

REFORMED CHURCH BELLVILLE: SUNDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2010: EVENING SERVICE

Sing before:

Psalm 146:3

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 145:1+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 4:1

Scripture reading: Isaiah 43.

Scripture text: Isaiah 43:1 and Heidelberg Catechism Lord's day 1.

But now, this is what the LORD says – He who created you, O Jacob, He who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name, you are mine. ...”

The true believer looks forward to the day when the Lord Jesus returns to earth as a day of comfort for he fears the punishment for his sins and on that day he shall receive forgiveness of his sins. He knows that on this day he will enter the kingdom of heaven and live with God for ever.

Let us consider two outstanding aspects:

- 1. Firmness of faith and joy in this life.**
- 2. Firmness of faith and eternal salvation.**

1. Firmness of faith and joy in this life.

All of us want to belong to someone. It is terrible not to be loved.

- We also do not want to be loved only by people.

- We wanted to be reminded always thereof that the Holy Spirit calls to us: “Fear not, because you belong to the Lord. He has called you by name, and the Lord Jesus lived and died for you.”

Listen to what the Lord says in verse 3:

“For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.”

Here the LORD calls himself “Saviour”. That is redeemer, the one who brings salvation.

- God was true to His promise of salvation and because of that Jesus the Saviour came to earth.
- He came to bring salvation. He came to take away our sin.

Sin and death are closely related, for sin is the cause of death and death is the result of sin.

- You may therefore be assured that, simultaneously with the forgiveness of our sin, the LORD plucks us out of hell.
- We are also saved from the power of death.
- We shall die the earthly death, but the death of hell shall pass us by because the Lord Jesus redeemed us from it.

2. Firmness of faith and eternal salvation.

The fact that each of us may live comforted is tied to our firmness of faith.

- Firmness of faith is to connect two worlds: it is to know that in this life and in the life hereafter you belong to the Lord Jesus.
- You belong with body and soul, both in life and in death, to the Lord.

The true believer shall not go to hell.

- You must know this positively:
- The LORD keeps you every day in this life and the Lord keeps you in the life hereafter as well.

In this life, the Lord Jesus said, He shall so preserve us that not a hair can fall from our head without His will.

- The Lord did not intend this to mean that this would last only until our death and stop then.
- He preserves us in this life precisely because in the life hereafter we shall be with Him.

Our main worry is the question of what is to become of us after our death.

- Where shall I open my eyes?
- What assurance do I have that it shall not be in hell?
- For we know that no-one except the Lord can preserve us in the Hereafter.

You have this assurance, certainty, in the birth, life and death on the cross of the Lord Jesus.

- He came to earth and was born here for the sole purpose of acquiring the life eternal for us.
- That is why His birth was succeeded by the death on the cursed cross where He bore God’s wrath for all our sins – and where He overcame death.
- This He did not do for Himself:

For He did not carry any sin for which He had to be punished,
And eternal life He did not need for Himself,
Because He is the eternally living God!

He bore the entire wrath and acquired the life eternal for us!

- Remember His promise to His disciples that He is going away to prepare a place for them.
- With that the propitiating ministry of our Lord Jesus did not end for He is still at work: at this moment preparing a place for us in the Hereafter.
- It is therefore clear that after our earthly death we still belong to the Lord for He has a place for us with Him.

Prayer-time and believing-time is grace-time.

- A time of grace because every occasion of public worship in particular reminds us of the redemption by the Lord Jesus.
- The true believer cannot fail to experience the fulfilment of God's counsel of salvation in Jesus.
- Therefore, do not on this day fix your eyes on the pain and perplexity of this life, but fix them on the God of your salvation.

But please, remain aware of the dangers of doubt.

- The danger of doubt is that it can cause us to fall into paganism: as the unbelievers we may seek our joy away from God.
- We shall then, like them, seek our comfort and joy elsewhere. History has taught us again and again that this kind of searching ends up with the glorification of man.
- It is already seeping into our churches.

Do not allow the worldly seduction to alienate you from the Lord and to lead you to transgress against the Almighty.

Direct your eyes at the horizon of history and see the Lord of our Salvation where He is returning to us to take us with Him unto eternity.

Let us read the Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's day1, together.

1. Lord's Day

Question 1.

What is thy only comfort in life and death?

Answer.

That I with body and soul, both in life and death, (a) am not my own, (b) but belong unto my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ; (c) who, with his precious blood, has fully satisfied for all my sins, (d) and delivered me from all the power of the devil; (e) and so preserves me (f) that without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from my head; (g) yea, that all things must be subservient to my salvation, (h) and therefore, by his Holy Spirit, He also assures me of eternal life, (i) and makes me sincerely willing and ready, henceforth, to live unto him. (j)

(a)

Rom.14:7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

Rom.14:8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

(b)

1 Cor.6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

(c)

1 Cor.3:23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

Tit.2:14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

(d)

1 Pet.1:18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

1 Pet.1:19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

1 John 2:2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

1 John 2:12 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

(e)

Heb.2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

1 John 3:8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

John 8:34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

John 8:35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

John 8:36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

(f)

John 6:39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

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.

2 Thess.3:3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

1 Pet.1:5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

(g)

Matt.10:29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

Matt.10:30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Matt.10:31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

Luke 21:18 But there shall not an hair of your head perish.

(h)

Rom.8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

(i)

2 Cor.1:20 For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

2 Cor.1:21 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;

2 Cor.1:22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

2 Cor.5:5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

Eph.1:13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

Eph.1:14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Rom.8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

(j)

Rom.8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

1 John 3:3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

Q. 2.

How many things are necessary for thee to know, that thou, enjoying this comfort, mayest live and die happily?

A.

Three; (a) the first, how great my sins and miseries are; (b) the second, how I may be delivered from all my sins and miseries; (c) the third, how I shall express my gratitude to God for such deliverance. (d)

(a)

Matt.11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Matt.11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Matt.11:30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Luke 24:46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

Luke 24:47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Luke 24:48 And ye are witnesses of these things.

1 Cor.6:11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Tit.3:3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

Tit.3:4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,

Tit.3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Tit.3:6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;

Tit.3:7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

(b)

John 9:41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

John 15:22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.

(c)

John 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Acts 10:43 To him (Jesus) give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

(d)

Eph.5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

Eph.5:9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

Eph.5:10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

Eph.5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

1 Pet.2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

1 Pet.2:10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

Rom.6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

Rom.6:2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

Rom.6:12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

Rom.6:13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

Amen.

Closing prayer.

Closing: Psalm: 116:1+5.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

Amen

Dr MJ Du Plessis

Reformed Church Bellville

14 February 2010

Scripture: New International Version