange,
till ease returns and love grows wise
through listening ears and opened eyes.**
- 4. When love is torn, and trust betrayed,
pray strength to love till torments fade,
till lovers keep no score of wrong,
but hear through pain love's Easter song.**
- 5. Praise God for love, praise God for life,
in age or youth, in calm or strife.
Lift up your hearts! Let love be fed
through death and life in broken bread.**

See You in Worship This Sunday