

Morning Worship

Sunday, October 3, 2021

What will you discover when you turn your eyes in dependence upon the Lord? You'll find him gazing back at you, eagerly waiting to bless. Upon tiring of fighting with pigs for food, the Prodigal Son had finally 'come to himself' and begun the journey home. I'm sure that as he walked, he searched intently for some sign of his house in the distance. But he wasn't the only one who was seeking. 'But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him'(Luke 15). While we're still far away, his compassion overwhelms him and he runs toward us! He is not standing around, waiting for us to come to him properly sorry. He doesn't allow us to come to him as hired servants. No, if we're going to return to him, then he is going to enjoy the pleasure of graciously blessing us with all the riches of full sonship.—Elyse Fitzpatrick

The family of God should welcome with open arms people of every tribe and language and people and nation'(Rev. 5:9). One day we will gather around God's throne as a grand choir singing praise to the Lamb who redeemed us with his blood. How good and pleasing it is to our Father if we begin rehearsals now for the eternal song.—Robert Peterson

Let Us Proclaim the Grace of Our Lord Together

Call to Worship

from Genesis 1:24-31

²⁴ And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds." And it was so. ²⁵ And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make man^[h] in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

²⁷ So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” ²⁹ And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. ³¹ And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

All Creatures of Our God and King

All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice, and with us sing: Alleluia, alleluia!
Thou burning sun with golden beam, thou silver moon with softer gleam,
O praise him, O praise him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Thou rushing wind that art so strong,
Ye clouds that sail in heaven along, O praise him, Alleluia!
Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice, ye lights of evening, find a voice, *Refrain*

Thou flowing water, pure and clear,
Make music for thy Lord to hear, Alleluia, alleluia!
Thou fire so masterful and bright, that givest man both warmth and light, *Refrain*

And all ye men of tender heart,
Forgiving others, take your part, O sing ye Alleluia!
Ye who long pain and sorrow bear, praise God and on him cast your care, *Refrain*

Let all things their Creator bless,

And worship him in humbleness, O praise him, Alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son, and praise the Spirit, Three in One,
Refrain

Prayer of Invocation

We ask God's presence to enable us to worship him as we ought.

Confess Your Preference for Lesser Fare

Call to Confession Psalm 78:19-22

They spoke against God, saying, “Can God spread a table in the wilderness? He struck the rock so that water gushed out and streams overflowed. Can he also give bread or provide meat for his people? “Therefore, when the Lord heard, he was full of wrath; a fire was kindled against Jacob; his anger rose against Israel, because they did not believe in God and did not trust his saving power.

Prayer of Confession

Holy God, our bodies are full of darkness. The lens through which we view the world has been an utterly self-centered one. We have viewed others as objects that exist for our consumption: some of us are haunted by the images we have lusted after—television, internet, movies, or billboards. But we have brought these fantasies into real-time, as well. We have used our eyes to violate those whom we come in contact with on a daily basis. Some of us have demeaned others by haughtily looking down on them for their plain features or lack of style, or else jealously scorning those whom we find to have the very things we want so badly: thinness, physical strength, or beauty. Though our individual eyes rest on different objects, this we have in common: our eyes have been drawn easily and often away from you, our Creator God.

But amidst this darkness we see a great Light. Lord Jesus, you are the Light of the world. When you left your throne to take on human flesh, you literally saw the world with eyes just like ours...yet without sin. You saw people as they truly were, not for what you could get from them. Though tempted in every way as we are, your eyes remained pure and undefiled, leaving your body full of light. Yet it was this body that hung lifeless on the cross due to the darkness of our sin. It was your eyes that were filled with agony as your Father poured upon you the wrath that we deserved.

We are indeed debtors to your mercy! We long to see with new eyes, and ask that you would help us to look away from the images that we have stored up in our minds. Help us to look upon others with love and compassion, remembering that they are made in your image. We long to see you, Jesus. Then we will finally see the Savior who looked upon us with great love, saw us as great treasure, and paid for us at a great price. Amen

Silent Prayers of Confession

Assurance of Pardon John 6:54-58

⁵⁴ Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread^[e] the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.”

