TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Daniel Balch / Opening Prayer by: Don Taylor
Morning Assembly Song Leader: Bryant Perkins

#1 Praise Medley
#450 Give Me the Bible

Scripture Reading by: Parker Balch
#364 Come Share the Lord

Communion Devotional by: Jerry Mallernee
Lord's Supper and Contribution

#162 All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name
Sermon by: Guest Speaker: Jonathan Oliver

#911 Bring Christ Your Broken Life
#705 A Common Love
Closing Prayer by: Zach Arthur

We will me watching the 3rd season of
The Chosen at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday nights
in the fellowship room.

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

June 30, 2024

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

Litmus Test

If there were a test available that could measure our level of spiritualty or faithfulness, how would we score? On the surface it appears that most of the time we feel things are going well and we are doing a pretty good job of being a Christian. I imagine most of us, if asked, "How are you doing?" would answer, "I'm doing fine."

But I wonder if that is not like the pat answers we give in the foyer when greeting each other on Sundays; we say "I'm fine" when, beneath the surface, that isn't really the case at all. We may not be growing spiritually. But what if we had a sort of benchmark that could really measure the level of our commitment to Christ and of our discipleship?

We have something like that in **John 13,** a kind of measuring stick to show us how well we are doing spiritually. This is the evening before Jesus' arrest later that night. He and the disciples are all in the upper room eating the Passover meal. The evening began with Jesus washing their feet, teaching them humility. Then they began to eat, and while they were eating, Jesus said that one of them that night will betray Him. This immediately caused questioning and turmoil, and in the midst of all that Judas quietly leaves. In the aftermath, Jesus begins to give indications of what it means to follow him.

Desire to Glorify God
When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him." **(Jn 13:31).** In context, it is evident he is talking about his own crucifixion. But how can any glory come out of that, out of suffering, pain, and death? On the cross, Jesus defeated Satan. He became the sacrifice to redeem us from all the sins that separate us from God. He reconciled us to God.

But there is more: *God will be glorified through me.* How could God be glorified through Jesus Christ? Again, the answer is found in the cross. On the cross Jesus reveals most fully what God is really like. We see the love and mercy and grace of God; we also see his righteousness, justice, and holiness. We see his power. It is all displayed there. For us, then, effectively whenever we show the world the love and mercy and grace of God in our lives, then God is being glorified through us.

How do we measure up when evaluated by this standard? Are we busy trying to glorify ourselves? Or are we trying to glorify God?

Love for One Another
A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. **(Jn 13:34-35).** The world will know we are Christians by our love. Not by our Scripture

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Steve Ward is at home and continues with health problems.

Jo Ella McKewen is in the hospital with breathing problems.

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Steve Ward, Caitlin Smith, Virginia Cole, Ken Coleman, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Donna Wilson, Jo Ella McKewen, Oscar Cantu, Jennifer Stelly, Ken Coleman, Dr. Hugo Thomas

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts, Willo Dean Ellis, Debbie Merritt

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique , Rod Kyle in the South Pacific, Mani Pagidopali in India

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister meeting Monday, July 1st at 5:30 p.m.

We are working a new Friends and Family directory. A copy of the old one has been placed on the bulletin board. Please check your name, address, phone number and email to make sure it is correct.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Tuesday, July 2nd at 8:00 a.m.

Elders	Deacons	Minister
Ken Coleman	Zach Arthur	Bryant Perkins
Bobby Rader	Daniel Balch	
Don Taylor	Danny Balch	
Robert Ward	Walden David	
	Gus Tristan	

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memorization. Not by the amount of money we have given. Of course, those things are important, and they ideally are even rooted in love. But Christ wants His followers to be known for their love for one another.

So consider how we serve each another. How we treat those among us who are hurting. How we minister to those who are suffering distress. How we restore the sinner. How we treat the lost. How do we measure up? Do me show the love of Christ to others? Or is our faith intellectual, sound, academic—but not lived in love?

Loyalty to Jesus

Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward." Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times." **(Jn 13:36-38)**

Do we have an unswerving loyalty that will always be there? We are told in **Matthew** that, immediately after his confession that Jesus was the Messiah, once he began to unfold what that actually meant—the road to the cross—that Peter turned around and rebuked him: *Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.* **(Mt 16:22).** It seems as if Peter was always being tempted by Satan, and Jesus was always praying for Peter to be able to resist those temptations.

Why? What was the matter with Peter? It was Peter who wanted to walk on water. It was Peter who wanted to build 3 tabernacles on the Mt. of Transfiguration. It was Peter who was always speaking, always charging ahead, always demonstrating his loyalty—at least with his words.

But there is a great difference between proclaiming your loyalty and practicing it. Peter was always proclaiming his loyalty, but not always willing to practice it. And I think we're very much like he was. "You're going to die, Lord?" he asks. "Well, if you die, I'll die with you." It is easy to say, "I would die for the Lord." It's a much different thing to actually do it; many of us aren't even loyal enough to even show up when the church is gathered if there is some sort of conflict, let alone actually do anything demanding.

Instead, when the soldiers showed up, Peter followed at a distance. And when you follow Jesus at a distance—when you aren't actually committed—you usually end up in the wrong crowd. That is exactly what happened to Peter. He ended up in the High Priest's courtyard just outside where Jesus was being put on trial. One of them asked him, "You're one of the Nazarene's followers, aren't you?" "Not me," Peter said. Three times he was asked. And three times he denied even knowing Jesus. Yes, Peter found out that it was much easier to proclaim his loyalty than to practice it.

Conclusion

How do we measure up on these three tests? Is your life one that brings glory to God? Is your life one that is filled with love for the family of God, for His people? Is your life one of unswerving loyalty to Jesus? It doesn't matter how many crosses we may wear, how many bumper stickers we have on our car. What really matters is our commitment to follow Jesus.

Bryant Perkins