

REFORMED CHURCH CLANWILLIAM : SUNDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2013 MORNING SERVICE

Sing before: Psalm 91:1

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

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 universal 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 40:4

Law

Psalm: 40:4

Prayer:

- **Doxology**
- **Worship**
- **Confession of sins**
- **Forgiveness**
- **Gratitude**
- **Prayer for the need of the congregation of 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 146:8

Scripture reading: 02 John 1**Scripture text:** 02 John 1:8

Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but that we may receive a full reward
(02 John 1:8)

A church writes a letter to another church. It is a letter that speaks of love and respect, because the one church testifies that they see that the members of the other church do not walk with the unbelievers. They are encouraged to continue to walk in obedience to the Lord's commands.

The apostle John writes the letter. He refers to himself as "the elder".

- This could also mean "old man".
- John was in fact an old man when he wrote this letter, but he was not an elder, he was an apostle.

Why does he then call himself an "elder"?

- He does it to show his unity with his church.
- In the unity of the faith he sees himself as part of the church - probably the church at Ephesus.

In this sermon we examine two issues:

1. **The life of the chosen lady.**
2. **Humility in the face of the world.**

1. **The life of the chosen lady**

This letter is written to a special person - the chosen lady.

- The Greek word translated as "lady" does not refer to a woman.
- It is the female form of the Lord's name. In the New Testament the Lord is named Kurios and this woman is named Kuria.

Later, when John wrote the book Revelation, he often referred to this woman. Listen to the following quotation:

7 "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."

8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

9 Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' " And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

(Revelation 19:7-9)

In Revelation 21 the New Jerusalem is called the Bride of the Lord - and the reference is not only to the gates and walls of the city.

- The reference is especially to the people in the city and that God will dwell with them and that they will be His people. (Rev 21:3+4)
- The meaning is clear that the woman of whom John speaks is the Lord's wife, the bride of the Bridegroom, the chosen lady, that it is the church of the Lord.

The name that John gives the woman in verse 1 is very important.

- It is the female form of Kurios. Kurios means "the Ruler and Conqueror in his majesty".
- The female form as used in 2 John 1 refers to the Bride of the Lord as ruler of the world and of sin.
- The name also indicates that she does not do so out of her own strength but through her relationship with God.

This particular name is meant to remind the church of her high nobility and her high calling.

- The name is even more important because it points prophetically to the Second Coming.
- And to the life that awaits the church of the Lord in the hereafter.

From this letter by John to the church (the chosen lady) it is clear that the church sending the letter has found the church to be living fully in the grace and love of the Lord:

"It has given me great joy to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as the Father commanded us". (verse 4)

This verse refers to each true believer.

- In the streets of the town where John met these members of the church he noticed that they had something which made them recognizably different from the heathen amongst whom they lived.
 - In the true believers there lives an inner power that is the power of God.
 - They live each day with this faith and out of the true faith.

That is the reason why this church of the Lord receives such an extensive blessing:

"Grace, mercy and peace ..."

- Grace is God's favour.

- Mercy is the compassion with which God helps us out of our misery.
- Peace is the well-being that comes from the blessed communion with God that the true believer practices.

You can only know the peace of God after you have come to know the God of peace.

- This is exactly where the problem lies with the churches of the present day.
- All the attributes of this church lauded in the letter addressed to it are lacking in the greatest part of the inhabitants of this world.
- That is why we pray so much that the cruelty and violence and hate should come to an end, if possible.

2. Humility in the face of the world

It is fruitless to speak of the sins of all the other people in our country because the greatest number of these people who refuse to admit that the Lord is God and therefore do things that are against the will of God are not attending any public worship today.

- But this does not mean that we should not honestly confess that all the wrong things such as sport on Sunday, doing business on Sunday, violence and hate are sinful.
- Our true confession as a church today is therefore that we know that many wrong things that are abhorrent to the Lord occur in our country.

But our confession must go further than that.

- We must confess by word and deed that we truly know the Lord.
- We must confess to the Lord that we shall persevere in the true faith - we want to serve Him, day and night and when He comes He shall find us where we are faithfully worshipping Him.

