

REFORMED CHURCH CLANWILLIAM : SUNDAY 6 July 2013 EVENING SERVICE

Sing before: Psalm 91:7

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: 18:1, 20

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 9:7, 9, 10

Scripture reading: Song of Solomon 1

Scripture text: Song of Solomon 1:3: Catechism Sunday 12

Because of the fragrance of your good ointments, Your name is ointment poured forth; Therefore the virgins love you.

(Song of Solomon 1:3)

Within the framework of God's kingdom, there is a marked resemblance between a woman and her husband in marriage, on the one hand, and the Lord Jesus Christ and his church on the other hand.

- Like a bride longing for her husband, the church – that is all the faithful – should be longing for the Lord Jesus Christ with all their heart and all their strength.
- And like a woman accepts the name and dwelling place of her husband when she marries him, the church acquires the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and a dwelling place in God's kingdom – on the new earth.

Ephesians 5 from verse 22 describes the relationship between a wife and her husband.

- This passage tells how the wife should be subject to her husband, for the husband is head of the wife as the Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the church.
- The husband is told frankly to love his wife, for God loves the church. The husband has no choice – he should do what God does.
- Marriage is therefore the symbol of the relationship between God and his church.

The letter to the Ephesians compares the sanctity in marriage with what is featured by the sacrament of the holy baptism (verse 26).

- The baptism is symbol of the perfection of the relationship between the church and the Lord because the Lord Jesus Christ washed away all the sins of the church.

Then the Bible says:

This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.
(Ephesians 5:32)

Hence it happens in the exact way described in the Song of Solomon:

Because of the fragrance of your good ointments, Your name is ointment poured forth; Therefore the virgins love you.
(Song of Solomon 1:3)

The Name of the Lord Jesus Christ is literally poured out over us so that we actually bear his Name: Christians.

To bear the Name of somebody means that we are part of Who and what He is: The Lord Jesus Christ was anointed to be Prophet, Priest and King – thus we also.

- He teaches, redeems and comforts and He adopts us as his servants.
- The congregation should believe and confess this: Christ of God was anointed to be Prophet, Priest and King.

Modern man would immediately ask: What can the Lord Jesus Christ do for me in this threefold office?

The answer is: Everything we need to be saved!

- As the Prophet He enlightens our hearts and minds.
 - He gives the Word of God to us. He makes us eager to read and understand the Bible.
 - Jesus Christ the Prophet has fully revealed to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our redemption: He revealed that it was God's plan that He would save us and reconcile God with us through his death.
- The Lord Jesus Christ, the **Priest**, is our Saviour.
 - In the first place because He died on the cross for us.
 - Through his redemptive ministry He saved us from the punishment and taint of our sins, because this was exactly what He died for.

- The Priest is also the Counselor who gives us God's peace. He grants us inner peace so that we would know that we are the chosen ones who belong to God forever and would live eternally through his redemptive sacrifice.

God the Holy Spirit also works at this level, because He grants us faith and the knowledge that we are saved. God the Holy Spirit works in and through all three these offices of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- He works insight in our minds when we listen to the ministry of God's Word (prophetic).
- He grants comfort and conviction that the Highest Priest of God reconciled God with us through his redemptive sacrifice.
- The Holy Spirit makes us understand that the death on the cross affects me personally! I am personally involved, because it effected and ensured my salvation!
- The Lord Jesus our eternal **King** sanctifies us so that we can be citizens of his kingdom.

Because we know these things – they have been revealed to us – we should bear the name Christian honourably and with dignity. This brings up our responsibilities:

- We should have good knowledge of what has been revealed to us. We must continually increase our knowledge of the Bible.
- Because our God the Holy Spirit is our Guide, we must never complain that it is too difficult to understand the Bible.
 - The Spirit of God leads us – He does not do our work for us, because He is not our slave!
 - He guides us to know that we must spend labour upon our faith!

Achievements regarding our faith do not just happen. We have to exercise – as we do to become physically fit.

- We must learn to live through the power of the Lord Jesus.
- We must become more and more acquainted with Him through studying his Word every day – guided by God the Holy Spirit.

Don't we often forget that our achievements through faith could also strengthen our fellow believers?

- The question is specifically addressed to those who always complain.
- Faith is not a matter solely between me/you and the Lord. The faithful are also strengthened by one another's piety.

Then we should also realise that we are vested with the three offices of the Lord Jesus Christ – because we are Christians.

- Every one of us is **priest** who should perform acts of love and compassion.
 - We must all pray.
 - We must all devote our entire life as a thanks offering to God.
- Likewise every one of us is also **prophet**.
 - We must testify about the Lord Jesus.

- We need not preach from a pulpit like a minister during public worship in order to testify about the Lord Jesus and his redemptive ministry.
- Our entire life – through what we say and do – should bear testimony of the honour of God.
- We must talk about religion and what the Scriptures say.
- Also, every one of us is a **king** of the Lord.
 - With very good reason He told Adam to tend and guard and keep the earth.
 - In whatever we do and wherever we go we must display God's kingship in his Name.
 - NB The Lord never committed his authority to us. He only revealed his will to us so that we could act according to his authority.
 - Hence we must also be kings in the Name of the Lord and fight against sin and the works of Satan.

After all, he who does not display the image of God can hardly expect to be accommodated by God in the hereafter.

Let's see what is written about this in our articles of faith – in the Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 12.

31. Q. Why is He called Christ, that is, Anointed?

A. Because He has been ordained by God the Father, and anointed with the Holy Spirit,[1] to be our chief Prophet and Teacher,[2] who has fully revealed to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our redemption;[3] our only High Priest,[4] who by the one sacrifice of His body has redeemed us,[5] and who continually intercedes for us before the Father;[6] and our eternal King,[7] who governs us by His Word and Spirit, and who defends and preserves us in the redemption obtained for us.[8]

[1] Ps. 45:7 (Heb. 1:9); Is. 61:1 (Luke 4:18; Luke 3:21, 22. [2] Deut. 18:15 (Acts 3:22). [3] John 1:18; 15:15. [4] Ps. 110:4 (Heb. 7:17). [5] Heb. 9:12; 10:11-14. [6] Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24; I John 2:1.

[7] Zach. 9:9 (Matt. 21:5); Luke 1:33. [8] Matt. 28:18-20; John 10:28; Rev. 12:10, 11.

32. Q. Why are you called a Christian?

A. Because I am a member of Christ by faith[1] and thus share in His anointing,[2] so that I may as prophet confess His Name,[3] as priest present myself a living sacrifice of thankfulness to Him,[4] and as king fight with a free and good conscience against sin and the devil in this life,[5] and hereafter reign with Him eternally over all creatures.[6]

[1] I Cor. 12:12-27. [2] Joel 2:28 (Acts 2:17); I John 2:27. [3] Matt. 10:32; Rom 10:9, 10; Heb. 13:15.

[4] Rom. 12:1; I Pet. 2:5, 9. [5] Gal. 5:16, 17; Eph. 6:11; I Tim. 1:18, 19. [6] Matt. 25:34; II Tim. 2:12.

Amen.

Closing prayer.

Closing Psalm: Psalm 2:1

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
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