

# **Lord's Day Worship**

**Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup> 2021**

We can see, but there's something wrong with our spiritual capacities to discern the beauty and value of what we see. We always wind up preferring other things over God. "Seeing they do not see," Jesus said (Matthew 13:13). That's the essence of sin, and it's the plight of every human being, not just a few. The only hope for this salvation, therefore, is that God would miraculously shine in our hearts with the light of the glory of God.

- John Piper

## ***Worship the Lord Our King***

### **Call to Worship**

**Psalm 146:1-2, 8-10**

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul! <sup>2</sup> I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. <sup>8</sup> The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous. <sup>9</sup> The Lord watches over the sojourners; he upholds the widow and the fatherless, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin. <sup>10</sup> The Lord will reign forever, your God, O Zion, to all generations. Praise the Lord!

### **Oh For a Thousand Tongues**

Oh for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise,  
The glories of my God and King, the triumphs of his grace!

Jesus! the name that charms our fears, that bids our sorrows cease;  
'Tis music in the sinner's ears, 'tis life, and health, and peace.

He breaks the power of canceled sin, he sets the prisoner free;  
His blood can make the foulest clean, his blood availed for me.

I felt my Lord's atoning blood close to my soul applied;  
Me, me he loved, the Son of God, for me, for me he died!

See all your sins on Jesus laid: the Lamb of God was slain,  
His soul was once an offering made for every soul of man.

Harlots and publicans and thieves in holy triumph join!  
Saved is the sinner that believes from crimes as great as mine.

Hear him, ye deaf; his praise, ye dumb, your loosened tongues employ;  
Ye blind, behold your Savior come, and leap, ye lame, for joy.

### **Prayer of Invocation**

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

# ***We Confess Our Spiritual Blindness***

## **Call to Confession**

**Mark 8:11-12**

The Pharisees came and began to argue with Jesus, seeking from him a sign from heaven to test him. <sup>12</sup> And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, “Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly, I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation.”

## **Prayer of Confession**

**(adapted from *Prone to Wander*)**

Our wise and loving Father,

We come to you admitting our foolishness and habitual blindness to your will. We often believe that we are wiser and more loving than you are and seek to use prayer to manipulate you into doing what we want. We are full of turmoil and anxiety because we do not trust in your wisdom or believe that all your ways are best for us. Although we claim to believe in you and fear you, we spend most of our days living as though you do not exist. We rarely think of you or run to you with our cares and burdens, but instead frantically try to fix our problems according to our own foolish thinking. We forget to worship you throughout each day because we cannot see your loving, sovereign kindness wrapped around us, even in our most painful moments. Father, forgive us.

Thank you for loving profoundly foolish and sinful rebels like us. You sent your cherished Son to live among blind and evil people, so that we could be rescued from our foolish depravity. He lived the perfect life of obedience and faith, demonstrating your wisdom for us in living proof with each word and action. On the cross, he submitted to your gracious plan, choosing to pay for all of our blind iniquity, sin upon sin. Now we stand before you as perfectly wise and righteous children, even though we will continue to struggle with blind foolishness until we see you face to face. For this, we are eternally grateful.

Patient and persistent God, we thank you that we cannot change ourselves. If we could, we would take the credit for our discernment and despise brothers and sisters who were more foolish than us. Instead, you have made us so completely dependent on you for every good thought and deed that we can only boast in you. Thank you for promising to complete the good work you have begun in us, even against our will. Please soften our hard hearts and open our blind eyes more each day. Help us to see you clearly, to see our sin, and long to change. Keep us near the cross, always needy and looking to you for mercy and hope. Fill us with your wisdom and be our vision, our battle shield, our dignity and delight until we see you with new eyes. In Jesus' name, amen.

## **Silent Prayers of Confession**

### **Assurance of Pardon**

**2 Corinthians 4:6**

<sup>6</sup>For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.

### **My Song is Love Unknown**

My song is love unknown, my Savior's love to me;  
Love to the loveless shown, that they might lovely be.  
O who am I, that for my sake my Lord should take frail flesh and die?

He came from his blest throne salvation to bestow;  
But men cared not, and none the longed for Christ would know:  
But O! my Friend, my Friend indeed, who at my need his life did spend.

Sometimes they strew his way, and his sweet praises sing;  
Resounding all the day Hosannas to their King:  
Then "Crucify!" is all their breath, and for his death they thirst and cry.

Why, what hath my Lord done? What makes this rage and spite?  
He made the lame to run, he gave the blind their sight,  
Sweet injuries! Yet all his deeds their hatred feeds, they 'gainst him rise.

They rise and needs will have my dear Lord made away;  
A murderer they saved, the Prince of life they slay,  
Yet willing he to suffering goes, that he his foes from thence might free.

In life, no house, no home my Lord on earth might have;  
In death no friendly tomb but what a stranger gave.  
What may I say? Heav'n was his home; but mine the tomb wherein he lay.

