

REFORMED CHURCH BELLVILLE: SUNDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2008: MORNING SERVICE

Sing before: Psalm 18:1

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 89:1,2

Confession of faith: Nicene

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who, for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was Incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven and sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.

And we believe one holy catholic* and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and we look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

After the reading of the Law we confess our guilt and pray for forgiveness and a new life before God with Psalm 19:4

Law

Psalm: 19:4

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 81:1,4,17

Scripture reading: Job 42

Scripture text: Job 42:3

You asked, 'Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. (Job 42:3)

After saying this, Job also said:

Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes." (Job 42:6)

Note the contrasts embodied in this passage of disclosure. It is important to note these because every believer, who truly believes and whose faith is progressing, passes through these contrasting matters described here about Job and his relationship with the Lord.

- First Job says that he knows that the Lord can do everything, and that no purpose of His can be withheld from Him. (V.2)
 - Every one of us is aware of this – often we confess to it.
- But now the Lord revealed matters to him which he saw with his own eyes.
 - Suddenly a renewal of his insight to faith came about!

Seeing something, instead of hearing it, has a greater imprint on all.

- Out of the storm the Lord answered Job, sternly admonishing him.
- With that the Lord completely laid bare Job in his weakness.

This had an immense impression on Job: not only did he hear, he also saw the omnipotence of the Lord!

- A transition came about in Job's faith crisis.
- He looks with new insight at the omnipotence of God.
- He has learnt that in the greatness of God, there are two things going hand in hand, namely power and rectitude.
- It was like discovering anew the infinite greatness of God and being compelled thereby to realise his own insignificance and weakness.

He confesses:

'Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. (Job 42:3)

And in verse 5:

"I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You. (Job 42:5)

His trepidation can clearly be heard:... but now my eye sees You. The Bible has an issue about seeing the Lord. There are different ways of seeing the Lord.

- John 1:18 for example teaches that nobody has ever seen God.
- The Bible also teaches that seeing God is lethal. In Exodus 33:20 the Lord told Moses:

"You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." (Exodus 33:20)

But in Genesis 32:30 the Bible teaches about another way of seeing the Lord, and that this will enhance you in your deliverance:

And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." (Genesis 32:30)

This is the way of seeing God as mentioned by Job. It refers to us seeing God in the revelation of His redemption and mercy, and then not dying.

Immediately after this revelation, Job experienced progression of his conversion and sanctification and also of his repentance to all his sins.

Again there is a contrast!

- By his first answer Job admitted his insignificance.
- After the revelation he admitted the greatness of God.

It is a big betterment getting away from yourself and facing the greatness of the Almighty God!

Suddenly he understood that, in the greatness of God, power and rectitude combines:

- God disposes over whomever He wants, whatever He wants.
- But in everything His honour is served and His greatness is sanctified.

Let us place Job, our own faith and life next to each other.

- Job was a sick man, dirty and covered in ulcers.
- He was sitting in dust and ashes as well.

This depicts his desolation, wrongfulness and repentance.

- He was not on good terms with the Lord!
- Herein he depicts all of us.

But on the other hand it is so that the Lord is also revealing Himself, through the visibility of His mercy, to us – just like He revealed Himself to Job.

- Last week we celebrated the sacrament of Holy Communion – this is something visible, instituted by the Lord.
- In the handling of the bread and wine we saw the symbolic revelation wherein the greatness of God lets His power and righteousness flow together over us:
 - We sat at the table of the Lord and saw his deeds of deliverance – with visible signs the sacrament illustrated that God became man, giving up to death His body and blood so that we may be saved.
 - The bread and wine is the visibility of the grace of God – we were able to see and taste that the Lord Jesus died and that the reconciliation engineered by Him became part of our entire humanity.

Like Job, we could see and experience God in His greatness and mercy, visiting us in our humbleness and sinfulness, assuring us of His exoneration.

- Like Job, we were able to face God and confess our sins.
- In our hearts, each one of us could confess:
 - Lord, with deep repentance about my sins of the past, I partake in Holy Communion.
 - I also partake with by eyes turned to You.
 - Lord, we thank You that our eyes may see that we are also included in Your redemption.

Amen.

Closing prayer.

Closing Psalm: 65:2

The Lord bless and keep you, the Lord make his face shine on you, the Lord turn His countenance to you and give peace.

Amen.

Dr. M.J. du Plessis

Reformed Church Bellville.

7 September 2008 (Service after Holy Communion)

Scripture MKJV