

Sunday, February 23, 2014

Welcome – Greg Snow

Preparing Our Hearts For Worship

O God, we joyously come together to worship, realizing we need not summon you into our midst, for you are here. We need not call you into the secret places of our hearts, for you are there. We need our eyes of faith to be opened, that we may see you; our ears to be unstopped, that we may hear you; our minds to be sensitive, that we may know you; our hearts to be tender, that we may receive you. Grant each one a blessing, O Lord, as each has need, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

As we prepare to worship the living God let's spend the next few moments in silent prayer, refocusing our mind on Christ, while leaving behind our stagnant thoughts and ways. May God use this worship service to break through our hardness of heart so that we might realize our need and come to him for everlasting life. Let's pray.

Call to Worship – *Psalm 98:1-6*

Sing a new song to the Lord, who has worked wonders, whose right hand and holy arm have brought salvation.

The Lord has made known salvation; has shown justice to the nations; has remembered truth and love for the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Shout to the Lord, all the earth, sing out your joy.

Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp, with the sound of music.

With trumpets and the sound of the horn acclaim the King, the Lord.

Praise the Lord.

The Lord's name be praised!

Song of Worship – *Doxology*

All Praise and Glory Be Yours, O God - (*Ephesians 1:3-18*)

All glorious God, we give you thanks: in your Son, Jesus Christ, you have given us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms. You chose us, before the world was made, to be your holy people, without fault in your sight. You adopted us as your children in Christ. You have set us free by his blood; you have forgiven our sins. You have made known to us your secret purpose, to bring heaven and earth into unity in Christ. You have given us your Holy Spirit, the seal and pledge of our inheritance. All praise and glory be yours, O God, for the richness of your grace, for the splendor of your gifts, and for the wonder of your love.

Song of Praise – Come Thou Fount

Confession of Sin & Prayer – Psalm 51

Hear the repentant words of King David, written after Nathan the prophet had come to inform David of God's judgment against him because of his adultery with Bathsheba, and his murder of Uriah, her husband. These are the words of Psalm 51:

Have mercy on me, O God, in your faithful love, in your great tenderness wipe away my offences; wash me thoroughly from my guilt, purify me from my sin. For I am well aware of my offences, my sin is constantly in mind. Against you, you alone, I have sinned, I have done what you see to be wrong, that you may show your saving justice when you pass sentence, and your victory may appear when you give judgment, remember, I was born guilty, a sinner from the moment of conception. But you delight in sincerity of heart, and in secret you teach me wisdom. God, create in me a clean heart, renew within me a resolute spirit, do not thrust me away from your presence, do not take away from me your spirit of holiness. Give me back the joy of your salvation, sustain in me a generous spirit. Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will speak out your praise. Sacrifice gives you no pleasure, burnt offering you do not desire. Sacrifice to God is a broken spirit, a broken, contrite heart you never scorn.

Like King David, the unconfessed sin in our lives will keep us from having true communion with Christ. King David acknowledged in Psalm 66:18, "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." With these words in mind, let's spend the next few moments in silent prayer confessing our sin to the Living God, in order that the fellowship with our Father be restored and made complete. Let's pray.

Song of Praise – Just As I Am

Assurance of Salvation – Romans 5:8-9

Hear the blessed assurance found in Romans 5, Verses 8-9...

God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!

Know that you are forgiven, and be at peace.

Thanks be to God.

Song of Praise – Blessed Assurance

Offering - *"If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world."* C.S. Lewis

Broken People – Psalm 34:18; 51:17 (Source: Don Fortner/Charles Spurgeon)

Hear the word of the Lord from Psalm 34:18

"The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit."

A broken heart, a contrite spirit, and a subdued will are rare things, especially in this age in which men everywhere are taught to demand their rights; and the church has become a place where man is exalted and enshrined as though he were God. Self-esteem, self-worth, and self-promotion is the cry of the day. Every man does that which is right in his own eyes. All men by nature are exceedingly proud, selfish people.

Preachers today, knowing man's natural pride, have capitalized upon it. They have developed a flesh-pleasing theology of pride. Our forefathers exalted the dignity, the majesty, and the supremacy of the eternal God. But the smooth-tongued preachers of deceit in our day have set themselves to exalt the dignity, majesty, and supremacy of puny man! It seems that religion today is dedicated not to the honor of God, but to the honor of man. Its purpose is to make man feel good about himself. Therefore we hear little about . . .

brokenness of heart,
contrition of the soul, and
the subduing of man's will.

The Lord God declares, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at My Word!" (Isaiah 66:2). God will have broken hearts with which to build His kingdom. Sooner or later, the Lord God will bring us to nothingness before His presence. God's people, all of God's people are a broken people.

No man has ever experienced the grace of God in salvation, until his heart is thoroughly broken before the holy Lord God, revealed in the crucified Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. If ever a man finds out:

who he is,
who God is,
who the Lord Jesus Christ is,
and what He has done for sinners
— he will be a broken man!

When Job saw himself in the presence of his three miserable friends, he vindicated himself. But when he stood in the presence of God, he was a broken man; and he spoke as a broken man. He saw himself in all the hideousness of his sin; and he saw God in all the holiness of His glorious majesty. Then he said, "Behold I am vile! I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear: but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes!" There is no pride and egotism here, no haughtiness, no self-vindication. Once Job had seen the Lord — he was broken, he loathed himself and blamed himself. Once Job saw the Lord — he honored God and vindicated Him. The truly broken heart will always vindicate God, no matter the cost.

This brokenness can be produced in proud, stubborn, sinful men and women — only by the saving revelation of Christ in our hearts. Brokenness is found at the cross — only at the cross.

Charles Spurgeon offers this warning: "If you haven't looked at Christ on the cross, you'll have to look at Him on the throne—with great trembling. The sacrificial death of Christ will be brought before the eyes of all who refuse to accept His free gift of forgiveness and eternal life. In Bethlehem He came in mercy to forgive sin. In the future He will come on the clouds in glory to establish justice. What will we do without a Savior? On the day of judgment there is nothing we can do if we have not trusted Christ."

Have you been to the cross? Have you had the crucified Christ revealed in your heart? Has your heart been broken by the knowledge of the Lord? O Lord, evermore break our hearts before You!

In closing, let us be reminded of the words found in Psalm 51:17, *"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise."*

Songs of Worship – *Give Us Clean Hands/At the Cross*

Message – *"A Much Married Woman"*

Scripture Reference: Matthew 22:23-33

Time of Prayer

Song of Worship – *Give Us Clean Hands*