

Morning Worship

Sunday, August 22nd 2021

“Here is the sweet paradox in how God works. He blesses those who admit that they need help: The poor in spirit are blessed (Matthew 5:3). Sanity has a deep awareness: ‘I need help. I can’t do life right on my own. Someone outside me must intervene.’ The sanity of honest humility finds mercy, life, peace, and strength. By contrast, saying we don’t need help keeps us stuck on that hamster wheel of making excuses and blaming others. The end result isn’t life and peace; it’s self-righteousness, self-justification, alienation, and bitterness.”

- David Powlison

Our Shepherd King Rules with Strength and Kindness

Call to Worship

Isaiah 40:9-11

⁹Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" ¹⁰Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds

How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds, in a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrow, heals his wounds, and drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole, and calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul, and to the weary, rest.

Dear Name, the rock on which I build, my shield and hiding place,
My never failing treasury, filled with boundless stores of grace!

By thee, my prayers acceptance gain, although with sin defiled;
Satan accuses me in vain, and I am owned a child.

Jesus, my Shepherd, Brother, Friend, my Prophet, Priest, and King,
My Lord, my life, my way, my end, accept the praise I bring.

Weak is the effort of my heart, and cold my warmest thought;
But when I see thee as thou art, I'll praise thee as I ought.

Prayer of Invocation

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

We Confess Our Sin to Our Good Shepherd

Call to Confession

Isaiah 53:4, 6

⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Prayer of Confession

adapted from *Prone to Wander*

O God, our Savior,

We come before you today as foolish sheep who wander far from you. You have set your love upon us, chosen us, and saved us, but we find it hard to trust you and prefer our own wisdom and understanding. You lead us in green pastures, but we reject the feast that you lay before us and try frantically to fill ourselves up with things that cannot satisfy. You lead us by still waters to restore our souls, yet we stray towards strong currents of temptation and are easily swept away by sinful cravings and lust. You call us to paths of righteousness, but we scorn your warnings, ignore your guidance, and rebel against your discipline. You have given us the great privilege of knowing and worshiping our Creator, the one true God. But we prefer to bow before our worthless idols day after day in search of the morsels of comfort or pleasure they offer to us. Father, we stray from you every day and turn to our own ways; forgive us for our many sins.

Jesus, you are our sacrificial lamb. You never strayed from the path of obedience to your Father, even when that path led you to a brutal cross and the mockery of those who should have worshiped you. As a sheep before its shearers is silent, you refused to argue about the charges made against you. You knew you would become sin for us, taking on the guilt of those belonging to you. Jesus, you are the Great Shepherd, who laid down your life for your beloved sheep, and you are the tender shepherd who gathers us in your arms and carries us. You were torn for all our sinful and rebellious wandering, and through your wounds we find healing and peace. Thank you.

Holy Spirit, help us to see where the path of blessing lies, and give us hearts that are eager to travel that path. While we live in a fallen world with sinful hearts, we will always be prone to wander. Thank you for holding fast to us, for we cannot hold onto you. Give us strong appetites for spiritual food: the Word of God and the body and blood of our precious Savior. Grant us unshakable confidence in the death and life of Jesus, until his wounds cleanse our guilt and give us great joy. Make us humble followers instead of prideful leaders, so that we can find safety and delight in walking with you. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Silent Prayers of Confession

Assurance of Pardon

Isaiah 53:5

5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

Poor Sinner, Dejected With Fear

Poor sinner, dejected with fear, unbosom thy mind to the Lamb;
No wrath on his brow he does wear, nor will he poor mourners condemn;
His arm of omnipotent grace is able and willing to save;
A sweet and a permanent peace he'll freely and faithfully give.

Come just as thou art, with thy woe, fall down at the feet of the Lamb;
He will not, he cannot say, "Go", but surely will take out thy stain
A fountain is opened for sin, and thousands its virtues have proved
He'll take thee, and plunge thee therein, and wash thee from filth in his blood.

The soul that on Jesus relies, he'll never, no never deceive;
He freely and faithfully gives more blessings than we can conceive;
Yea, down to old age he will keep, nor will he forsake us at last;
He knows and is known by his sheep; they're his, and he will hold them fast.

Congregational Prayer

We Listen to the Voice of the Good Shepherd

Scripture Reading

John 10:1-18

“Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. ² The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵ But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.” ⁶ Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them.

⁷ Therefore Jesus said again, “Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. ⁹ I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

¹¹ “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. ¹³ The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

¹⁴ “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. ¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.”

Sermon

“The Good Shepherd”

Rev. Dr. T. David Gordon

We Celebrate Christ, the Sacrificial Lamb and Shepherd King

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:

Ah Holy Jesus

Ah, holy Jesus, how hast thou offended,
That man to judge thee hath in hate pretended?
By foes derided, by thine own rejected, O most afflicted.

Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon thee?
Alas, my treason, Jesus, hath undone thee.
'Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was denied thee! I crucified thee.

Lo, the Good Shepherd for the sheep is offered;
The slave hath sinned, and the Son hath suffered;
For man's atonement, while he nothing heedeth, God intercedeth.

For me, kind Jesus, was thy incarnation,
Thy mortal sorrow, and thy life's oblation;
Thy death of anguish and thy bitter passion, for my salvation.

Therefore, kind Jesus, since I cannot pay thee,
I do adore thee, and will ever pray thee,
Think on thy pity and thy love unswerving, not my deserving.

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Song of Response:

There is a Higher Throne

There is a higher throne, than all this world has known,
Where faithful ones from ev'ry tongue will one day come.
Before the Son we'll stand, made faultless through the Lamb;
Believing hearts find promised grace—salvation comes.

*Hear heaven's voices sing; their thund'rous anthem rings
Through em'erald courts and sapphire skies, their praises rise.
All glory, wisdom, pow'r, strength, thanks, and honor are
To God our King, who reigns on high forevermore.*

And there we'll find our home, our life before the throne;
We'll honor him in perfect song where we belong.
He'll wipe each tear-stained eye as thirst and hunger die.
The Lamb becomes our Shepherd King; we'll reign with him.

Benediction

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