

## REFORMED CHURCH BELLVILLE: SUNDAY 19 APRIL 2009: EVENING SERVICE

**Sing before:** Psalm 146:4

*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 150:1

**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 148:5

**Scripture reading:** Revelation 1:9-20

**Scripture text:** Revelation 1:9 and Catechism Lord's Day 12.

What do you believe of Jesus Christ? Do you know what it means when you confess Him to be the Eternal and Almighty God?

- 1. Where is the Lord Jesus Christ and what is He doing now?**
- 2. How far away are we now from the Lord Jesus Christ?**
- 3. Confession and responsibility.**

**1. Where is the Lord Jesus Christ and what is He doing now?**

On a Sunday morning John heard the sound of a trumpet.

- This was nothing extraordinary because it was the Jewish custom to summon the people on the Sabbath to public worship in this way, a custom the Christians adopted.
- The trumpet was the signal that the people must ready themselves for meeting God in public worship.

When John heard the sound of the trumpet he turned around and saw the Son of Man – Jesus, the King of the Church.

- It was given the apostle John to see the Lord Jesus as we confess Him to be: - risen from the dead and in His full glory.
- John sees Him as the High Priest walking among the lampstands (His churches).

John therefore saw the Lord Jesus in the wealth of His eternal holiness.

- He saw Jesus as the Comforter of His people and as the Conqueror of death.
- That is indeed what we confess the Lord Jesus to be.

Our entire life is built upon the gospel of salvation.

- It is our hope for the future after death.
- And it is our comfort when we suffer under the oppression and struggle of this life and of sin.

What is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ?

- We may summarise it in the Name: Jesus Christ. He is the entire content of our gospel of salvation.
- God the Father's complete Counsel and Will regarding our salvation is compressed in Jesus Christ.
- It was planned that:
  - He would come to live on earth and, while innocent, experience the deepest sorrows and struggle ,
  - so that it would become possible for Him to bear the burden of all mankind who are guilty before the Lord.
- The Lord now tells us that for us, lost people, there is salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the contents of the gospel of redemption.

In the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ stands and falls the whole doctrine of election.

- He Himself teaches that He did not bring salvation for all people.
- He fulfilled God's Counsel by dying only for those who are His own, whom He loved, till the end.
- That certainly is the greatest revelation of God's love and compassion.

Pause for a moment and reflect on the Lord Jesus as He stood there before John.

- In Him John saw how every prophecy about the Messiah as from creation was fulfilled.
- The promised Messiah came. He lived and died and overcame death.
- He ascended to Heaven and John sees Him there as God the Almighty. He sees Him as the Ruler of His church.

At that moment John also saw what had become of the church.

- He himself had seen that the Lord had sent them out as disciples to found churches – John himself was aged and many of the others had already died.
- John was also one of the apostles who had appointed elders and deacons to be governors and priests in the churches they had founded.
- He had seen how under the guidance of the Holy Spirit they proclaimed the salvation of the church and governed the church in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Now he saw the Lord Jesus as He is now: the eternal God and LORD! The Almighty Ruler of His church.

## 2. How far away are we now from the Lord Jesus Christ?

The Lord Jesus Christ also sent us the Holy Spirit.

- It is the Holy Spirit who causes us to accept the Gospel.
- It is He who engenders faith in us.
- The Holy Spirit makes us live our life joyfully because the Holy Spirit makes us know by this gospel that there is no struggle or sorrow in this life without us having the protection of Jesus Christ's intercession.

In this way the comfort proclaimed over Jerusalem, that her debts were paid and that all her transgressions against God were forgiven, is made to come true in the life of each of us.

This matter is in particular about the *Priesthood* of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- He was simultaneously Priest and Sacrifice.
- In the words of Revelation we might say: He was High Priest and He was the Lamb being sacrificed.
  - He was obliged to bring an offering and could not bring a better or another offering than Himself.
- He was Priest according to God's law, because He acted as Redeemer, and also because He had to bring the offering.
- As Priest He sees to it that by His sacrifice the believers are saved out of the hands of Satan: complete salvation from the power of sin.

Christ's Priesthood goes even further:

- As High Priest He continues to make intercession for us with God.
- With His ascension He entered God's sanctuary and there He pleads for us because of His merits.

All this does not mean that the Lord now removes all fear and stress from our life.

