

## REFORMED CHURCH BELLVILLE: SUNDAY 16 MAY 2010: EVENING SERVICE

**Sing before:** Psalm 18:2, 3

*Let us commence this meeting with God by declaring openly to one another and to God:*

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Beloved grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, through the mighty working of God the Holy Spirit.

**Amen**

Psalm of praise: Psalm 33:1, 10

**Prayer:**

- **Doxology**
- **Worship**
- **Confession of sins**
- **Forgiveness**
- **Gratitude**
- **Prayer for the need of the congregation for the church, the authorities and the sinful world and appeal to God's promises.**
- **General prayer**
- **Enlightenment from the Holy Spirit for the sake of the ministry of the Word.**

**Amen**

Psalm 40:8

**Scripture reading:** Colossians 1

**Scripture text:** Colossians 1:18 – 20; Catechism Sunday 19

**And he is the head of the body, the church: the starting point of all things, the first to come again from the dead; so that in all things he might have the chief place. For God in full measure was pleased to be in him; Through him uniting all things with himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross; through him, I say, uniting all things which are on earth or in heaven. (Colossians 1:18-20)**

Where is Jesus Christ now? In what capacity is He there? What is it worth to me?

These are questions continually surfacing in history, causing people, and especially their leaders in faith (theologians), to differ sharply from each other.

- This happens because it is difficult for people to cling to a promise of Jesus Christ returning again, but there is nothing visible confirming this promise.
- Together herewith we must not regard the doubt and disbelief caused by today's science too lightly.
- What people cannot see, nor prove, is disbelieved.

This passage we have read together reveals the following about the Lord Jesus Christ:

- Verse 15 reveals that Jesus is the image of the unseen (invisible) God – thus He is God Himself.
- He, prior to creation taking place, was already there.

- He was there first and He is elevated above the creation. He created all things and since then He rules over all things and powers in heaven and on earth.

After He lived on earth and was crucified, He ascended back to heaven.

- By His ascension He did not relinquish His rule over anything. He still rules over everything.
- Together with that He is now is an Intercessor for us to the Father.
- Furthermore He ascended to heaven to prepare a kingdom. This kingdom is the place where we will be living. Verse 18 & 20 reveals how Jesus, our God and Lord, rules over His church as Head of His congregation:

**1. He is the source of the church's life.**

**2. He is the hope of the church's future.**

**1. He is the source of the church's life.**

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the body. This body is not a natural or body of flesh.

- The body referred to by the Lord is His church.
- The Lord Jesus does not as God stand alone or remote from those he redeemed.
- Spiritually He is joined to His congregation, the same as the head of a body is joined to it.

Not everybody is able to understand these matters.

- You must be led by the Holy Spirit to be able to understand that the Creator-god, Jesus Christ, is the only true Ruler of the church.
- This is why He is the Source of the church's life.

Carefully consider the consequences of this to you as a believer:

- The Lord Jesus is the Head of His church.
- He is the only and absolute Ruler.
- Therefore He has to, in your mind and existence, fill the topmost place.

Why does this have to be emphasised? Because Jesus is not our inferior – He is the highest God and Lord.

- In their lives of conversion many people hold the Lord Jesus as a God who is only too thankful that they, themselves have given them onto Him.
- In a certain way the Lord Jesus now becomes a slave on duty do them for their salvation.

Beware of such a way of faith practice. This passage from the Bible clearly reveals that we are from Him and to Him.

- We are totally dependent on Jesus Christ.
- We are totally and completely subservient to Him.

In two ways the Lord Jesus reveals that He is the Giver and Developer of all life.

- Firstly He created us and during this creation granted us life.
- Secondly He overcame death – thereby revealing that He has total power over death and that He can give life to whomever He wants.

In this no human can copy Him.

- We all die and enter our graves – no matter how hard we try not to die.
- Because the power of death is too great over us, none of us was ever able to arise from death.
- But the Lord Jesus arose. Paul wrote that He was the first of the harvest.

Should we now apply what the Bible teaches, then we realise the power of Jesus' rule.

- Because the congregation is His Body, therefore under no circumstances can the congregation remain in death.
- Something like a living Head with a dead body just does not exist.

Our Lord Jesus now reveals Himself in heaven as God who is King over all:

- He rules over the angels and the holy in heaven with Divine omnipotence.
- On earth He rules over the believers (His church) by means of His Spirit and Word.
- He, because everything was created by His power and to His glory, grants life to all.

