

WORSHIPING ON THE LORD'S DAY

April 3, 2016

Worship, as God intended, is a supernatural event. As we enter into this service of worship, we cross the threshold of the secular to the sacred, from the common to the uncommon, from the profane to the holy. Prepare yourself therefore for this most holy convocation!

Prelude

Worship Theme

God is Omnipotent

Psalm 66:5-7: "Come and see the works of God, *who is* awesome in *His* deeds toward the sons of men. He turned the sea into dry land; they passed through the river on foot; there let us rejoice in Him! He rules by His might forever; His eyes keep watch on the nations; let not the rebellious exalt themselves. [Selah]."

God Calls us to Worship Before the Cross Gen. 17:1-3a

+We Adore Him

Hymn #53, "Praise To The Lord"

Based on Psalm 103

We Confess Our Sin

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, before You all the nations are as nothing. You see to the depths of our souls; You know all our secret sins. Forgive us our mental idolatry, creating in our minds a god we can control. Forgive us our resisting the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. Forgive us our seeking private comforts where we avoid the service of God and man. Forgive us our stubborn wills which refuse to follow You.

Lord, wash away our sins by the blood of Jesus Christ. Let grace reign through righteousness in our hearts. Make us channels of love and truth. Through Christ's blood, Amen!

We Thank Him For His Forgiveness

Hymn #119, "I Sing Th' Almighty Pow'r"

God Calls us to Worship Thru Dedication Gen. 17:9

We Give Him Our Offering & Concerns

We Give Him Ourselves

Hymn #168, "I Greet Thee"

God Calls us to Worship Thru Fellowship Jer. 31:31-32

We Read His Word

Sermon

*We Partake Of The Lord's Supper

Hymn #289, "A Hymn Of Glory Let Us Sing"

God Blesses us in the Benediction

Welcome and Announcements

Postlude

(Containers have been placed at the front for communion cups and small trash)

+You are invited to raise your hands during the prayer of adoration.

*Visitors, please see note below on the Lord's Supper.

The Powerful Message of Easter, Pt. 4

Matthew 27:45-54

Study Notes for April 3, 2016

I. Introduction

II. The Powerful Message of Easter, Mt. 27:45-54.

- A. A Message of Judgment, v. 45.
- B. A Message of Sacrifice, vv. 46-49.
- C. A Message of Restored Fellowship, vv. 50-51a.

D. A Message of Victory, vv. 50, 51b-53.

1. The Consequence of Christ's Death, vv. 51-53.

V. 51a

V. 51b

VV. 52-53: When Jesus died, many who had long since been laid in the grave were raised from the dead!...

1. As we examine this text we confess at the outset that a passage like this is quite amazing and fraught with confusion: Who are these "saints"? When they were raised, did they immediately leave their tombs? Or did they stay around their graves for three days until after Christ rose from the dead? To whom did they appear? Did they resume the life they had before they died? Did they remain on the earth?
2. The questions go on and on- many of which are unanswerable! Yet we are NOT at a loss when it comes to some of the particulars- most notably, the significance of this resurrection. Notice...

2. The Message Contained in Christ's Death, vv. 52-53.

V. 52: It has been suggested...

...when Jesus died, a resurrection occurred! Previously dead saints- ones under the Old Covenant who had trusted in Christ- came from the abode of the righteous spirits and were joined with their bodies. Why? Look with me at v. 53 for a clue...

V. 53: That they "appeared to many" indicates that a message is being proclaimed in Christ's death- that's the point of the expression! So what is that message?

...this indeed is an essential part of the gospel message! In Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, we behold our own (cf. 1 Thes. 4:14-17; Rom. 6:8; Jn. 11:25-26; 1 Jn. 3:2)...

***Point:** Amazingly and gloriously, this promise was partially realized the day that Christ rose and brought with Him a foretaste of the future that awaits us all: the resurrection of our bodies and the reunion of these bodies with our souls!

***Illustration:** Turn with me to Heb. 6:4-6a- this helps to explain our text...

...in the middle of the Hebrew's text, did you notice the phrase in v. 5? During the first advent of Christ, "the powers of the age to come" were slightly revealed such that we got a glimpse, a tiny peek, at them. What are these powers? They are foretastes of the glory that awaits us in Christ- no more death, illness, sickness, suffering, hunger, deprivation, or disease! That is what occurred when Christ died. The veil which separates this world from the next was lifted, and we got a glimpse at our future!!!

***Where We Live**

1. Consider 1 Cor. 15:50-53... From this passage we learn that someday we will stand before the throne of grace in the very same bodies in which we exist today; yet they will be glorified! And we will forever serve in the presence of God- no longer beset by the sin and miseries of this life! What a day that will be!!! It reminds me of a story that came out of WWI...
2. Easter is a Powerful Message of Victory as Christ's death and resurrection serve as a foretaste of that glorious time when each of us will stir, rise, shake ourselves, and stand in amazement at the sight of the thousands of glorified saints risen in Christ. How ought we to respond to so powerful a message? Notice the text...

3. The Only Valid Response, v. 54.

The only valid response to Christ's death and resurrection-power is that of worship! And yet, it is amazing that in the midst of such clear Biblical signs of divine displeasure- the darkening, the torn veil, the earthquake...

1. The people of God largely missed it!
2. And yet a bunch of pagan men- soldiers of the "evil" Roman empire- got it!

...Easter is NOT about resurrection roses, sunrise services, and feel good messages. Easter is about the condescending grace of God which lifts the sinner up, transforms him, and welcomes him into the beloved!

***Where We Live**

1. What is God's message to you from our text this morning? In a phrase it is: The end/telos of life on this earth is a renewed creation where we in glorified bodies will serve the Lord evermore without sin! In light of this and until then, it behooves us to, "...contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3)!
2. There has been much teaching on the religious climate in Christ's day that we can forget that as hypocritical as were the Scribes and Pharisees, they nevertheless were the *Christian* religious establishment of their day... and they missed Christ! And so it will be in the last day as well (cf. 2 Pet. 3:3-4; Mt. 23:30)!..
3. That should sober us! For today we are the religious establishment which comprises God's people! That being the case...
 - a. It behooves us to recognize that we are no different than our fathers in the faith who crucified the Lord. As men of old- who were genuinely concerned about theology- missed Christ, so also could we!
 - b. Recognizing this fact, let us labor to...
 1. Take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. 10:5.
 2. Worship the Lord and follow Him not as a celestial "goody-goody," but as the King of kings and Lord of lords- the omnipotent, almighty Son of God that He is!!!
 3. Contend earnestly for the faith (Jude 3).
 4. Live in light of the glorious hope of the second coming of Christ!
 5. Renew our faith every day (Lam. 3:22-23)!
4. So let us never grow bored with Christ, His service, and His worship. But let us strive evermore to serve Him with integrity and truth! For as we have gazed back this morning, we have looked forward to the Resurrection that still awaits us all in Christ!