A Debtor to Mercy Alone

A debtor to mercy alone, of covenant mercy I sing.
I come with your righteousness on, my humble offering to bring.
The judgments of your holy law with me can have nothing to do,
My Savior's obedience and blood hide all my transgressions from view.

The work which your goodness began the arm of your strength will complete.
Your promise is yes and amen, and never was forfeited yet.
The future or things that are now, no power below or above,
Can make you your purpose forego or sever my soul from your love.

My name from the palms of your hands eternity will not erase,
Impressed on your heart it remains in marks of indelible grace.
Yes I, to the end will endure until I bow down at your throne:
Forever and always secure, forever and always secure,
Forever and always secure, a debtor to mercy alone.

Congregational Prayer

The Lord Himself Reminds Us of His Great Salvation

Scripture Reading Leviticus 11: 1-23, 20:22-27 | Acts 10

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, ²“Say to the Israelites: ‘Of all the animals that live on land, these are the ones you may eat: ³You may eat any animal that has a divided hoof and that chews the cud.

⁴“There are some that only chew the cud or only have a divided hoof, but you must not eat them. The camel, though it chews the cud, does not have a divided hoof; it is ceremonially unclean for you. ⁵The hyrax, though it chews the cud, does not have a divided hoof; it is unclean for you. ⁶The rabbit, though it chews the cud, does not have a divided hoof; it is unclean for you. ⁷And the pig, though it has a divided hoof, does not chew the cud; it is unclean for you. ⁸You must not eat their meat or touch their carcasses; they are unclean for you.

⁹“Of all the creatures living in the water of the seas and the streams you may eat any that have fins and scales. ¹⁰But all creatures in the seas or streams that do not have fins and scales—whether among all the swarming things or among all the other living creatures in the water—you are to regard as unclean. ¹¹And since you are to regard them as unclean, you must not eat their meat; you must regard their carcasses as unclean. ¹²Anything living in the water that does not have fins and scales is to be regarded as unclean by you.

¹³“These are the birds you are to regard as unclean and not eat because they are unclean: the eagle, ¹⁴the vulture, the black vulture, the red kite, any kind of black kite, any kind of raven, ¹⁵the horned owl, the screech owl, the gull, any kind of hawk, ¹⁶the little owl, the cormorant, the great owl, ¹⁷the white owl, the desert owl, the osprey, ¹⁸the stork, any kind of heron, the hoopoe and the bat.

¹⁹“All flying insects that walk on all fours are to be regarded as unclean by you. ²⁰There are, however, some flying insects that walk on all fours that you may eat: those that have jointed legs for hopping on the ground. ²¹Of these you may eat any kind of locust, katydid, cricket or grasshopper. ²²But all other flying insects that have four legs you are to regard as unclean.

²³“You shall therefore keep all my statutes and all my rules and do them, that the land where I am bringing you to live may not vomit you out. ²⁴And you shall not walk in the customs of the nation that I am driving out before you, for they did all these things, and therefore I detested them. ²⁵But I have said to you, ‘You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey.’ I am the LORD your God, who has separated you from the peoples. ²⁶You shall therefore separate the clean beast from the unclean, and the unclean bird from the clean. You shall not make yourselves detestable by beast or by bird or by anything with which the ground crawls, which I have set apart for you to hold unclean. ²⁷You shall be holy to me, for I the LORD am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine.

²⁸“A man or a woman who is a medium or a necromancer shall surely be put to death. They shall be stoned with stones; their blood shall be upon them.”

Acts 10

At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort, ²a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the

people, and prayed continually to God. ³ About the ninth hour of the day[Ⓜ] he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God come in and say to him, “Cornelius.” ⁴ And he stared at him in terror and said, “What is it, Lord?” And he said to him, “Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God. ⁵ And now send men to Joppa and bring one Simon who is called Peter. ⁶ He is lodging with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea.” ⁷ When the angel who spoke to him had departed, he called two of his servants and a devout soldier from among those who attended him, ⁸ and having related everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.

