

WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday, September 22, 2019

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God;
and so we are.

1 John 3:1

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

ENTERING INTO WORSHIP

Greeting and Blessing*

Responsive Reading*

Psalm 145 (p. 838)

Hymn of Preparation*

“All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name!” Hymn 296

Congregational Confession of Sin

Leader: Heavenly Father, we approach your throne of grace this morning through our Savior, Jesus Christ, seeking forgiveness for our disobedience.

All: We have sinned against you and other people with our thoughts, words, and deeds. Instead of fleeing from sin, we gave into temptation. Our hearts are weighed down as we consider how we have offended you, our loving Father.

Leader: Forgive us, we pray, and cause us to keep in step with the Holy Spirit. For we are your workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which you prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

All: Thank you for the assurance we have of forgiveness through the blood of our Savior, who lives and reigns with you in unity with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Private Confession of Our Sins

Assurance of Forgiveness

Colossians 3:12-14

Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

* *Congregation is requested to stand, if able.*

ADORATION AND PRAISE

First Reading*

Isaiah 41:21 - 42:9

Congregational Response

“O Word of God Incarnate” Hymn 140

Confession of Faith

The Westminster Shorter Catechism

Q. 70. *Which is the seventh commandment?*

A. The seventh commandment is, “You shall not commit adultery.”

Q. 71. *What is required in the seventh commandment?*

A. The seventh commandment requires the preservation of our own and our neighbor’s chastity, in heart, speech, and behavior.

Q. 72. *What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?*

A. The seventh commandment forbids all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Stewardship

Tithes and Offerings

Doxology*

Hymn 732

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Lord’s Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

Second Reading*

Matthew 3

Congregational Response (Psalm 150)

“Hallelujah! Hallelujah!” Hymn 10

Pastoral Prayer (based on Isaiah 1:16-17)

Sermon

“Children of God”
John 1:6-13

Pastor Ben Muresan

GOD'S BLESSING ON HIS PEOPLE

Hymn of Thanksgiving*

“My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less” Hymn 521

Benediction*

Congregational Benediction Response*

(Sung to Stuttgart [Hymn 5])

May the grace of Christ our Savior and the Father's boundless love,
with the Holy Spirit's favor, rest upon us from above.
Thus may we abide in union with each other and the Lord,
and possess, in sweet communion, joys which earth cannot afford. Amen.

LORD'S DAY DEVOTION AND QUESTIONS

As children of God, we have received the highest blessing imaginable. We are not merely tolerated by God, but we are loved with an everlasting love, as a father loves his children and cares for their every need. John expresses this great wonder when he writes, “See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are” (1 John 3:1).

In his book, *Knowing God*, J.I. Packer argues that while justification is the immediate consequence of Jesus' death on the cross for his people, it is not the highest blessing of the gospel in the order of salvation. Packer writes, “Adoption is higher because of the richer relationship with God that it involves.” Justification is a legal term that teaches we are declared not guilty because our sin has been imputed to Christ and his perfect obedience has been imputed to us. Justification assures us that our Judge is no longer wrathful toward us. This is wonderful news, but Packer argues that we need to probe deeper. He writes, “But contrast this, now, with adoption. Adoption is a family idea, conceived in terms of love, and viewing God as Father. In adoption, God takes us into his family and fellowship—he establishes us as his children and heirs. Closeness, affection, and generosity are at the heart of the relationship.” Packer concludes, “To be right with God the Judge is a great thing, but to be loved and cared for by God the Father is greater.”

1. For review, read John 1:4-5. What kind of life does Jesus have and give? Why is the darkness unable to overcome the Light, and how should this reality affect our daily lives?
2. What was John the Baptist's role in redemptive history according to Matthew 3? What does the word “witness” mean in John 1:6-8? How can we bear witness about the Light?
3. According to John 1:11, why did some in Israel reject Jesus? Read and consider the list of woes Jesus speaks against the leaders of Israel in Matthew 23.
4. How do we become the children of God according to John 1:12-13? What are the blessings of adoption as explained in Westminster Confession of Faith chapter 12? Do you agree with what J.I. Packer wrote about adoption in the quote above?
5. In preparation for next Sunday, read John 1:14-18. What can you recall from your Bible reading about the Tent of Meeting that God instructed Israel to construct? How do you think the Tent of Meeting foreshadowed or pointed to Christ?

