



WORSHIP NOTES
SUNDAY July 19, 2020

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC ***Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying***

Rodney Barbour

Wake, awake, for night is flying, the watchmen on the heights are crying; awake, Jerusalem, at last. Midnight hears the welcome voices, and at the thrilling cry rejoices: "Come forth, you maidens! Night is past. The Bridegroom comes! Awake; your lamps with gladness take!" Alleluia! Prepare yourselves to meet the Lord, whose light has stirred the waiting guard.

This music is one of JS Bach's most familiar and beloved organ works. It's a Chorale Prelude on the melody from a Reformation Chorale based on today's scripture from Matthew 25:1-13---the Parable of the Ten Virgins. Bach's sense of harmony is amazing as you will never hear more than three notes at any given time. The melody of the chorale is played on a TRUMPET sound reminding us of 1 Corinthians 15:52 (it will happen suddenly, quicker than the blink of an eye. At the sound of the last trumpet the dead will be raised. We will all be changed, so we will never die again). Today's sermon of three parables in Matthew 25 will cause us to reflect on God's eternal kingdom.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rodney Barbour

Leader: Lord, you teach us to be ready for your coming.

People: We must keep the fire burning in us, through faith and by reading, upholding and defending the truth in your Word. (Mt 25: 1-13)

Leader: Lord, you teach us that God gives us everything we need to do what he has called us to do.

People: We must be faithful to obey and honor God with the gifts and talents he has given us. (Mt 25: 14-30)

Leader: Lord, you teach us that one day we will stand before you in judgment. a final exam!

People: We are blessed that Jesus has already taken that exam and passed! We know our salvation is by faith in God through Jesus Christ. We know as Christians, we become like Christ and that we will love others from our relationship to the Shepherd! Praise the Lord! Hallelujah! (Mt 25:31-46)

Our call to worship is a summary of today's teaching in the three parables of Matthew 25. First is Matthew 25:1-13, the Parable of the Ten Virgins reminding us to be alert and be prepared following and seeking the truth in God's word to us. Second is Matthew 14-30, the Parable of the Talents reminding us to be faithful and to obey and honor God with what he has given us. Third is Matthew 31-46, the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, reminding us in our lives there WILL be a FINAL EXAM (which Jesus has taken and passed on our behalf!). We can know our status is achieved by faith in God through Jesus Christ. And, as we know and serve him, we become more like him and will be able to love others even more through our relationship with the Shepherd!

SONG OF PRAISE *Reckless Love*

Before I spoke a word, You were singing over me

You have been so, so good to me

Before I took a breath, You breathed Your life in me

You have been so, so kind to me

Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God

**Oh, it chases me down, fights 'til I'm found, leaves the ninety-nine
I couldn't earn it, and I don't deserve it, still, You give Yourself away**

Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God, yeah

When I was Your foe, still Your love fought for me

You have been so, so good to me

When I felt no worth, You paid it all for me

You have been so, so kind to me

And oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God

**Oh, it chases me down, fights 'til I'm found, leaves the ninety-nine
And I couldn't earn it, and I don't deserve it, still, You give Yourself
away**

Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God, yeah

**There's no shadow You won't light up, Mountain You won't climb up
Coming after me**

**There's no wall You won't kick down, Lie You won't tear down
Coming after me**

**There's no shadow You won't light up, Mountain You won't climb up
Coming after me**

**There's no wall You won't kick down, Lie You won't tear down
Coming after me**

**Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God
Oh, it chases me down, fights 'til I'm found, leaves the ninety-nine
And I couldn't earn it, I don't deserve it, still, You give Yourself away
Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God.**

This is a new song to Crestview Worship. Verse 1 highlights that God created us and gives us life. Verse 2 focus on how God redeems us-- despite the fact we were his enemies and rebellious in our sinfulness. God is good. God is kind. Look at how these lyrics are crafted: "When I was your foe, still your love fought for me." "When I felt no worth, You paid it all for me."

The bridge continues to emphasize the theme of God's love using the word reckless. It paints the picture of God pursuing his children like Liam Neeson in the movie "Taken" who goes to the most extreme measures to rescue his daughter.

Is God's Love Reckless? The chorus focuses on how incredible it is that God loves us and pursues us. A definition of "reckless" (of a person or their actions) without thinking or caring about the consequences of an action. This song was written with the parables in Luke 15 in mind. Think how "reckless" it was for the Father to receive the Prodigal Son back into his house! He did not care about the consequences of what other people thought of this act of love. Same thing with the parable of the lost sheep. Why would a shepherd not care about the safety of the ninety-nine to go find the one? Look at 1 Corinthians 1:18, where Paul writes the message of the cross is "foolishness" to the world. A word similar to "foolishness" is "reckless".

The composer has written about this song: "When I use the phrase, "the reckless love of God", I'm not saying that God Himself is reckless. I am, however, saying that the way He loves, is in many regards, quite so. What I mean is this: He is utterly unconcerned with the consequences of His actions with regards to His own safety, comfort, and well-being. His love isn't crafty or slick. It's not cunning or shrewd. In fact, all things considered, it's quite childlike. His love bankrupted

heaven for you. His love doesn't consider Himself first. His love isn't selfish or self-serving. He doesn't wonder what He'll gain or lose by putting Himself out there. He simply gives Himself away thinking that one of us might look back at Him and offer ourselves in return."

SCRIPTURE AND SERMON

Rev. Shawn Barkley

Matthew 25

Stories that Jesus Told---The Ten Virgins, The Talents, The Sheep and Goats

To consider these three parables: here is a prayer, a quote, and a hymntext.