What did the heathen not have that the members of the church to whom this letter is addressed did have?

- They did not know the truth to love God. (verse 1)
- They did not have the eternal bliss and truth that lives in them forever. (verse 2)
- And their lives showed it.

Hence the chosen lady and her children are warned that they should live according to all of God's commandments. They must be different and remain different from the world and its people.

- In the world there are deceivers. The Greek word actually means "false stars". People who spread a false light.
- The same word is used thereafter to say who and what the Anti-Christ is - a false star or a lost spirit who opposes the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord emphasizes here again a fact which is mentioned also elsewhere in the Lord's Revelation, namely, that the false teachers do not preach Jesus Christ correctly.

- They do not preach Jesus as God revealed Him as He truly was while He was on earth.
- They deny that Jesus was bodily on earth. This is a pure untruth.

You must not separate this from the preceding verses.

- What happens to people who do not believe in Jesus Christ? Or who do not believe in Him in the right way?
- They become disobedient and unable to live in the love of God.

Consider what this means. It is untrue that it means only that the church degenerates.

- When you become disobedient to the commandments of the Lord it means that you disobey all ten of them.
- Practically it means that a wrong relationship exists between the Lord and such people - the first four commandments.
- And it means that the last six commandments are also disturbed.
 - The relationships of authority - sixth commandment are disturbed.
 - That leads to murder and theft.
 - Moral decay follows because the destruction of marriages and immorality and disrespect for the truth (false testimony) are all included.

The Lord gives a clear command to His chosen church - and also to us:

- Stay with the truth.
- Beware of false preachers and false teaching.
- Do not welcome them.

The devil is spreading a spirit in this world that teaches that everybody must accept everybody else, no matter what they do or believe.

- In this epistle, verses 10 and 11, the Lord teaches that you must not take into your house people who preach false teaching and all that goes with it, you must not welcome them, otherwise you share in their wicked work.

It is clear that with "house" the Lord means "church" for this where the chosen lady to whom the letter is addressed resides.

- Do not take into the church people who are unbelievers and who bring false teaching.
- The church council carries a heavy responsibility and will need the ability to distinguish accurately.
- You are the people that God has chosen to keep the church pure in these times.

The Lord's command concerning the welcoming of such unholy people refers to the greeting as it appears in verse 3.

- The Lord's blessing - grace, mercy and peace - may not be given to them.
- We may not reconcile us with the religious decay around us and also not with the people who practice it.

The Lord's judgment is pronounced over those who do not stay with the true gospel.

- That which they have worked for will be lost. Where the devil is allowed to work his evil he destroys all that the faithful have.

- They lose the gospel and with it all that is good and just in their community - as we can see happening.

In contrast to this stands the full reward that is received by those who persevere in the pure teaching, the perfect salvation in Jesus Christ.

What must we do? We must confess our faith and renew our vow to obey the Lord.

- Then we shall know God's peace.
- The peace that comes from the blissful communion with God.
- This peace of God will come only after all of us who live here have come to know the God who gives eternal peace.

As a church we must truly confess that we know that many things happen around us that are abhorrent to the Lord

- But we must ensure that we are not part thereof.
- We confess to the Lord that we shall persevere in the true faith - we are not like those who do not believe, or whose faith is brittle or who kill or are arrogant.
- We serve the Lord by day and by night until He comes. The Lord shall find us in faithful worship.

Perhaps the Lord will save us.

- He told Abraham that He would spare Sodom and Gomorrah for the sake of ten righteous people. (Genesis 18:32)
- Perhaps the Lord will spare our country for the sake of true believers who like the chosen bride of the Lord rule over sin.

However bad it may be, let us look past the blood in our streets to the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross.

- In Christ we are clothed with heavenly glory.
- Let us remain the pure church of Christ and let us remain on our knees in prayer where we pray the Lord to forgive us our sins although we should suffer.
- Let us live prayerfully until we receive the full reward from the Lord Jesus.

Amen.

Closing prayer.

Closing Song: Scripture Versification 7-2:2, 3

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 MJ Du Plessis
 Helping Reverend
 Reformed Church Clanwilliam
 17 February 2013
 Scripture: Modern King James Version