**Sunday, October 28, 2012**

**Welcome** – Greg Snow

**Call to Worship –** *Colossians 1:15-20*

*Hear the word of God:*

*Colossians 1:15-20*

*“Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth.*

*He made the things we can see and the things we can’t see—  
 such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world.  
 Everything was created through him and for him.  
 He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together.*

*Christ is also the head of us, the church, and by the blood of the cross reconciles everything to God.*

Let’s sing to our Redeemer!

**Song of Praise –** *The Wonderful Cross*

**Unconditional Love –** *The Story of William Cowper*(Source Charles Stanley/Truth)

The Cross is where love became a five-letter word. Eternal, incomprehensible, unconditional love is spelled C-R-O-S-S. William Cowper came to know this “unconditional love” of Christ in a special way.

In spite of his intellectual achievements, William Cowper was physically frail and emotionally sensitive throughout his childhood. One of the traumatic experiences that contributed to his emotional instability was the death of his mother in 1737, when William was only six years old. Unable to properly deal with this grief that he experienced as a small child, it stayed with him throughout his life. He never stopped grieving for his mother. After an unsuccessful suicide attempt William was placed in an insane asylum for a period of eighteen months. While confined in the asylum and suffering from prolonged periods of deep depression he would spend much of his time in reading the Scriptures and at the age of 33 was saved. He would later in life attend the church of his good friend, Pastor John Newton. Whenever Mr. Newton would notice William slipping into another bout of depression he would encourage William to write a hymn, which they often did together.

While sitting alone one day at his desk in his little house, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and with the words of the prophet Zechariah (13:1) fresh in his mind, he began to pen these comforting words:

There is a fountain filled with blood  
drawn from Immanuel's veins  
And sinners plunged beneath that flood  
Lose all their guilty stains

In spite of his mental depression, emotional melancholy and spiritual doubts, God used the experience of William Cowper to pen the words that have been an inspiration to the church for two hundred years. These words have been used by the Holy Spirit to encourage many saints and a call to wayward sinners to find their peace with God which can only be found in that "fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins".

**Song of Worship –** *There Is A Fountain*

**In His Presence** *– Hebrews 10:19-22  
   
 And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven’s Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place. And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God’s house, let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ’s blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water.*

**Song of Worship –** *Worthy Is the Lamb*

**You Are Worthy, O Lord** *– Revelation 4:3, 6-11  
   
 The one sitting on the throne was as brilliant as gemstones .*

*In the center and around the throne were four living beings.*

*Day after day and night after night they keep on saying,*

*"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty –*

*the one who always was, who is, and who is still to come."*

*Whenever the living beings give glory and honor and thanks*

*to the one sitting on the throne, the one who lives forever and ever,*

*the twenty-four elders fall down and worship* *the one who lives forever*

*and ever. And they lay their crowns before the throne and say,*

*"You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power.*

*For you created everything, and it is for your pleasure*

*that they exist and were created."*

**Song of Worship –** *Holy, Holy, Holy***Offering *(“The choice is clear: follow the crowd with its characteristic bent toward taking the path of least resistance, or join the few who accept the limiting demands of loyalty. The easy way will turn out hard (it ends in destruction), whereas the hard way will lead to eternal joy (life*).” Robert MounceTake Up Your Cross and Follow Me – *Matthew 16:21-27/J.C. Ryle*** *From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.” Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.*

Bold indeed must that man be who would dare to say that we may keep our self-righteousness, our sins, our laziness, and our love of the world, and yet be saved? I grant it costs much to be a true Christian. But who in his sound senses can doubt that it is worth any cost to have the soul saved? When the ship is in danger of sinking, the crew thinks nothing of casting overboard the precious cargo. When a limb is mortified, a man will submit to any severe operation, and even to amputation, to save life. Surely a Christian should be willing to give up anything which stands between him and heaven. A religion that costs nothing is worth nothing! A cheap Christianity, without a cross, will prove in the end a useless Christianity, without a cross.

Hear the words of the Lord from Matthew Chapter 16, verses 25-27…

*For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.*

**Songs of Worship –** *I Have Decided to Follow Jesus/Give Me Jesus/Ephesians 3:14-19*

**Message** – *“It’s Time For A Decision”*   
 *Scripture Reference: Matthew 7:13-14*

1. **Command**

* Jesus commands that we are to “enter”.
* John 14:6, *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me.”*

**2. Courses**

* Jesus says there are only two courses, “ways”, to walk…narrow and wide!
* The narrow course is hard but leads to eternal life.
* Scripture describes the narrow way:

1) Hard (Matthew 7:14)

2) Strive, agonize (Luke 13:24)

3) Persecution (John 15:20)

4) Dealing with sin (Matthew 18:8-9)

5) Total cost of discipleship (Luke 14:25-33)

6) Suffering (Acts 9:16)

7) Tribulation (Acts 14:22)

***Remember Paul’s words to Timothy: all will be persecuted! (2 Timothy 3:12)***

**3. Crowds**

* + - * There are two crowds on life’s road: many and few.
      * Matthew 22:14, *“For many are called, but few are chosen.”*

**4. Consummation**

* + - * Jesus says that the hard way and narrow gate leads to life and glory.
      * The easy broad gate leads to eternal hell.

**Take-away’s**

1. Jesus is speaking to a religious crowd. Of the religious, church going people, there are only a few on the narrow way. (Matthew 13: Parable of the Sower)

2. Quote from A.W. Pink:

*Yet pleasant as the broad way may be to the flesh and popular as it is with the masses, it ends in unutterable woe and everlasting torments. How necessary it is then, that each of us should give heed to that injunction, “Ponder the path of thy feet” (Proverbs 4:26). Men are ready enough to do so in temporal matters, why not so in spiritual? They do not enter a train or even a bus without first ascertaining where it is bound for: then why not pause and ask, Whither will this godless mode of life take me? In which direction are my feet pointed: heavenward or hellward? So immeasurable is the distance betwixt those two bodies, so vast is the difference between life and destruction, that we are called upon to exercise the utmost care and conscience in using every Divinely prescribed means for attaining the one and escaping the other.*

What course are you on?

3. Be obedient and enter through Him, enter the way that leads to eternal life! We are called to make a decision now, as well as daily! We are to be decisive in all our ways!

**Time of Prayer**