⁹ The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour[Ⓜ] to pray. ¹⁰ And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance ¹¹ and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. ¹² In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. ¹³ And there came a voice to him: “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.” ¹⁴ But Peter said, “By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean.” ¹⁵ And the voice came to him again a second time, “What God has made clean, do not call common.” ¹⁶ This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.

¹⁷ Now while Peter was inwardly perplexed as to what the vision that he had seen might mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood at the gate ¹⁸ and called out to ask whether Simon who was called Peter was lodging there. ¹⁹ And while Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, “Behold, three men are looking for you. ²⁰ Rise and go down and accompany them without hesitation,[Ⓜ] for I have sent them.” ²¹ And Peter went down to the men and said, “I am the one you are looking for. What is the reason for your coming?” ²² And they said, “Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you have to say.” ²³ So he invited them in to be his guests.

The next day he rose and went away with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him. ²⁴ And on the following day they entered Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. ²⁵ When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. ²⁶ But Peter lifted him up, saying, “Stand up; I too am a man.” ²⁷ And as he talked with him, he went in and found many persons gathered. ²⁸ And he said to them, “You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean. ²⁹ So when I was sent for, I came without objection. I ask then why you sent for me.”

³⁰ And Cornelius said, “Four days ago, about this hour, I was praying in my house at the ninth hour,[Ⓜ] and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing ³¹ and said, ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God. ³² Send therefore to Joppa and ask for Simon who is called Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.’ ³³ So I sent for you at once, and you have been kind enough to come. Now therefore we are all here in the presence of God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord.”

³⁴ So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵ but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶ As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), ³⁷ you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹ And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰ but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, ⁴¹ not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

⁴⁴ While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. ⁴⁵ And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. ⁴⁶ For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, ⁴⁷ “Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” ⁴⁸ And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.

Sermon *“Luke’s Third Centurion”*

Reverend Tony Cowley

Jesus Welcomes Us All by His Body and Blood Given for Us

The Lord’s Supper

All baptized Christians who trust in Christ alone as their Savior and Lord, who are communicant members of a Bible-believing church, and who seek strength and grace to live more faithfully to Christ are invited to participate. The cups with lighter liquid contain grape juice, the darker liquid is wine. The darker bread in the paper cup in the center of the plate is gluten-free. While communion is being served, please feel free to join in song or meditate quietly on Christ’s sacrifice.

Song of Preparation:

Behold the Lamb

Behold the Lamb, silent before his accusers,
as thorns are pressed into his brow.

They lift him up, oh see the spikes that hold him.

Redeeming blood flows down.

But look again! The cross stands empty now...and he is risen!

Behold the Lamb, see him crowned with glory!

Behold the Lamb, cast your crowns before him!

Crying holy, holy is the Lamb!

Behold the Lamb, carrying all our transgressions, he freely takes our place.

Endures the lash, the mocking and the laughter of those he dies to save.

But look again! The cross stands empty now...and he is risen! *Refrain x2*

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Song of Response:

At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing

At the Lamb's high feast we sing praise to our victorious King,

Who has washed us in the tide flowing from his pierced side;

Praise we him whose love divine gives his sacred blood for wine,

Gives his body for the feast, Christ the victim, Christ the feast.

Where the paschal blood is poured, death's dark angel sheaths his sword;

Israel's hosts triumphant go through the wave that drowns the foe;

Praise we Christ, whose blood was shed, paschal victim, paschal bread;

With sincerity and love eat we manna from above.

Mighty victim from the sky, pow'rs of hell beneath thee lie;

Death is conquered in the fight, thou has brought us life and light;

Hymns of glory and of praise, risen Lord, to thee we raise;

Holy Father, praise to thee, with the Spirit, ever be.

Benediction

The lyrics of the songs are used by permission. CCLI License #3008560

A Debtor to Mercy Alone: music and additional words by Bob Kauflin, © 1998 Sovereign Grace Praise.

Behold the Lamb: by Mark Altrogge © 2000 Sovereign Grace Praise.