Therefore everything is subservient to Him.

- Even His enemies exist because He allows them existence.
- With His Second Coming He will remove them to a place He prepared for them. To them He gives the death.

How and why does He grant eternal life to His children? Out of grace.

- It is untrue that the fall of man brought the Kingdom of God to ruin.
- God still lets His Kingdom come and erects this Kingdom with all who were redeemed by Jesus Christ.
- Consider the sequence planned by God: firstly chosen – then created; then redeemed – thereafter resurrected and declared just to eternally live through Jesus Christ. (Romans 8)

## 2. He is the hope of the church's future.

The rule of the Lord Jesus is thus aimed at judgement and redemption.

- The judgement concerns those who do not believe and reject Him.
- The redemption deals with those included in the church.

Therefore we are going to consider it. The rule of Jesus Christ as Head of the church, inter alia focussed on bringing the congregation to fullness.

- In verse 19 the following is written:  
**For God in full measure was pleased to be in him** (Colossians 1:19)
- In our confession it is written: Firstly that He grants the heavenly gifts to us, his members.
  - All the heavenly gifts are resident in Him, therefore He, in His mercy, can shower us with love, mercy happiness and glory.
  - As such the Head of the church changes its members so that we return to the image of our Creator.

Through His Holy Spirit He also pours gifts like faith and wisdom into us.

- The Holy Spirit powerfully works into us so that we, as members of Jesus Christ, may know and worship Him as God and King.
- In this way Jesus Christ lives and works inside us whilst He, in heaven, is also praying for us.

Through His blood He, already in our earthly existence, engineers the peace of God into us.

- This is taking place because His blood was spilled and His body was broken so that we are shielded from the wrath of God.
- In this way we entered into the power-protection of the Lord Jesus.
- Now we are safely kept in His care.

- Now any crisis can arrive: tension of even persecution – as had already happened.
- The Lord bears us and cares for us though it.
- The Holy Spirit guarantees us that the Lord's care will never depart from us.

*Herein our complete future expectations are contained: The Lord Jesus Christ reconciles us with the judgement of God and thereby enables our entry into eternal life.*

He faced God's judgement by body and soul so that He also thereby removed the curse and taint from our congregation.

- But now you must realise that this brings us to a new relationship with Christ.
- This is a relationship wherein our responsibility is very sharply emphasised.

We have to confess this greatness and Godliness of Jesus Christ.

- We must not only do this orally.
- We also must do it by each deed done in our lives.

We must live out our submission and obedience to our King Jesus Christ confessingly.

- We must trust Him when He reveals that He loves us. He knows what is best for us and sees to it that we receive the right thing at the proper time.
- We also must expect the Lord from heaven. Our expectation must be that the Lord, at the moment of His Second Coming, will take us with Him, to His Kingdom.

Together let us read Catechism Sunday 19:

**Q. 50.**

**Why is it added, "and sitteth at the right hand of God"?**

A.

Because Christ is ascended into heaven for this end, that he might appear as head of his church, (a) by whom the Father governs all things. (b)

(a)

Eph.1:20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

Eph.1:21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

Eph.1:23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Col.1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

(b)

Matt.28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

John 5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

**Q. 51.**

**What profit is this glory of Christ, our head, unto us?**

A.

First, that by his Holy Spirit he pours out heavenly graces upon us his members; (a) and then that by his power he defends and preserves us against all enemies. (b)

(a)

Acts 2:33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

Eph.4:8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

(b)

Ps.2:9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Ps.110:1 <<A Psalm of David.>> The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Ps.110:2 The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

John 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

Eph.4:8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

**Q. 52.**

**What comfort is it to thee that "Christ shall come again to judge the quick and the dead"?**

A.

That in all my sorrows and persecutions, with uplifted head I look for the very same person, who before offered himself for my sake, to the tribunal of God, and has removed all curse from me, to come as judge from heaven: (a)

who shall cast all his and my enemies into everlasting condemnation, (b)

but shall translate me with all his chosen ones to himself, into heavenly joys and glory. (c)

(a)

Luke 21:28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

Rom.8:23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

Philip.3:20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

Tit.2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

1 Thess.4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

(b)

2 Thess.1:6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

2 Thess.1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 Thess.1:9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

2 Thess.1:10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

Matt.25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

Matt.25:42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

Matt.25:43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

(c)

Matt.25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

2 Thess.1:7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.

**Amen.**

Closing prayer.

Closing Psalm: 66:6

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you.  
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

**Amen**

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