

# Sunday, September 15, 2013

**Welcome** – Greg Snow

**Call to Worship** – *Hebrews 12:28-29; Psalm 91:2; Romans 10:9, 13 (Source; Jeff Purswell/John Piper)*

Here the word of God found in Hebrews 12:28-29...

*Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.*

God's word doesn't **suggest** that we offer acceptable worship unto God, **it commands it**. The church is one authentic manifestation of the entire people of God that right now is worshipping before the throne of God. And when we begin to wrap our minds around that, there springs to mind a thousand reasons to rejoice, to praise, and to sing; and to renounce flippancy, self-display, selfishness, superficiality, sloppiness, and thoughtlessness.

Before the God who is a consuming fire, we don't shuffle in casually. We don't demand our artistic preferences. We don't *merely* gather with our friends. We don't merely sing together. As the people of God, we enter into the very presence of God. Encountering God in this way is the very nature of the church. By definition, to *be* the church is to gather in God's presence and to worship God together. And when we begin singing, we join the glorious worship that takes place unceasingly before the throne of God.

Let's spend the next few moments in silent prayer searching our hearts as we prepare to come before the throne of God. If we want power in God let us worship with all our heart and all our soul and all our strength. God sits ... on the praises of his people. Let's pray.

Silent Prayer

Please stand with me as we prepare to sing praises to our Lord!

Let us worship God.

**"He is our refuge and our fortress, our God, in whom we trust."**

Let us confess with our mouths, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in our hearts that God raised him from the dead.

**"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."**

Since we have met to worship the true and living God, let us call upon Him, believing Him in our hearts, confessing Him with our mouths, and worshipping Him in spirit and in truth.

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

## **I will Exalt You, Lord— Psalm 30**

This is the word of God found in Psalm, Chapter 30...

*I will exalt you, LORD, for you lifted me out of the depths and did not let my enemies gloat over me. LORD my God, I called to you for help, and you healed me. You, LORD, brought me up from the realm of the dead; you spared me from going down to the pit.*

*Sing the praises of the LORD, you his faithful people; praise his holy name. For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime, weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.*

*When I felt secure, I said, “I will never be shaken.” LORD, when you favored me, you made my royal mountain stand firm but when you hid your face, I was dismayed.*

*To you, LORD, I called; to the Lord I cried for mercy: “What is gained if I am silenced, if I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it proclaim your faithfulness? Hear, LORD, and be merciful to me; LORD, be my help.”*

*You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent. LORD my God, I will praise you forever.*

## **Song of Worship – Come Thou Fount**

### **Confession of Sin & Prayer - 1 John 1:8-9**

We are all prone to wander. Prone to leave the straight path God has marked out for us. Prone to drift away from our Master. From self-righteous attitudes and selfish desires to lack of discipline and wrong motivations, in our flesh we are weak. We need Him constantly and completely. Fortunately, we serve a God who unselfishly nailed His perfect Son to a cross so that we may be found righteous by His blood. God's Word assures us in 1 John 1, verses 8-9: *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Take the next few moments to confess your sins to God and to thank Him for the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ.

### **Assurance of Salvation – 1 Timothy 1:15; 1 Peter 2:2**

Hear the good news:

*This saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, that we might be dead to sin, and alive to all that is good.*

I declare to you in the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Songs of Worship** – *Jesus Paid It All/Worthy Is the Lamb*

**Offering** “We are right when, and only when, we stand in the right position relative to God, and we are wrong so far and so long as we stand in any other position. Much of our difficulty as seeking Christians stems from our unwillingness to take God as He is and adjust our lives accordingly. We insist upon trying to modify Him and to bring Him nearer to our own image.” A.W. Tozer

## **Why Did Christ Die** – *John Stott (Source: Tim Challies)*

John Stott, an English Christian leader passed away in 2011 at the age of 90. He was well known for his classic work, *The Cross of Christ*. In the second chapter of the book, Stott asks the question, “Why Did Christ Die?” Stott shows that the truest and deepest answer leads us not to blame others, but to blame ourselves. Listen to an excerpt of this chapter:

Herod and Pilate, Gentiles and Jews ... had together “conspired” against Jesus. More important still, we ourselves are also guilty. If we were in their place, we would have done what they did. Indeed we *have* done it. For whenever we turn away from Christ, we “are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.” We too sacrifice Jesus to our greed like Judas, to our envy like the priests, to our ambition like Pilate. “Were you there when they crucified my Lord?” the old negro spiritual asks. And we must answer, “Yes, we were there.” Not as spectators only, but as participants, guilty participants, plotting, scheming, betraying, bargaining and handing him over to be crucified. We may try to wash our hands of responsibility like Pilate. But our attempt will be as futile as his. For there is blood on our hands.

Before we can begin to see the cross as something done *for* us (leading to faith and worship), we have to see it as something done by us (leading us to repentance). Indeed, “only the man who is prepared to own his share in the guilt of the cross,” wrote Canon Peter Green, “may claim his share in its grace.”

Returning to the question posed in this chapter, Scott writes, “Why did Jesus Christ die? My first answer was that he did not die; he was killed. Now, however, I have to balance this answer with its opposite. He was not killed; he died, giving himself up voluntarily to do his Father’s will.”

What a beautiful ending to a beautiful chapter.

## **Songs of Worship** – *When I Survey the Wondrous Corss/Show Us Christ*

**Message** – “*Peter’s Great Confession*”

*Scripture Reference: Matthew 16:13-20*

**Time of Prayer**

**Song of Worship** – *O Church Arise*

**Benediction**