

WORSHIP NOTES

Sunday February 11, 2018 9:30am

SONG We have been studying Moses in Exodus 3 and 4. We read that God said (in Exodus 3: 8): “I have seen the misery of my people...so I have come down to rescue them... so {Moses} I am sending you to bring my people out of Egypt. We read Moses fearful responses: “What if they do not believe me...or listen to me” ...and “Lord, I have never been eloquent in the past...I am slow of speech and tongue.” It is also easy for us to hold back, being caught in our comfortable patterns and not embrace the “work” God has in mind for us to do in our families and in our communities. Today, the choir opens worship with this prayer hymn inviting God to pour his power on us, to grant us wisdom and courage along with hearts and hands for service, and to free our hearts to work and praise. The Lord looks not for impressive abilities, but only for a willing heart. The Lord is Master of all creation. The Lord can make much of very little when it is yielded to his hand!

God of grace and God of glory, on your people pour your power; crown your ancient church's story, bring her bud to glorious flower. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the facing of this hour, grant us hearts and hands for service, Lord, on your people pour your holy power. Heal your children's warring madness; bend our pride to your control; shame our wanton, selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, lest we miss your kingdom's goal, lest we miss your kingdom's goal. Lo! the hosts of evil round us scorn your Christ, assail his ways! Fears and doubts too long have bound us, free our hearts to work and praise. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the living of these days, for the living of these days. Guild this church to true commitment, let your vision be our own; faith and love our earthly mission, Jesus Christ, our cornerstone. Take our lives for joyful service 'til our journey leads us home, 'til our journey leads us home. God of grace, God of glory, on your people pour your power. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage for the facing of this hour. Grant us hearts, and hands for service, Lord, on your people pour your holy power. Amen, amen!

CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 98). At the inauguration of Solomon's Temple, 120 priests blew rams' horns, accompanied by other Levites, singing and playing cymbals, harps, and lyres (2 Chronicles 5). No wonder the Lord says, “Make a joyful noise!” All of nature joins in a cacophony of sound and motions. “Let the sea resound...let the rivers clap their hands...let the mountains sing together for joy (v. 7-8). What inspires this explosion of joy? What induces this liberated worship in song? The Lord is coming! As we think about what this will mean, we should be inspired to mix all the rich resources available to us in this palette of praise and pour out our own “new song”. *Lord, let our imaginations soar as we lift up your name!*

Leader: Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises. Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody. With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful

noise before the King, the Lord. Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who live in it. Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy at the presence of the Lord, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity. [verses 4-9]

People: Here we are Lord! We come into your house this morning praising your faithfulness, giving thanks for your mercy, seeking your joy. Thank you for creating us and giving us life and breath today. Thank you for your son Jesus Christ, our Savior. Thank you for your Holy Spirit whose presence here unites us as your people, helps us and empowers us to your will even when we feel scared and helpless. Fill us with your peace today as we worship you.

HYMN Here is a prayer for this hymn: *Jesus, you did not come for people who insist they are good but for people who know they are not. Deliver us from self-righteousness. Forgive us for being too stubborn to repent, too proud to fall at your feet. Help us to remember the depths from which you saved us. Help us to remember that we are not worthy of your grace. May we never be a stumbling block for anyone who is reaching out for you.*

1 Jesus! what a friend for sinners!

Jesus! lover of my soul;

Friends may fail me, foes assail me,

He, my Savior, makes me whole.

Refrain:

Hallelujah! what a Savior!

Hallelujah! what a friend!

Saving, helping, keeping, loving,

He is with me to the end.

