

Guide for the Preparation for Worship on 27 October 2024

AM Worship – Rev. Stephen Migotsky

Call to Worship: Psalm 96:1-3

Opening Psalm: 146 Praise the Lord! My Soul, O Praise Him!

Confession of Sin

Most holy and merciful Father; We acknowledge and confess before You; Our sinful nature prone to evil and slothful in good; And all our shortcomings and offenses. You alone know how often we have sinned; In wandering from Your ways; In wasting Your gifts; In forgetting Your love. But You, O Lord, have pity upon us; Who are ashamed and sorry for all wherein we have displeased You. Teach us to hate our errors; Cleanse us from our secret faults; And forgive our sins for the sake of Your dear Son. And O most holy and loving Father; Help us we beseech You; To live in Your light and walk in Your ways; According to the commandments of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon: Isaiah 1:18

Psalm of Preparation: 72B Hail To the Lord's Anointed

Old Covenant Readings: 1 Kings 17:8-16, 2 Kings 5:1-14

New Covenant Reading: Luke 4:14-30

Sermon: A Murderous Response to the Good News

Hymn of Response: 442 Blow Ye the Trumpet, Blow!

Confession of Faith: Q/A 1 Heidelberg Catechism (p. 872)

Doxology (Hymn 568)

Closing Hymn: 476 It is Well with My Soul

PM Worship

168 Father, Again in Jesus' Name We Meet

54 By Your Name, O God, Now Save Me

386 Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending

Old Covenant Reading: Psalm 37:1-11

New Covenant Reading: Jude 14-16

Sermon Title: *Living in Light of the Second Coming*

Adult Sunday School: Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 44

**Q. What is God's will for you
in the tenth commandment?**

A. That not even the slightest desire or thought
contrary to any one of God's commandments
should ever arise in our hearts.

Rather, with all our hearts
we should always hate sin
and delight in all righteousness.

**Q. But can those converted to God
keep these commandments perfectly?**

A. No.

In this life even the holiest
have only a small beginning of this obedience.
Nevertheless, with all seriousness of purpose,
they do begin to live
according to all, not only some,
of God's commandments.

**Q. Since no one in this life
can keep the Ten Commandments perfectly,
why does God want them
preached so pointedly?**

A. First, so that all our life long
we may more and more come to know our sinful nature
and thus more eagerly seek the forgiveness of sins
and righteousness in Christ.
Second, so that
we may never stop striving
and never stop praying to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit,
so that we may be renewed more and more after God's image,
until after this life we reach our goal:
perfection.

Suggested Preparations

Monday (10/21) Read and discuss Luke 4:14-30

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, “Today this

Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, “Is not this Joseph’s son?” And he said to them, “Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, “Physician, heal yourself.” What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.” And he said, “Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.” When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. But passing through their midst, he went away. (ESV)

David Garland writes:

Jesus’ application of one of the Servant Songs in Isaiah to Himself does more than announce good news to beleaguered people. He implies that He is the Anointed One, the Messiah, and the Servant of the LORD, who is to fulfill the program outlined in Isaiah. The sermon does not go further than announcing, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing,” because the “content” of the sermon lies in the phrases of the text outlining various ways in which Jesus will bring salvation (Byrne).”

Jesus’ presence alters the meaning of the present. Jesus announces good news for the poor, not because God is about to do something, but because God is already acting to forgive sins and release the oppressed from Satan’s thralldom. It implicitly calls for repentance – a call that was central to the preaching of John the Baptist. Tannehill writes: “God is powerfully at work in the world changing things, and this provides a special opportunity in which you, too, can change. In this context, repentance is not an isolated human action. It is a human action, which theologically discerned, is also diving action in individuals and societies.”

What short-circuits that divine action is the “we first” mentality that Jesus’ encounters in the audience, who turns a deaf ear to what God is doing for the world. It assumes that “our” Messiah must serve our needs and must do so first. The Nazareth assembly apparently understood the fulfillment of the Isaiah prophecy to mean that something wonderful would happen to them. True. The Isaian context talks about the glory of the LORD rising upon Israel (Isaiah 60:1-2), accompanied by material abundance (60:5-7) and the submission of the nations (60:10-14). They wanted their Messiah to fulfill the golden words, “I will make you the everlasting prided and the joy of all generations” (60:15). Consequently, they expected to be especially favored by the year of the LORD’s favor.

But Jesus lives under a divine “must” and was not sent just to serve the people of Nazareth or just to do their bidding. When He makes that clear, their admiring wonderment hardens into venomous hatred. The evident selfishness and provincialism of the Nazareth gathering disqualifies them, because “those who stand upon their rights and insist on preferential treatment are not likely to appreciate One who offers the change to spend and be spent in the service of others (Caird).”

Jesus has resisted Satan’s demands; He will resist any demands to please a hometown crowd. He does not do miracles on call.