Prayer: My Lord and Master, I want to please you by using the talents and gifts you have given me for your glory and for your pleasure. Let me not take them lightly or bury them under rationalization or procrastination. Help me to make the most of what I have been given and to faithfully discharge my duties as your humble servant.

Quote: (from Jonathan Edwards 1703-1758) The kind of religion that God requires, and will accept, does not consist in weak, dull, and lifeless "woulding"---those weak inclinations that lack convictions---that raise us but a little above indifference. God, in his word, greatly insists that we be in good earnest, fervent in spirit, and that our hearts be engaged vigorously in our religion: "Be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord' (Romans 12:11).

Hymntext: Faithful and true would he find us here. If he should come today? Watching in gladness and not in fear, if he should come today? Signs of his coming multiply, morning light breaks in eastern sky: Watch, for the time is drawing high; what if it were today?

SONG OF RESPONSE: ***Great is Thy Faithfulness*** Rodney Barbour

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father, there is no shadow of turning with thee; thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not; as thou hast been thou forever wilt be. Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see; all I have needed thy hand hath provided--Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me! Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth, thy own dear presence to cheer and to guide; strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow, blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!
(Refrain)

These last few months of pandemic have caused much turmoil in our lives, socially, economically, and perhaps spiritually. “Support systems” which we depend on to “feel confident and good” about our very lives have been put into jeopardy. When you are feeling “the worst” about all of this it’s good to put your attention on scripture. This hymn is from Lamentations 3: 22-23: *Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.* Again, to review today’s scripture from Matthew 25: The Lord wants us to be prepared (increasing our faith by storing his word into our minds and hearts). The Lord gives us TALENTS and wants us to be faithful to obey and honor him with what he has entrusted to us. There will be a time of judgement where we stand before the Lord, but Jesus took on our sin allowing God to offer pardon, and peace that endures along with his presence to cheer and to guide with STRENGTH FOR TODAY and bright hope for tomorrow. Like today’s prelude, this hymn arrangement uses the BIG TRUMPET on the organ, a symbol of looking toward the TRUMPET BLAST that will signal Jesus’ return.

POST SERVICE MUSIC **They’ll Know We Are Christians by our Love**
Rodney Barbour, organ

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord, and we pray that all unity may one day be restored: And they’ll know we are Christians by our love, by our love, Yes, they’ll know we are Christians by our love. All praise to the Father, from whom all things come, and all praise to Christ Jesus, his only Son, and all praise to the Spirit, who makes us one: and they’ll know we are Christians by our love, by our love, Yes, they’ll know we are Christians by our love.

Read John 13:34-35 The earliest Christians WERE known by the love they demonstrated to others – particularly to the poor, the outcasts, the oppressed of their communities. They voluntarily shared their resources to the extent that no one among them was in need. John, who was with Jesus on the night he offered this “new Commandment” to love one another, later wrote letters to those in the newly formed, growing Christian churches, and he wrote, “If we have the world’s goods and see our brothers and sisters in need, yet close our hearts against them, how does God’s love abide in us? Let us not love in word or speech, but in deed and in truth.” And as we read in James, “If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, keep warm and eat your fill’ and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself,

if it has no works, is dead.” And as Paul wrote to those in the early Christian community in Corinth, “If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers and I understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.” In these words, written to Christians in the early years of this developing faith, John and James and Paul echoed the words Jesus spoke on the night of his last supper with his disciples, hours before he was arrested, betrayed, denied, beaten and crucified. John and James who were there, and Paul who was met by Jesus on the road to Damascus, knew that those early Christians needed to know what Jesus meant when he said “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.” How had Jesus loved them? The answer to that question would provide them with the example they needed in loving others. Jesus loved people where they were. He did not insist that they change, that they reach some level of spiritual maturity before he loved them or that they agree to certain principles before he loved them or that they agree with his teachings about God before he loved them. Jesus didn’t even wait until they changed in positive ways before he loved them. He loved Matthew and Zacchaeus while they were tax collectors cheating the people. He loved the Pharisees while they challenged him and sought to discredit him. He loved those who nailed him to the cross and displayed that love through his words from the cross, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do”. Jesus loved people where they were. That doesn’t mean that he didn’t yearn for people to change – but he knew that trying to force that change or guilt them into change would not bring about a lasting change. Lasting change would only come through loving them even if and when they did not return that love. And Jesus was persistent. He did not give up on people.

A FINAL NOTE: please consider the music in this morning’s worship. Note the Organ Prelude was a REFORMATION CHORALE, *Sleepers Wake!*---musical language from 1513 with text from 1599, arranged in the Eighteenth Century from one of the world’s greatest composers. The opening “SPIRITUAL SONG” *Reckless Love* is from 2019 and one of today’s current Christian composers. It’s a very personal expression between an individual and God with sentences of scriptural truth. The HYMN “Great is Thy Faithfulness” has been sung in Christian worship

since 1923. Some would consider this an “old hymn” but it’s 400 years newer than “Sleepers Wake”. Its obviously based on Lamentations 3. Then today’s postlude “They’ll Know We Are Christians By Our Love”, is one of the first generation new “spiritual songs” from the 1960’s sung at every youth meeting or rally held in America and around the world.

While we can enjoy a wide variety of music in today’s worship, together it works in different ways to unify the scriptural texts and bring us deeper into today’s scriptures. Please take time to review the texts and scripture before worship this Sunday, and allow the Holy Spirit to quicken his message into your hearts and minds.

***See you this Sunday in Worship
either On-Line or On-Site at 9:30AM!***