

Sunday, March 17, 2013

Welcome – Greg Snow

Call to Worship – *Colossians 2:13-15*

Hear the word of the Lord...Colossians 2:13-15

When you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it. Brothers and sisters: through the cross of Christ we are forgiven, and the power of evil is broken. Praise be to God!

Let us join our voices to praise the spotless Lamb, Jesus Christ, who has redeemed us from sin and death.

We, whom he has redeemed, will sing praises and shout for joy this hour;

because in Christ the Lamb we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins in accordance with the riches of his grace.

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.

Let us praise him by saying:

Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise! To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb we give worship this hour and forever and ever. Amen.

Song of Praise – *Are You Washed In the Blood*

Confession of Sin – *Psalms 32:1-6*

The psalmist testifies:

Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Happy are those to whom the LORD imputes no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you.

For the next few moments, let us silently confess our sin before God and one another.

Silent Prayer

Assurance of Salvation – Jeremiah 33:8

Hear the promise of God: Jeremiah 33:8

“I will cleanse them from all the guilt of their sin against me, and I will forgive all the guilt of their sin and rebellion against me”.

Song of Worship – Nothing But the Blood of Jesus

What Wondrous Love – 1 John 4:9-12

By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has beheld God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

Songs of Worship – The Love of God/My Savior’s Love

Offering - *“The cross is the proof that there is no length to which the love of God will refuse to go, in order to win men’s hearts...If the cross will not waken love and wonder in men’s hearts, nothing will.”* William Barclay

A Flaming Fire in the Service of the Lord – John 15:5-8/David Brainerd (Source: John Piper)

Hear the word of God from John 15:5-8:

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

Have you ever prayed a prayer like this?

Lord, let me make a difference for you utterly disproportionate to who I am?

That’s the quote from a prayer that David Brainerd, missionary to the New England Indians, wrote 200 years ago. He continued,

Oh, that I might be a flaming fire in the service of the Lord. Here I am, Lord, send me; send me to the ends of the earth...send me from all that is called earthly comfort; send me even to death itself if it be but in Thy service and to promote Thy kingdom.

Brainerd has made a difference for God utterly disproportionate to who he was. However, he did not live to see his impact for the Lord in his lifetime. During his short life which spanned from 1718-1747, David became extremely vulnerable to depression and was dismissed from Yale University for challenging the religious Rector and calling the Rector hypocritical. David developed tuberculosis, and lived his last few months with his good friend, Jonathan Edwards. Brainerd died when he was only 29 years old.

Even though he saw but only a handful of converts throughout his five years of ministry, he was so *aflame for God* that Jonathan Edwards felt led by God to put Brainerd's brief missionary career of five years and his journal into a book that has changed the world where men and women have been challenged to invest their lives for the sake of the lost. It is amazing what God can do through a short life ablaze for his glory. The impact can be all out of proportion to who a person is.

There are many lessons to learn from a life like David Brainerd's, but here's an important one. At times when we grow discouraged about our own lack of perceived impact for Christ and the times of fruitlessness and meager results, Brainerd's story reminds us to exercise caution in assessing our own service for Christ. We don't know the complete story yet and will not this side of heaven.

Thus, let us take courage today from knowing that God continues to use frail and crooked sticks like us to strike the straight blows to advance His kingdom's rule and reign in this world! This is truly the miracle of the ministry.

May He do so today through us for the glory and honor of His great name!

Songs of Worship – *Take My Life/The Potter's Hand*

Message – *“Responding To Christ”*

Scripture Reference: Matthew 11:16-24

Time of Prayer

Song of Worship – *Just As I Am*

Benediction