Read or sing Psalm 146 Praise the Lord! My Soul, O Praise Him!

Tuesday (10/22) Read and discuss Matthew 22:23-33

The same day Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection, and they asked him a question, saying, “Teacher, Moses said, ‘If a man dies having no children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother.’ Now there were seven brothers among us. The first married and died, and having no offspring left his wife to his brother. So too the second and third, down to the seventh. After them all, the woman died. In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be? For they all had her.”

But Jesus answered them, “You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not God of the dead, but of the living.” [33] And when the crowd heard it, they were astonished at his teaching. (ESV)

Tom Wright comments:

There are several things going on all together, both in the story the Sadducees tell and in the reply Jesus gives.

First, they quote what is to us a rather strange biblical law (Deuteronomy 25:5): that if a married man dies childless, his brother must marry the widow, and the children of the new marriage will count as the heirs of the dead man. This law was vital for the people of God BC, to whom God had made promises about the continuance of their ‘seed’ or ‘family.’ So far as possible, the people were to prevent family lines and tribal identity from dying out in Israel. This was one of the ways of doing so.

But Jesus has come, it seems, to bring about God’s renewal of His people. They will now be a worldwide family, marked not by ethnic origin or tribal identity but by the new creation of the gospel. The old laws designed to keep the family going will be irrelevant. That’s the first reason for rejecting their story.

Second, when God raises people to new life they will have passed into a new world order in which death itself has been left behind (Otherwise, resurrection would simply collapse into reincarnation, an endless cycle of death and rebirth). But this will mean a whole new kind of life, which at present we can only guess at. Our present bodies are decaying all the time; it's very hard to think what a non-decaying body would be like. Similarly, there will be no need to propagate the species, and hence no need for sexual activity. Again, most humans find it very hard to think of a non-sexual world, but that's what Jesus probably means when He says that resurrected people will be 'like angels.' (If you grumble that this makes God a killjoy, remember what C.S. Lewis said: asking if there will be sexual activity in the future world is like the child who, on being told that sex was the greatest pleasure known to humans, assumed that people ate chocolates as the same time).

In particular, third, what the Sadducees were missing was any real engagement with the meaning of the Bible, and any real awareness of just how great and powerful the creator God is. They claimed to base themselves on the books of Moses, but they had missed the real thrust of the whole thing. Israel's God was and is the creator of the world, who is content to describe Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob even though they died long ago. He is holding them in life still, and one day they will be raised along with all God's people, past, present, and future, to enjoy the new world that God will make.

Read or sing Psalm 72B Hail To the Lord's Anointed

Wednesday (10/23) Read and discuss 2 Kings 5:1–14

Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master and in high favor, because by him the LORD had given victory to Syria. He was a mighty man of valor, but he was a leper. Now the Syrians on one of their raids had carried off a little girl from the land of Israel, and she worked in the service of Naaman's wife. She said to her mistress, "Would that my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy." So Naaman went in and told his lord, "Thus and so spoke the girl from the land of Israel." And the king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel."

So he went, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothing. And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which read, "When this letter reaches you, know that I have sent to you Naaman my servant, that you may cure him of his leprosy." And when the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man sends word to me to cure a man of his leprosy? Only consider, and see how he is seeking a quarrel with me."

But when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent to the king, saying, “Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come now to me, that he may know that there is a prophet in Israel.” So Naaman came with his horses and chariots and stood at the door of Elisha’s house. And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, “Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored, and you shall be clean.” But Naaman was angry and went away, saying, “Behold, I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call upon the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?” So he turned and went away in a rage. But his servants came near and said to him, “My father, it is a great word the prophet has spoken to you; will you not do it? Has he actually said to you, ‘Wash, and be clean’?” So he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God, and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. (ESV)

Dale Ralph Davis writes:

Now the whole story hangs on this little lass and yet we don’t even know her name. As she went about her housework one day she mentioned how burdened at heart she was over her poor master’s condition. There was a prophet in Samaria who could bring healing to him (v. 3)! Naaman, apparently desperate, decided it was worth a try (v. 4). The rest is history.

But chip away at verse 2 and sense the personal tragedy in it. Were the girl’s parents killed in the Aramaeans’ raid? She was spirited off by raiders, never to return home again, never to see loved ones again, living the rest of her life in servitude in a foreign country (though one could have drawn a worse lot than working for Mrs. Naaman). What was it like when she was wrenched away that Thursday morning? Was she not scared out of her wits? When Israelites received their electric bills there would be no enclosure with a picture of this lass with the legend, ‘Have you seen this girl?,’ along with the date of her disappearance. No, she was gone for good – after probably the worst trauma of her young life. Whatever dreams she had of personal fulfillment or simply of life among her family and village had been smashed. And, apparently, she was from a godly home, from a remnant family, for she knew of Elisha and had confidence that God’s power operated through the prophet (v. 3).

