

MORNING WORSHIP CELEBRATION

The Lord's Day – Third Sunday of Advent

December 11, 2022

10:30 a.m.

Welcome & Announcements: Pastor Jeff Birch

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Prelude: Jan Driessnack, soprano and Lynne Fowlkes, flute

A Lute Carol

Call to Worship: Psalm 96:10-13

The Invocation

Hymn of Praise 208

O Come, All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;

Chorus

O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.

God of God, Light of Light;
Lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Very God, begotten, not created; (chorus)

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above:
Glory to God in the highest; (chorus)

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, late in flesh appearing; (chorus)

Confession of Sin

Need of Confession: 1 John 5:21

²¹ Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

Personal Confession of Sin

Corporate Confession of Sin (Unison)

Our lives are cluttered, Lord Jesus, by too many things and too much to do. We are driven by the need to succeed and distracted from our service. We have often lost our way. Forgive us. Let us, like Mary, find the one thing that is needed and sit at your feet. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon: Colossians 1:13-14

¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Song of Praise 203

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! the herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With th’angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

Chorus

Hark! the herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King.”

Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold him come,
Offspring of the Virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the God-head see;
Hail th’incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with men to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel. (Chorus)

Hail, the heav’n born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Ris’n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that men no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth. (Chorus)

The Lord’s Prayer (unison) / Pastoral 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. Amen.

Giving of Tithes and Offerings

Offertory: Dick Forrester, baritone

People Need the Lord

Doxology

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.

***Sermon Series: The Indescribable Gift
Our Great High Priest
Hebrews 4:14-5:10 (ESV)***

¹⁴ Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

⁵ For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. ² He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. ³ Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. ⁴ And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was.

⁵ So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him,

“You are my Son, today I have begotten you”; ⁶ as he says also in another place, “You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.”

⁷ In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. ⁸ Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. ⁹ And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, ¹⁰ being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Truly experiencing Jesus, meeting the God of the Bible always impacts us, always changes us. A divine encounter will never leave you unchanged. Maybe that is why many of us, do the very Christian things, but to actually meet God, to have a divine encounter, we avoid that, because deep down, we do not want to be changed.

Well, how does God come down and change us? There is no greater issue in life. There is nothing more important.

We have been learning that the people to whom the author of Hebrews was writing have embraced Christianity, they have met Jesus and are following Jesus but are tempted, due to the difficulties

of life to turn back, to give up, to quit in the Christian life. The author is encouraging them to persevere, to not give up. And to this end he is demonstrating the superiority of Jesus. Jesus is greater than the angels. Jesus is greater than Moses. Now Jesus is greater than all the priests, the high priests of the Old Testament.

We learn three things about Jesus the Great High Priest from this passage.

- I. Human Understanding
- II. Legal Representation
- III. Eternal Salvation

Reflection

“Because Christ has died, Christ has risen, and Christ will come again, our long-term worst-case scenario is *not* that we will rot in the ground. On the contrary, our long-term worst-case scenario is resurrection, everlasting life, and an ever-increasing, imperishable bliss. One hundred years, ten thousand years, and a thousand billion years from now, this is as bad as it will ever get for us.”
(Scott Sauls, *Beautiful People Don't Just Happen*)

Hymn 252 (vss. 1-2)

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God:
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

The Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Hymn 252 (vss. 3-4)

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

See, from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down:
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

The Benediction

Postlude