**Sunday, January 29, 2012**

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**Welcome** – Greg Snow

**Call to Worship** – Galatians 3:26, 29

As we gather together for worship today, let us remember who we are and whose we are. We are children of the living God, heirs of all God’s promises. As God’s people, our wealth is literally unnumbered. The Apostle Paul put it this way in his letter to the Galatians:

*…”for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (Galatians 3:26,29)*

Let us worship God, who presents to us the very keys to the Kingdom and gives us the Holy Spirit as the guarantee and pledge of our inheritance. (Source: www.presbyterian.ca)

**Songs of Praise** – *Standing on the Promises/Tis So Sweet*

Isaiah 43:2-3; Psalm 56:4; Proverbs 3:5

When Thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee.  
In God I have put my trust; I will not fear.   
And through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.  
In God I have put my trust; I will not fear.  
When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned.  
In God I have put my trust; I will not fear.  
I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour. Trust in the Lord with all thine heart.

**Dependent on the Grace of God** *(Excerpt from the book “Transforming Grace” by Jerry Bridges)*

The Bible is full of God’s promises to provide for us spiritually and materially, to never forsake us, to give us peace in times of difficult circumstances, to cause all circumstances to work together for our good, and finally to bring us safely home to glory. *Not one of those promises is dependent upon our performance.* They are all dependent on the grace of God given to us through Jesus Christ.

Psalm 62:1-8

*For God alone my soul waits in silence;  from him comes my salvation.   
He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.*

*How long will all of you attack a man to batter him, like a leaning wall, a tottering fence?   
They only plan to thrust him down from his high position. They take pleasure in falsehood.   
They bless with their mouths, but inwardly they curse.   
  
 For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him.   
He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken.   
On God rests my salvation and my glory; my mighty rock, my refuge is God.*

*Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us.*

**Songs of Worship** – *Oh, the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus/It Is Well With My Soul*

**Offering**

**Morning Dedication *(Puritan Prayer)***

Almighty God, as I cross the threshold of this day I commit myself, soul, body, affairs, friends, to Thy care. Watch over, keep, guide, direct, sanctify, bless me. Incline my heart to thy ways. Mould me wholly into the image of Jesus, as a potter forms clay. May my lips be a well-tuned harp to sound Thy praise. Let those around see me living by Thy Spirit, trampling the world underfoot, unconformed to lying vanities, transformed by a renewed mind, clad in the entire armour of God, shining as a never-dimmed light, showing holiness in all my doings.

Let no evil this day soil my thoughts, words, hands. May I travel miry paths with a life pure from spot or stain. In needful transactions let my affection be in heaven, and my love soar upwards in flames of fire, my gaze fixed on unseen things, my eyes open to the emptiness, fragility, mockery of earth and its vanities.

May I view all things in the mirror of eternity, waiting for the coming of my Lord, listening for the last trumpet call, hastening unto the new heaven and earth. Order this day all my communications according to Thy wisdom, and to the gain of mutual good. Forbid that I should not be profited or made profitable.

May I speak each word as if my last word, and walk each step as my final one. If my life should end today, let this be my best day.

**Songs of Praise –** *The Potter’s Hand/Be Thou My Vision*

**Message** – *“A Wild Man In The Wilderness”* Scripture Reference: Matthew, Chapter 3:1-6

**Man**

* John was a great man – the greatest to be born
  + Matthew 11:11 “*among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist*”
* John was a herald to precede the great King Jesus!
* Malachi 4:5-6 *“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.* *And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.”*
* Matthew 11:14 *“and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come.”*

**Message**

* John the Baptist had one message…REPENT!
* True repentance involves sorrow for sin…sorrow will lead to a change of thinking, desire, and conduct of life.

**Motive**

* The motive for repentance was *“The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand”* (Matthew 3:2)

**Missions**

* John was to prepare – make ready the people for the coming Great King!
* John was to encourage the people to make the paths of their lives straight so the King could make His home in their hearts.

**Manner**

* John’s diet and dress was a rebuke then and now to our worldly fashion minded, comfortable, over indulgent lives we live.
* The mannerisms of John call us to separate from the world of sin and come unto Christ and His Kingdom!

**Ministry**

* John’s ministry was big in numbers; “Going out” speaks of separation and being baptized.

**TAKE-AWAY’S**

* Repentance is the gift of God and a lifelong process of the Christian.
* John’s diet and dress is a rebuke to most of us. The gospel calls us to separate from the world.
* The wilderness is a great picture of separation from the mainstream in order to get a clearer view of God’s way – His path.

**Time of Prayer**