And yet, in Yahweh’s providence, in this story everything hangs on this little girl, on her tragic servitude. Without her Naaman would never have been healed. [Naaman would never have been converted]. People are often brought into the kingdom of God at great cost to other people.

Read or sing Hymn 442 Blow Ye the Trumpet, Blow!

Thursday (10/24) Read and discuss Psalm 37:1–11

Fret not yourself because of evildoers;
 be not envious of wrongdoers!
For they will soon fade like the grass
 and wither like the green herb.

Trust in the LORD, and do good;
 dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness.
Delight yourself in the LORD,
 and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Commit your way to the LORD;
 trust in him, and he will act.
He will bring forth your righteousness as the light,
 and your justice as the noonday.

Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him;
 fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way,
 over the man who carries out evil devices!

Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath!
 Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil.
For the evildoers shall be cut off,
 but those who wait for the LORD shall inherit the land.

In just a little while, the wicked will be no more;
 though you look carefully at his place, he will not be there.
But the meek shall inherit the land
 and delight themselves in abundant peace. (ESV)

Commenting on verses 10 and 11, Christopher Ash writes:

“In just a little while” reminds us that the return of the Lord Jesus and the final judgment is always coming soon. “To be no more” implies not extinction but rather exclusion from the new creation. Psalm 37:10 conjures up almost a cartoon picture of someone looking carefully at the place where the wicked man had seemed so powerful and so permanent, and yet now he can find no trace of him! There will be no residue of impenitent wickedness in the new creation. Luther notes a common proverb of his day: “The greater the scoundrel, the greater his success”; this is how things appear to us, but as Luther observes, the word of God refutes this notion outright.

If Psalm 37:10 assures us who will be absent, 37:11 tells us who will find a place in the land. They are the meek, a word very close in meaning to “afflicted.” For meekness is rooted in the experience of being persecuted and troubled. These, according to Jesus, “shall inherit the earth.” Psalm 37:11 expands on this inheritance in terms of delight ... in abundant peace,

a wholeness that necessarily comes to those who delight in the LORD, who is the source of peace.

Friday (10/25) Read and discuss Jude 14–16

It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own sinful desires; they are loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage. (ESV)

Tom Schreiner writes:

Jude emphasizes that no unbelieving person will escape the judgment. He will “convict all the ungodly.” ... Another connection to verse 4 exists in that the judgment is due to the “ungodliness” of the opponents. Indeed, Jude uses three different terms from the “ungodly” word group in this verse. The false teachers lived their lives in disregard of God, as if He were not the sovereign and mighty God who deserves praise and honor and obedience.

The judgment is specifically attributed to two matters – the evil works and words of the false teachers. We should note that the judgment includes “all the ungodly acts that they have done.” No evil action is exempted; nothing wicked is erased from God’s database. Those who have rejected God demonstrate such by the way they live. Second, the judgment also is executed because of the “harsh things ungodly sinners have said.” Their harsh words stem from rebellion against God because they are “said against Him”

Read or sing Hymn 476 It is Well with My Soul

Saturday (10/26) Read and discuss Luke 4:14-30

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,

to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
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And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" And he said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, "'Physician, heal yourself.'" What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.'" And he said, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. But passing through their midst, he went away. (ESV)

David Garland writes:

All are undeserving, but Jesus announces that this is the year of the LORD's acceptance. ... This welcome is extended with the offer of release, because "sin is not [only] a situation of guilt that has to be forgiven as a plight from which one needs to be set free (Byrne)." Stenschke captures the thrust of Luke-Acts in concluding that "people need to be saved because of their alienation from God, which shows itself in their attitude towards Him, towards themselves and their fellow people, and which culminated in the rejection of Jesus." All, both Jew and Gentile, high and low, rich and poor, religious and irreligious, are mired in the same plight.

These references to grace extended to Gentiles in the Old Testament foreshadow the development of the Gentile mission in Acts. Tannehill notes: "At the point in Acts where the mission begins to spread to the Gentiles, the Nazareth scene is recalled" (Acts 10:36-38). They do not foreshadow the movement of the gospel from Jew to Gentile, as if the Jew were to be rejected. God intends "to save and heal both together." Crockett contends, "For Luke, God's spirit and power are fully manifested when Jew and gentile are brought together within the divine purpose."

Jesus uses Scripture to announce the fulfillment of God's promises but also to redefine the mission of the community of God in light of that fulfillment. He seeks to insert a wide-angle lens on their perspective of the world so that they will focus on more than their narrow self-interest. He does more than speak gracious words, but by His words and His ensuing actions, He intends to give them a vision so that they can get beyond wanting God to do

something only for themselves and see what God is doing for the world through Him.

Prayer: Please lift up tomorrow's morning and evening worship services.