

REFORMED CHURCH CLANWILLIAM : SUNDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2013 MORNING SERVICE and HOLY COMMUNION

Sing before: Psalm 84:1

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 19:1

Confession of faith: Apostolic

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into Hell, the third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, a holy universal Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting

Amen.

After the reading of the Law we confess our guilt and pray for forgiveness and a new life before God with Scripture Versification 9-1:11

Law

Scripture Versification 9-1:11

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

Confession of Faith

Psalm 134:3, 4

After everybody is re-seated:

Psalm 9:7

Scripture reading: Romans 12

Scripture text: Romans 12:1,2

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

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Romans 12:1, 2

The grace of God was fully examined in the previous chapters of the letter to the Romans.

- The apostle explained to the congregation that we are dead to sin, but alive by the Holy Spirit.
- He wrote a song of praise that God is for us and nothing can be against us. (8:31-39)
- Thereafter follows the revelation how the Lord predestined us without us doing anything good or bad.

At the end of all these many revelations of faith a song of praise again follows where it is asked: Can man now understand this council? Listen again to the final words of chapter 11:

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

“How unsearchable are...?”

- Is the council of the Lord so incomprehensible that we can never know what the Lord expects from us?
- Is it true that the Lord can set demands to us that we cannot know how to deal with them?
- The answer is that we can understand this unfathomable love of God if we are prepared to become silent to the face of God and bow to Him.

Listen to the Grace of God:

- By the grace of God He brought us by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ and through the earnings of the Lord Jesus Christ over to the kingdom of His Son. (Canons of Dordt 3-4:10)
- These people are brought with by the Lord in His church and are protected and developed by His Word and Spirit. Thus you are sitting today as such changed people in this church.
- But what is our calling in the church? That what is written in our verse of text! I beseech you therefore... Now that we know everything we can know that what the

Lord asks from us to be prepared to loosen ourselves from the world and to give ourselves to God as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.

Both these matters are extremely important:

- We must be willing to loosen ourselves from the world.
- We must present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, to God.

Therefore this chapter starts with the reminder that our bodies are **living and holy** offers to God and that we must see to it that it remains as such.

- It is very important that we realise that the Lord is bringing one matter into sharp focus, namely that we already are *so changed by the Lord that we are no longer part of this world*.
- This of course does not mean that the world will now leave us alone – it will attack us to try and destroy our new nature.
- Thereby the Bible depicts the opposition of the world to the believer: Do not become the same as this world (because you are not the same)!

To know what the attributes of this time zone are we must heed the matters the Bible has to say about us and about others:

- The type of wisdom you obtain in this world is foolish – indeed the Bible teaches that the Lord turned the wisdom of this world into foolishness.
- It does not matter who the person is exercising it, because amongst the executioners of this worldly foolishness are people who just argue but also clever people and even theologians. (1Corinthians 1:20)

The opposite we find in 1 Corinthians 2:6 where the Bible teaches that the wisdom of God will not decay like the rulers of this world itself.

The wisdom of God guides us into the future disposition. The future disposition is not something vague or something far removed from us.

- It already started with Christ. (1Corinthians 10:11)
- The Letter to the Hebrews puts it clearly that the fulfilling already started when the Lord Jesus once appeared in the completion to take the sins away by His offer. (9:26)
- The completion then also started in our lives because the Holy Spirit descended upon us and He changed our insight.

The Holy Spirit indeed worked a new insight in us because suddenly we have the insight that we no longer belong to the devil and that we also are no longer caught up in our old life. We are now in a new life where we belong to the Lord. In this life we have His will that reveals to us how such new people must live.

- Therefore the Bible beseeches us to be changed by the new insight we have.
- The purpose and result of this change is underlined. The change comes to be through the testing and claiming of the will of God. We must literary taste how good it is to do the will of God and to want continuing doing it.

- The Bible points to the fact that the current life style of the world is not to seek and follow the will of God.

The apostle Paul exclaims that it must be judged according to the commandments of God what is good and right.

- The world propagates itself in its own principles and lives merrily, but against that Paul puts it that the Lord does not like anything else than what He commanded.
- In the attempt of the world to reach perfection it falls away from the Word of God into all sorts of new findings.

In this passage the Lord shows that perfection is in the will of the Lord and the moment people exceed this barrier they are threatened by false values. The way in which we are changed is also described in the Bible.

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

(2Corinthians 3:18)

We are not only changed in our exterior life. This renewal of insight must come from inside. We need not concern ourselves whether it will ever take place because the Holy Spirit indeed works this change in us.

- The Lord says that He saved us through the bath of the reborn and renewal by the Holy Spirit. (Titus 3:5; 2Corinthians 4:16)
- This new person we are changed into by the Holy Spirit carries more and more the image of our Creator and the full knowledge of God (Colossians 3:10)
- You must just realize that the devil is not satisfied with this new person and that he will attack this new person with all his might to try and destroy it. The apostle Paul also experienced it. He writes that he always saw another law inside of him that wanted to capture him and this other law is the sin. (Romans 7:23, 25)
- The change goes hand in hand with the ability to distinguish. It means that our direction of thought and direction of life must change and be renewed. On Golgotha the Lord Jesus renewed us so that we can live differently.
 - His body was tortured to pieces and nailed with iron nails to the cross.
 - He was totally alone – even God forsook Him.
 - This all was because this was how God punished our sins so that we could be saved from death into the eternal life.
 - During Pentecost the inhabitation and guidance of God the Holy Spirit enriched us.
 - The Holy Spirit works the ability to differentiate in our minds so that we can see what is right and what is wrong.

This renewal that the Lord Jesus works by the Holy Spirit in us means that it must be a renewal according to the image of Christ. We cannot just live like we want and do what we like. We must be what Jesus wants us to be (and also how he was as a human): holy, good and well.

You may possibly have your doubts whether we would ever be able to grow into this condition and persevere.

- You must not doubt because that is why the Lord Jesus called you today to His table of Holy Communion.
- He assures you that you are no longer the property of the devil.
- He, through His earnings on the cross, brought you over to the eternal Kingdom. (Canons of Dordt 3-4:10)
- The Holy Spirit ensures you that you are brought with by the Lord to the surroundings of the table of Holy Communion and that He feeds you by His body and by His Word and Spirit protects and builds you up.

Amen.

Prayer

Psalm: 32:4

Formulary

Psalm 23:2,3

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

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 Helping Reverend
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 Scripture Modern King James Version