

4/3/2011

THE PSALM AND THE CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 100

Lay Minister: 1 Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.

People: 2 Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.

Lay Minister: 3 Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his;

People: we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

Lay Minister: 4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;

People: give thanks to him and praise his name.

Lay Minister: 5 For the LORD is good and his love endures forever;

People: his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Lay Minister: We worship the Lord with Gladness, coming before Him with joyful songs, for He is

good, and His love endures forever.

People: We worship at the call and grace of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy

Spirit. Amen.

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY Almighty and Everlasting God, you loved us eternally through the sacrifice of your Son. Help us by your forgiving love to be willing to sacrifice to love others in your name. Give us your guidance not be an opportunity for disagreement, but rather an opportunity for growth and encouragement. We ask these prayers through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Exodus 20:8-11

(God establishes a Sabbath Day)

8 "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. 11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

THE EPISTLE LESSON Romans 14:1-9

(Jesus' healing on the Sabbath causes division among the Jews.)

1 Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters. 2 One man's faith allows him to eat everything, but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. 3 The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him. 4 Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

5 One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. 6 He who regards one day as special, does so to the Lord. He who eats meat, eats to the Lord, for he

gives thanks to God; and he who abstains, does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God. 7 For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. 8 If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

9 For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living.

THE GOSPEL LESSON John 9:1-16

(Jesus' healing on the Sabbath causes division among the Jews.)

1 As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3 "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. 4 As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. 5 While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

6 Having said this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. 7 "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means Sent). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing. 8 His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" 9 Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him." But he himself insisted, "I am the man." 10 "How then were your eyes opened?" they demanded. 11 He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see." 12 "Where is this man?" they asked him. "I don't know," he said.

13 They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. 14 Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. 15 Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see." 16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others asked, "How can a sinner do such miraculous signs?" So they were divided.

THE SERMON "The Sacrifice of Love – **'Worship Wars–Worship Encouragement'**" Romans 14

This week there was a march in Alaska called, "Choose Respect." The purpose of this march was to support positive relationships, and specifically to oppose abuse. Unfortunately, abuse of spouses, abuse of children, abuse of elders has become more common. So, the blessing of family and the blessing of home has often lost its blessing, and become instead a place of trouble.

God has given us the Sabbath. In the Third Commandment we are told: Exodus 20:8 "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." The Sabbath is meant as a **BLESSING**.

Yet there have been problems in God's church surrounding God's intended blessings of the Sabbath. In Jesus' time there were conflicts over how to keep the commandment. **John 9:16**

Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others asked, "How can a sinner do such miraculous signs?" So they were divided.

In the early Christian Church, Paul had to write about which day to observe the Sabbath.

Romans 14:5 One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.

Unfortunately, instead of always being a blessing, the Sabbath has been an opportunity for **CONFLICT**.

And, unfortunately, there continue to be conflicts surrounding worship today. In fact, some articles have been written entitled, "Worship **WARS**." People have disagreed about

- Traditional or Contemporary.
- Charismatic or not charismatic.
- Organ or guitars
- Hymnal or no hymnal.
- Screens or no screens
- Or you *can probably name other items*.

People have their own opinions, often strongly held. So, as in Jesus' time so it is even today. Instead of being a **BLESSING**, sometimes Worship is an opportunity for conflict, no matter which denomination or congregation.

In Romans 14 God speaks through Paul to call people to put aside their opinions and conflict for love and peace as we serve *GOD in worship!* **1 Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters. . . . 5 One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. . . 7 For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. 8 If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.** What is most important is our relationship with God and His plan for worship.

God's plan for worship can be seen in the shape of a **CROSS**.

Worship is about our relationship with **GOD**. That's the vertical staff of the cross.

Worship is also about our relationship with **OTHER CHRISTIANS**. horizontal staff

Two verses call us to see God's view of Christian Worship, Colossians 3:15-17, and Hebrews 10:23-25.

Colossians 3:15-17 15 Let the PEACE OF CHRIST rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. 16 Let the WORD OF CHRIST dwell in you richly as you TEACH AND ADMONISH ONE ANOTHER with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with GRATITUDE in your hearts to God. 17 And WHATEVER YOU DO, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving THANKS to God the

Father through him.

Hebrews 10:23-25 23 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is FAITHFUL. 24 And let us consider how we may SPUR ONE ANOTHER on toward LOVE and GOOD DEEDS. 25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another -- and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

According to Colossians 3, God comes to us in worship through the PEACE of Christ (verse 15), and the WORD of Christ (verse 16). We respond to God with GRATITUDE, (v. 16), THANKS (v. 17) and doing EVERYTHING in Jesus' name. God loves us and we praise Him!

However, worship is also about TEACHING and ADMONISHING (or encouraging) one another with songs and other parts of worship. Worship is a time we love and encourage others.

Hebrews tells us that God is FAITHFUL (v. 23), so we have HOPE in Him. This shows our relationship with our faithful Lord. We reflect God's love by spurring one another on to LOVE and GOOD WORKS, (v. 24), and by MEETING TOGETHER (v. 25) and ENCOURAGING one another. Do you see, we receive God's love, and then share it with others.

Please practice this act of worship. For our relationship with God, put your arm around your neighbor, point to heaven, and give a squeeze. We are being loved and thanking God.. Now, put your hands on the shoulders of the other, look at them, and then give a hug. We love one another in life's challenges, because God loved us in Jesus.

On Friendship Sunday, and every Sunday, our focus in worship starts with GOD. Our goal in worship is not only thanks and praise to God, and our growth, but loving and ENCOURAGING one another.

The march was held this week because what is intended as a blessing has become a curse in some situations through people's sin. God calls us to sets aside our own opinions and seek His purposes when it comes to worship, His purposes of of strengthening our relationship with Him, and of strengthening our relationships with other Christians. That is the Sacrifice of Love.