



**March 15, 2020**

**9:30 AM**

PREPARATION MUSIC

***To God All Praise and Glory***

Crestview Ringers

*Sing praise to God who reigns above The God of all creation. The God of power, the God of love the God of our salvation. He fills my soul with sweet relief and make my faithless murmur cease, to God all praise and glory.*

**Deuteronomy 32:3 I will proclaim the name of the Lord. Oh, praise the greatness of our God! This hymn extols the greatness of God in giving all good things to His people, and calls on us to continue to give God the praise He richly deserves. The lyrics remind us of God's faithfulness through both times of joy and times of sadness.**

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Jesus, many other "vines" contend for our allegiance. But they promise what they cannot deliver. "Remain in me" says my job, "and you will find true success." "Make us top priority," says my family, "and you will find unmatched love." "Stick with me," says my religious tradition, "and you will enjoy the deepest spiritual experiences." "Plug into status or riches or pleasure" says this world, "and you will find yourself."

**People: But all of these "vines," dear Lord, even those created for our good, cannot complete with you. You alone are the true vine. In you alone, do we find our rightful place in this world. Through your strength alone will our brief lives count for eternity. So we choose, by your grace, to remain in you, to make our home in you forever.**

**The words of our call to worship relate directly to today's Scripture verses in John 15:1-8. Mother Teresa of Calcutta spoke these words: *Let us all become a true and fruitful branch on the vine Jesus, by accepting Him in our lives as it pleases Him to come: as the Truth to be told; as the Life to be lived; as the Light to be lighted; as the Love to be loved; as the Way to be walked; as the Joy to be given; as the Peace to be spread; as the Sacrifice to be offered, in our families and within our neighborhood.***

HYMN OF PRAISE

***O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus***

Hymnal #477

O the deep, deep love of Jesus, vast, unmeasured, boundless, free,  
rolling as a mighty ocean in its fullness over me!  
Underneath me, all around me, is the current of his love  
leading onward, leading homeward to that glorious rest above.

2

O the deep, deep love of Jesus, spread his praise from shore to shore!  
He who loves us, ever loves us, changes never, nevermore;  
he, who died to save his loved ones, intercedes for them above;  
he, who called them his own people, watches over them in love.

3

O the deep, deep love of Jesus, love of every love the best,  
vast the ocean of his blessing, sweet the haven of his rest!  
O the deep, deep love of Jesus--for my heaven of heavens is he;  
this my everlasting glory--Jesus' mighty love for me!

**Ephesians 3:17,18 reads: *I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ. Who can fully grasp the dimensions of God's great love for us? Yet the Scriptures teach that we are to have a growing awareness of divine love. Love is the very heart and essence of God, not only for the lovely but for the vilest of sinners. Christ did not die merely to display God's love---He died because God is love (I John 4:8). If the New Testament teaches us anything, it teaches us about God's love in searching for the lost. Becoming a Christian in a very real sense is simply putting ourselves in the way of being found by God—to stop running from his loving pursuit. As we mature in the faith, we begin to realize that every situation that comes our way is an opportunity for God's love to be made more evident in our lives. Once we realize this, our attitude changes dramatically toward suffering people as well as toward ourselves when we are called to suffer. Then even during those times when our spiritual fervor declines and our devotion to God subsides, despite these shortcomings, God's love remains unfailing---continually working for our eternal good.***

SCRIPTURE SONG

***I Am the Vine***

Chancel Choir

*If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done for you, for you. I am the vine, I am the vine, and you are the branches, you are the branches. You shall ask what you will, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done for you, for you. I am the vine, I am the vine, I am the vine.*

**Christ is the Vine, and God is the Gardener who cares for the branches to make them fruitful. The branches are all who claim to be followers of Christ. The fruitful branches are true believers who by their living union with Christ produce much fruit. Living in Christ means: believing he is God's Son; receiving him as Savior and Lord; doing what God says;**

**continuing in faith; relating to the community of believers, Christ's body. Many people try to do good, be honest, and do what is right. But Jesus says the only way to live a truly good life is to stay close to him, like a branch attached to the vine. Apart from him our efforts are unfruitful. The nourishment and life offered by Christ, the Vine, are a special gift he has for you!**

### **Confessing Sin**

#### CALL TO CONFESSION

Leader: Jesus said: "I am the vine, you are the branches." We thank you, gracious God, for Jesus Christ the true vine, with his roots eternally grounded in you. We rejoice that by grace we have been grafted into him, to be branches on a vine which bears the loveliest of all the fruits of earth. Yet we confess that all is not well with the way we live.