Here might I stay and sing, no story so divine;  
Never was love, dear King! Never was grief like thine.  
This is my Friend, in whose sweet praise I all my days could gladly spend.

### **Prayer for the Church and Congregation**

## ***Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus***

### **Scripture Reading**

### **Mark 8:1-26**

During those days another large crowd gathered. Since they had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to him and said, <sup>2</sup>“I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. <sup>3</sup>If I send them home hungry, they will collapse on the way, because some of them have come a long distance.” <sup>4</sup>His disciples answered, “But where in this remote place can anyone get enough bread to feed them?” <sup>5</sup>“How many loaves do you have?” Jesus asked. “Seven,” they replied. <sup>6</sup>He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. When he had taken the seven loaves and given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people, and they did so. <sup>7</sup>They had a few small fish as well; he gave thanks for them also and told the disciples to distribute them. <sup>8</sup>The people ate and were satisfied. Afterward the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. <sup>9</sup>About four thousand were present. After he had sent them away, <sup>10</sup>he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the region of Dalmanutha.

<sup>11</sup>The Pharisees came and began to question Jesus. To test him, they asked him for a sign from heaven. <sup>12</sup>He sighed deeply and said, “Why does this generation ask for a sign? Truly I tell you, no sign will be given to it.” <sup>13</sup>Then he left them, got back into the boat and crossed to the other side.

<sup>14</sup>The disciples had forgotten to bring bread, except for one loaf they had with them in the boat. <sup>15</sup>“Be careful,” Jesus warned them. “Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod.” <sup>16</sup>They discussed this with one another and said, “It is because we have no bread.” <sup>17</sup>Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked them: “Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened? <sup>18</sup>Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear? And don’t you remember? <sup>19</sup>When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?” “Twelve,” they replied. <sup>20</sup>“And when I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?” They answered, “Seven.” <sup>21</sup>He said to them, “Do you still not understand?”

<sup>22</sup>They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him. <sup>23</sup>He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. When he had spit on the man’s eyes and put his hands on him, Jesus asked, “Do you see anything?” <sup>24</sup>He looked up and said, “I see people; they look like trees walking around.” <sup>25</sup>Once more Jesus put his hands on the man’s eyes. Then his eyes were opened, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. <sup>26</sup>Jesus sent him home, saying, “Don’t even go into the village.”

## Exodus 20:1-17

And God spoke all these words:

<sup>2</sup>“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

<sup>3</sup>“You shall have no other gods before me.

<sup>4</sup>“You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. <sup>5</sup> You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, <sup>6</sup> but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

<sup>7</sup>“You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

<sup>8</sup> “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. <sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup> but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. <sup>11</sup> For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

<sup>12</sup> “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

<sup>13</sup> “You shall not murder.

<sup>14</sup> “You shall not commit adultery.

<sup>15</sup> “You shall not steal.

<sup>16</sup> “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

<sup>17</sup> “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

**Sermon**

**“Persistent Spiritual Blindness”**

Reverend T. Cowley

## ***Behold God's Gift of Grace***

### **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:***

#### **Immanuel**

From the squalor of a borrowed stable,  
By the spirit and a virgin's faith;  
To the anguish and the shame of scandal  
Came the Savior of the human race!  
But the skies were filled with the praise of heav'n,  
Shepherds listen as the angels tell of the Gift of God  
Come down to man at the dawning of Immanuel!

King of heaven now the Friend of sinners,  
Humble servant in the Father's hands,  
Filled with power and the Holy Spirit,  
Filled with mercy for the broken man.  
Yes, he walked my road and he felt my pain,  
Joys and sorrows that I know so well;  
Yet his righteous steps give me hope again: I will follow my Immanuel!

Through the kisses of a friend's betrayal, he was lifted on a cruel cross;  
He was punished for the world's transgressions,  
He was suffering to save the lost.  
He fights for breath, he fights for me,  
Loosing sinners from the claims of hell;  
And with a shout our souls are free: Death defeated by Immanuel!

Now he's standing in the place of honor,  
Crowned with glory on the highest throne,  
Interceding for his own beloved, till his Father calls us to bring them home!  
Then the skies will part as the trumpet sounds,  
Hope of heaven or the fear of hell;  
But the Bride will run to her Lover's arms, giving glory to Immanuel!

## **Celebration of the Lord's Supper**

### ***Song of Response:***

#### **What the Lord Has Done In Me**

Let the weak say, "I am strong." Let the poor say, "I am rich."

Let the blind say, "I can see; it's what the Lord has done in me." *(Twice)*

*Hosanna, hosanna to the Lamb that was slain.*

*Hosanna, hosanna, Jesus died and rose again.*

Into the river I will wade. There my sins are washed away.

From the heavens mercy streams of the Savior's love for me. *Refrain*

I will rise from waters deep into the saving arms of God.

I will sing salvation songs; Jesus Christ has set me free! *Refrain*

## **Benediction**

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