2 Jesus! what a strength in weakness!

Let me hide myself in Him;

Tempted, tried, and sometimes failing,

He, my strength, my vict'ry wins. [Refrain]

4 Jesus! what a guide and keeper!

While the tempest still is high,

Storms about me, night o'ertakes me,

He, my pilot, hears my cry. [Refrain]

5 Jesus! I do now receive Him,

More than all in Him I find,

He hath granted me forgiveness,

I am His, and He is mine. [Refrain]

CONFESSION: Here are five specific Bible verses that can help transform how you view God and your personal journey of faith:

“I don’t really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don’t do it. Instead, I do what I hate” (Romans 7:15, NLT). I, too, have found this verse to be comforting. I so often feel like I know what I should be doing, yet I see myself doing the total opposite, and it can lead me to feel increasingly insufficient as a Christian. Knowing that the apostle Paul wrestled with the same disconnects between his faith and his behavior reminds me that we are not alone in our struggles. This verse doesn’t let us off the hook, though, but instead should draw us back to the God who rescues us from our sin. (Romans 7:25)

“Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48, NKJV). “The call for perfection always left me feeling defeated until one day, out of desperation, I thought, But I can’t be perfect.”. “And I sensed the Holy Spirit respond to my heart, “You sure can’t — not without Jesus — that’s My whole point!””

“For by one sacrifice He has made perfect forever those who are being made holy” (Hebrews 10:14, NIV). Look carefully at the wording here-- “He has made perfect” is in past tense. That has been done in Him. But we are still “being made holy” in an ongoing process of sanctification. Therefore, on this side of heaven, I shouldn’t expect to see my perfection, but the promise of it has already been secured by Christ’s sacrifice on the cross.”

“For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21, ESV). This can be a mind-blowing thought. Jesus literally took our sin upon Himself when He died on the cross. He became our sin so that our sin would die when He did. In Him, our sin is dead forever and can no longer keep us separated from our Father in Heaven. It is through Jesus that we can be made whole, be made perfect, and become the righteousness of God. How incredible is that? It reminds me that my sin does not get to define me forever-- Jesus has offered us salvation and a new life together with Him for all eternity.

“I give [My sheep] eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand” (John 10:28-29, NKJV). Our God is greater than our sin. When I feel like my behavior will change God’s mind about me, this verse reminds me that it is not my performance that determines the outcome of this story. Jesus has already conquered sin and death once and for all, and we cannot be snatched away from our Father.

These verses are convicting reminders that despite my imperfections and all the ways I fall short, nothing can separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:39).

Leader: Lord God, we call to you and name you as eternal, ever-present, and boundless in love. Yet there are times, O God, when we fail to recognize you in the

busy-ness of our lives. Sometimes shame clenches tightly around our hearts, and we hide our true feelings. Sometimes fear makes us small, and we miss the chance to speak from our strength. Sometimes doubt invades our hopefulness, and we degrade our own wisdom.

People: Father God, remind us again of your Holy Presence hovering near us and in us. Free us from shame and self-doubt. Help us to see you in the moment-by-moment possibilities to live honestly, to act courageously, and to speak from the power of your Spirit.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON In Hebrews 4:15 *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who was tempted in every way that we are, yet was without sin.”* Because Jesus understands our weaknesses, and has been tempted even as we are tempted, because he knows the lure of sin and did not succumb to its power, we can come before his throne of judgment transformed to be the throne of grace. Where once we would have received condemnation, now we receive forgiveness. We can draw near to Jesus, with confidence, that we will receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Leader: Jesus knows our every weakness, and loves us still. Awaken to the promise of Christ's amazing grace.

People: Friends, believe the good news of the gospel. In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

SCRIPTURE/SERMON: Read Exodus 4:13-16. God finally agreed to let Aaron speak for Moses. Moses' feelings of inadequacy were so strong that he could not trust even God's ability to help him. Moses had to deal with his deep sense of inadequacy many times. When we face situations which are too difficult or frightening, we must be willing to let God help us.

FINAL HYMN: Hebrews 13:6—*So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?”* A believer's stability in this life, as well as his confidence for eternity, rests solely on the written promises of God's Words. The direction of the living God for our lives is very definite. It is found in a firm foundation—the written revelation: “Thus saith the Lord.” In the first stanza of this hymn, the sure foundation of the Christian faith is established as being the Word of God. This challenging question is posed: What more can God do than provide his very Word as a completed revelation of himself to man?” The succeeding verses personalize precious promises from his Word: Verse Two: Isaiah 41:10—*Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God.* Verse Three Isaiah 43:2—*When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;* Verse Five: Hebrews 13:5 *I will never leave you, nor forsake you.*

**1 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?**

**2 "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."**

**3 "When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
the rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;
for I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,
and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."**

**5 "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!"**