**People: Forgive us for our tendency to wander instead of growing on the framework you provide, for being content, and sometimes even proud of a few sparse or undersized fruits, and for the apathy which lets us to go through some seasons without bearing any fruit.**

Leader: Have mercy on us. Do not lose patience or sever us completely from the true vine. Rather heal our diseases, discipline and train our wandering tendrils, prune our unfruitful branches and cut away our diseased ones.

**People: May we remain in Christ and he in us, through all the changing seasons of life. Let us delight in bearing the fruits of love which are our true purpose and joy.**

**When things are going well, we feel elated. When hardships come, we sink into depression. But true joy transcends these waves of circumstance. Joy comes from a consistent relationship with Jesus Christ. When our lives are intertwined with his, he will help us walk through adversity without sinking into lows and manage prosperity without moving into deceptive highs. The joy of living with Jesus Christ daily keeps us levelheaded no matter how high or low our circumstances.**

#### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Jesus said, "If you abide in me, and my words reside in you, ask whatever you will and it shall be done for you." Friends, we have asked for forgiveness and correction. It has been truly done for us. It is being done for us. And it will be done for us.

**People: Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gifts!**

**These words are from Josiah Concer (1824): Vine of heaven, thy love supplies this blest cup of sacrifice. 'Tis thy wounds our healing give; to**

**Thy cross we look and live: Thou our life! O let us be rooted, grafted, built on Thee!**

## **Telling Truth**

SCRIPTURE

John 15:1-8

**My King James Study Bible compares John 15: 1-10 to a computer network. One way of setting up a network is to use a central computer to handle the main programming, storage, and communication functions, with remote workstations for individual input and retrieval. This is similar to the situation Jesus described in His image of the vine and the branches in John 15. Here's a verse by verse run-through.**

**John 15:1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Here we see Jesus is the key. Like the central processing unit of a computer system, Jesus provides the life, the direction, and the command for his followers, those of us on-line.**

**John 15: 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. To be effective, believers must maintain their relationship with Jesus. In order to use the features of a network, a user must remain attached to the network. If one signs-off, there is no more access to the central computer or to others in the network. Likewise, if we allow sin to disrupt our walk with Christ, we lose fellowship with him and with other believers**

**John 15:5-8 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. Jesus wants his followers to be productive. Companies install computer networks so that their employees can get their work done. The systems cost too much to be treated as toys or to be underutilized. Correspondingly, the relationship that believers have with God was purchased through Christ's blood, so we need to take it seriously. Christ wants us to enjoy walking with Him, but he also wants us to accomplish his purposes.**

**John 15:9-10. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. 10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. To love Jesus is to follow his commands. Occasionally network users receive an "error message" indicating that they have not followed the instructions of the program correctly. By the same token, Jesus has given us commands to follow, and the only way to experience his life and power is to obey those commands. To do so is not only practical, but an expression of our love for the Lord.**

\*SONG OF RESPONSE

***Trust and Obey***

Hymnal #523

**1**

**When we walk with the Lord in the light of his Word,  
what a glory he sheds on our way!**

**While we do his good will, he abides with us still,  
and with all who will trust and obey.**

**[Refrain:]**

**Trust and obey, for there's no other way  
to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.**

**3**

**But we never can prove the delights of his love  
until all on the altar we lay;  
for the favor he shows and the joy he bestows  
are for them who will trust and obey. (Refrain)**

**4**

**Then in fellowship sweet we will sit at his feet,  
or we'll walk by his side in the way;  
what he says we will do, where he sends we will go –  
never fear, only trust and obey. (Refrain)**

**Salvation is God's responsibility. Our responsibility is to trust in that salvation and then to obey its truths. This hymn presents a balanced view of a believer's trust in Christ's redemptive work, and it speaks of the resulting desire to obey Him and do his will in our daily lives. Then we experience real peace and joy!**

***SEE YOU IN WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY!***