

Sunday, April 21, 2013

Welcome – Greg Snow

Call to Worship – *Ephesians 2:4-7*

Welcome! We have gathered this morning to corporately respond in worship to the God who made us and loves us. As we prepare to enter this time of worship let us be still for a moment, taking time to pray to our holy God for forgiveness of sins, as well as asking God to prepare our hearts for true worship. Let's pray.

O God, you pour out the Spirit of grace and love. Deliver us from cold hearts and wandering thoughts, that with steady minds and burning zeal we may worship you in spirit and truth. Amen.

Hear the good news of the gospel:

God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ— by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. In Christ, by God's grace, we are saved.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

Song of Praise – *Doxology*

Let Us Go to the House of the Lord – *Psalms 122:1; 84:1-2, 4, 10*

Hear the word of the Lord:

I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD." How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God. Blessed are those who dwell in your house, ever singing your praise! For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.

Song of Worship – *Better Is One Day*

Prayer of Confession – (Source: *The Worship Sourcebook*)

Eternal God,

You do not change. You have revealed yourself to us in your Word. You call us to worship you in spirit and in truth. But we confess that we often worship not your true self but who we wish you to be. We too often ask you to bless what we do rather than seeking to do what you bless. Forgive us for seeking concessions when we should be seeking guidance. Forgive us when our worship shapes you into what we want instead of shaping us into what you want. Help us to meet you here, that we might bow before your unspeakable majesty and so live for you now and ever, in Christ. Amen.

Song of Worship – *Rock of Ages/I Have A Shelter*

Offering - *When Christ delays to help His saints now, you think this is a great mystery, you cannot explain it; but Jesus sees the end from the beginning. Be still, and know that Christ is God.* Robert Murray McCheyne

Look Unto Christ: The Saving Testimony of Charles H. Spurgeon - *Isaiah 45:22 (Source: Eugene Higgins)*

"Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other." Isaiah 45:22

It was a small gospel meeting – little more than a dozen people were present. A snowstorm raged outside. The scheduled speaker was unable to make it to the meeting. A teenager who was earnestly seeking salvation, and who had intended to go to a different meeting, was tired of fighting the storm and turned in to this meeting instead. Here is a description of that meeting in his own words:

"At last a very thin-looking man, a shoemaker, or tailor, or something of that sort, went up into the pulpit to preach ... He was obliged to stick to his text, for the simple reason that he had little else to say. The text was, 'Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.' He did not even pronounce the words rightly, but that did not matter. There was, I thought, a glimpse of hope for me in that text. The preacher began thus: 'My dear friends, this is a very simple text indeed. It says Look. Now lookin' don't take a deal of pains. It ain't liftin' your foot or your finger; it is just Look. Well, a man needn't go to college to learn to look. You may be the biggest fool, and yet you can look. A man needn't be worth a thousand a year to be able to look. Anyone can look; even a child can look. But then the text says, Look unto Me. Ay,' said he, in broad Essex, 'many of ye are lookin' to yourselves, but it is no use lookin' there. You'll never find any comfort in yourselves.

Some look to God the Father. No, look to Him by-and-by. Jesus Christ says, Look unto Me. Some of ye say, "We must wait for the Spirit's working." You have no business with that just now. Look to Christ. The text says, Look unto Me.' Then the good man followed up his text in this way: 'Look unto Me, I am sweatin' great drops of blood. Look unto Me; I am hangin' on the cross. Look unto Me; I am dead and buried. Look unto Me; I rise again. Look unto Me; I ascend to heaven. Look unto Me; I am sittin' at the Father's right hand. O poor sinner, look unto Me! Look unto Me!' When he had gone to about that length, and managed to spin out ten minutes or so, he was at the end of his tether. Then he looked at me under the gallery, and I daresay, with so few present, he knew me to be a stranger. Just fixing his eyes on me, as if he knew all my heart, he said, 'Young man, you look very miserable.' Well, I did; but I had not been accustomed to have remarks made on my personal appearance from the pulpit before. However, it was a good blow struck. He continued: 'And you will always be miserable — miserable in life and miserable in death — if you do not obey my text. But if you obey now, this moment, you will be saved.' Then, lifting up his hands, he shouted, as only a Primitive Methodist could do, 'Young man, look to Jesus Christ. Look! Look! Look! You have nothin' to do but to look and live.' I saw at once the way of salvation ... Like as when the brazen serpent was lifted up, the people only looked and were healed, so it was with me. I had been waiting to do 50 things. But when I heard that word "Look," what a charming word it seemed to me! Oh! I looked until I could almost have looked my eyes away. There and then the cloud was gone, the darkness had rolled away, and that moment I saw the sun; and I could have risen that instant and sung, with the most enthusiastic of them, of the Precious Blood of Christ and the simple faith which looks alone to Him."

In this way, 15-year-old Charles Spurgeon found Christ. Eventually, he would preach for almost 40 years, his audiences usually numbering five or six thousand until he went to heaven on January 31, 1892. But it all started with the realization that as a sinner he needed LIFE, what the Bible calls eternal life. This is the life required in order to live in heaven. Apart from having this, like those serpent-bitten Israelites, we are dying in our sins. The young Spurgeon had thought of "50 things" he might need to do to obtain that life. The stunning truth he learned that day was that it is obtained by a LOOK – a helpless sinner turns to Christ and relies on Him for salvation. When dying Israelites turned to look at the serpent on the pole, there was nothing meritorious, magical, or mighty about the way they looked. The power to save was all on God's part. They simply believed what God said and looked. So, today, "there is LIFE in a LOOK at the crucified One; there is life at this moment for you." In the words of that unknown tradesman,

"Look to Jesus Christ. Look! Look! Look! You have nothing to do but to look and live."

Songs of Worship – *Christ Is Able/Give Me Jesus*

Message – *"Profaning the Sabbath Day"*

Scripture Reference: Nehemiah 13

Time of Prayer

Song of Worship – *I Need Thee*

Benediction