- In verse 17 it is written that the Lord placed His hand on John and told him: "Do not be afraid."
- This implies that there would be fear.
- But it also says clearly that in such moments the power of the Lord Jesus will care for us – nothing can harm you without the will of God.

In verse 13 the Lord Jesus Christ is shown as *King*.

- He wears a golden sash – the sign of His royalty.
- The Lord Jesus is God the King of his church and congregations.
- In His Kingship He is immutable and Almighty.
- He is omnipresent to save and to care for everyone.
- So that everyone who believes in His grace might be saved and forever shares in it.
- But also that everyone who does not believe and who disobeys Him might be punished.

*Jesus Christ's loving rule over us is without end. That is why the Bible shows Him here with His face like the sun shining in all its brilliance.*

### 3. Confession and responsibility.

As a church we all have communion with this Lord Jesus Christ.

- That is why it is written here that Jesus, the Almighty God, is moving among the lampstands,
- Every moment He moves among us.
- That is the fulfilment of Psalm 23, which teaches that the Lord is my Shepherd who so leads me through life that I shall not want anything.

But then I must be responsible.

- I must not know His Name with my lips only.
- I must know Him truly and praise Him with my whole life.

I must shout it out that I too receive His grace every day.

- It must compel me to pray and sing spontaneously to the greater glory of God.
- It must make me look forward longingly to each possible moment that I can commune with Him.

My responsibility and love of God in this life is finished off with a perfect communion with Him in the Hereafter.

- It will be a communion where we will live on a new earth and there will be a new heaven where there shall be only the good gifts that the Lord Jesus has prepared for us.
- We shall every moment experience only joy and pleasure, and with it, the presence of God.

Are you a true Christian?

- Then your life and your confession must be in harmony.
- Then you must strive towards knowledge of His Word.
- Then we must do all we can to obey His Law.
- And then we must believe that He lives with us.

Let us see what our confession as set out in the **Heidelberg Catechism** teaches us about this:

## 12. Lord's Day

### Q. 31.

Why is he called "**Christ**", that is, **Anointed**?

**A.**

Because he is ordained of God the Father, and anointed with the Holy Ghost, (a) to be our chief Prophet and Teacher, (b) who has fully revealed to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our redemption; (c) and to be our only High Priest, (d) who by the one sacrifice of his body, has redeemed us, (e) and makes continual intercession with the Father for us; (f) and also to be our eternal King, who governs us by his word and Spirit, and who defends and preserves us in that salvation, he has purchased for us. (g)

(a)Ps.45:8: All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.

Heb.1:9: Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

Isa.61:1: The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

Luke 4:18: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

(b)Deut.18:15: The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

Acts 3:22: For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

Acts 7:37: This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

Isa.55:4: Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

(c)

John 1:18: No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

John 15:15: Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

(d)

Ps.110:4: The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

(e)

Heb.10:12: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

Heb.10:14: For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Heb.9:12: Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Heb.9:14: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Heb.9:28: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

(f)

Rom.8:34: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Heb.9:24: For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

1 John 2:1: My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

Rom.5:9: Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

Rom.5:10: For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

(g)

Ps.2:6: Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

Zech.9:9: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

Matt.21:5: Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

Luke 1:33: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

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

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.

Rev.12:10: And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

Rev.12:11: And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

### **Q. 32.**

But why art thou called a **Christian**? (a)

#### **A.**

Because I am a member of Christ by faith, (b) and thus am partaker of his anointing; (c) that so I may confess his name, (d) and present myself a living sacrifice of thankfulness to him: (e) and also that with a free and good conscience I may fight against sin and Satan in this life (f) and afterwards I reign with him eternally, over all creatures. (g)

#### (a)

Acts 11:26: And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

#### (b)

1 Cor.6:15: Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.

#### (c)

1 John 2:27: But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

Acts 2:17: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

#### (d)

Matt.10:32: Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

Rom.10:10: For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Mark 8:38: Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

#### (e)

Rom.12:1: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

1 Pet.2:5: Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

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:

Rev.5:8: And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

Rev.5:10: And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

Rev.1:6: And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

(f)

1 Pet.2:11: Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

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.

Gal.5:16: This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

Gal.5:17: For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Eph.6:11: Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

1 Tim.1:18: This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;

1 Tim.1:19: Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:

(g)

2 Tim.2:12: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

Matt.25:34: Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

**Amen.**

Closing prayer.

Closing Hymn 2-4:1+2+3.

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

**Amen**

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