**Sunday, July 8, 2012**

**Welcome** – Greg Snow

**Song of Praise** – *Brethren We Have Met To Worship*

**The Reason For Our Hope –** *Lamentations 3:21-26*

 **Let us call to mind the reason for our hope:**

 ***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, O Lord. “The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for Him.”***

 ***The LORD is good to those whose hope is in Him. Praise be to the God of our Salvation!*

Song of Praise –** *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*

**Create In Me A Clean Heart, O God –** *Psalm 51*

***Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight.***

***Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.***

**Song of Worship –** *O Great God*

**Do All In the Name of the Lord Jesus –** *Colossians 3:12-17*

***Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.***

 ***And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.***

**Song of Worship** – *Savior Like A Shepherd Lead Us*

**Offering (Praying and sinning will never live together in the same heart. Prayer will consume sin, or sin will choke prayer.” J.C. Ryle)**

**The Westminster Shorter Catechism *–****Questions 82-90*

The Westminster Shorter Catechism was written in the 1640s by English and Scottish divines. It is considered by many Protestants to be one the grandest doctrinal statements to come out of the English Reformation. Typically, parents and the church would use the shorter catechism to train their children and new converts in the ways of the Lord. Upon John Knox’s return to Scotland, catechizing became a part of life in the Scottish Churches. The *First Book of Discipline* required that a Sabbath afternoon session be set aside for examination of young children in catechism. It is still widely practiced by many denominations and the Free Church of Scotland still presents a Bible to a child who can answer all 107 questions accurately at one sitting.

 I invite you to join me in answering a few of the questions to this historical document.

 **Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?**
 A. No mere man, since the fall, is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but does daily break them in thought, word, and deed.

**Are all transgressions of the law equally evil?**
A. Some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more evil in the sight of God than others.

**What doth every sin deserve?**
A. Every sin deserves God’s wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come.

**What doth God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse, due to us for sin?**
A. To escape the wrath and curse of God, due to us for sin, God requires of us faith in Jesus Christ, repentance unto life, with the diligent use of all the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption.

 **What is faith in Jesus Christ?**
 A. Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.

 **What is repentance unto life?**
 A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience.

 **What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption?**
 A. The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption are, his ordinances, especially the Word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.

 **How is the Word made effectual to salvation?**
 A. The Spirit of God makes the reading, but especially the preaching, of the Word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith, unto salvation.

 **How is the Word to be read and heard, that it may become effectual to salvation?**
 A. That the Word may become effectual to salvation, we must attend thereunto with diligence, preparation, and prayer; receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practice it in our lives.

**Songs of Worship –** *Speak, O Lord/Show Us Christ*

**Message** – *“The Permanency of Marriage”*
 *Scripture Reference: Matthew 5:31-32*

1. Jesus is continuing His sermon by giving the antithesis statement to meticulously reveal the self-righteous hearts of the people, especially the Scribes and the Pharisees.

2. Jesus is simply elevating Gods word back to its rightful place. He is clearing it from the false interpretations and traditions of the teachers of that day.

3. Bad teaching, based on bad theology, was reflected in their lives.

4. In verses 31-32 Jesus is affirming God’s ideal marriage. God’s original intent in creation is that Christian marriages are permanent. (Matthew 19:1-10)

5. Divorce is a denial of God’s created order in the very nature of marriage and its purpose is not just for procreation and pleasure but mostly displaying God’s covenant love.

6. Deuteronomy 24:1-4 is not a justification for divorce but rather a provision in the Law to deal with the event of a divorce. It was to regulate the event of a divorce – never permission to divorce.

7. Marriage passages: Genesis 2:23-25; Deuteronomy 22-24; Matthew 5, 19; Mark 10; Luke 16; Romans 7; 1 Corinthians 7. We never see a provision as permission to divorce.

8. Matthew 5:31-32 Jesus is setting the standard back to reveal men’s sin. The “Exception clause” is a reference to Deuteronomy 24 and Moses’ Law to deal with the event of a divorce.

 Reasons: 1. No place can be found in scripture for divorce.

 2. “Makes her commit adultery”

 3. Jesus statement “But I say unto you”

**Takeaways**

1. This is Gods standard, His perfect ideal for marriage.

2. The perfect standard should lead us to brokenness and worship no matter where we are in the divorce dilemma.

3. Hosea principle is the believer’s path. We are in it till death do we part. So unfaithfulness or abundant we are true and can never initiate a divorce.

4. Divorce is never commanded or commended in God’s Word but the example of scripture is forgiveness, restoration, love, etc.

5. Church Discipline – we are called to deal with this issue. Think about our world today, what it would look like if the Church was more pure and striving to be more holy by God’s standard.

6. New Creation – 2 Corinthians 5:17 – We are new in Christ. Our past doesn’t have to haunt us but rather embrace God’s perfect standard and His forgiveness.

7. Deuteronomy 29:29 – *“The secret things belong to the Lord our God…”* God’s standard is all we have and need. He never changes but His ways are a mystery.

**Time of Prayer**