

## REFORMED CHURCH CLANWILLIAM : SUNDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2013 MORNING SERVICE

**Sing before:** Psalm 138:1

*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 33:5

**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 119:62*

Law

Psalm: 119:62

**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 73:1

**Scripture reading:** Hosea 4**Scripture text:** Hosea 4:1, 6a

**Hear the word of the Lord, You children of Israel, For the Lord brings a charge against the inhabitants of the land: "There is no truth or mercy Or knowledge of God in the land.**

(Hosea 4:1)

**My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me...**

(Hosea 4:6a)

These words of the Lord are very strict! In modern vernacular it means:

*You may not enter My Kingdom! I reject you to hell! You who did not want to have any knowledge about Me!*

Brother! Sister! This is what lies in store for us should our knowledge of the Bible be poor.

- It is not possible for us to say that we believe in the Lord and leave it at that!
- Sometimes we hopelessly over emphasize our beautiful life and the good things we do (good works) – but together therewith we know too little about what is written in the Bible.
- We do good works, as good as we can, because we must display our gratitude – but from Ephesians 2:8 we learn that the reward therefore is the eternal death.

Why do some people then persevere in the image of right whilst there are so much we have to convert from?

- Because our knowledge of God is so poor. That is why.
- We do not know the Bible well enough – this is the only way in which we really get to know God, because the Bible is the specific revelation of God.

It is of no use being able to tell somebody: somewhere the Bible teaches this or that about this matter.

- Mostly our quotation is so distorted that it is not the Bible itself speaking through our mouth.
- Let us put it as it is: it is not the Lord speaking by our words because our knowledge is too poor.

To worsen the matter, the person, we are attempting to convince about the truth, asks where the Lord says it in His Word and we then cannot find the place, or we don't even know where to search for it!

It was exactly like this with Israel. Then the Lord sent two prophets to them.

- The Lord sent the prophet Amos to preach about their social injustices.
- He also sent Hosea to preach about their religious injustices.
  - This is the entire content of his preaching: You are impure in your worship! You are untrue to the Lord!

Verse 1 is a call to the people to wake up and hear the Word of the Lord.

- The Lord is coming to take you on in a battle of rights.
- We put it into our idiom: The LORD is going to sue you! Because you no longer have any love, faithfulness and knowledge about the Lord.

There are three matters the Lord has against the people. Every one is the result from the following named by the Lord:

- Because you do not know the Lord you became untrue.
- Because it is only somebody who is without God that breaks his word and not keep to his promises.
- It is only people like this that you cannot trust at all.

*And, says the Lord it is because you have lost your loyalty towards each other that you no longer have love for each other.*

In verse two the Lord tells exactly where their loyalty and honesty and love lack towards each other in their daily lives.

- You swear falsely, you lie to each other, you steal and also steal each other's wives and husbands because you commit adultery like only people who have left God can do.
- You burgle each other's house and in this process many people are wounded so that the Lord says that is one bloodbath running into the other.

Now just think: it definitely was not all the people who were so very bad.

- There were also believers amongst them
- But the Lord places the bad also on the account of the believers because they did not have sufficient knowledge about God to convert the bad.

Spiritual knowledge was also lacking.

- This was so because the people became estranged from God.

- Always when people lose knowledge about the Lord then this type of spiritual desolation arrives – ignorance about the Lord and His Word.

The sins mentioned in verse two are a summation of the Ten Commandments. What does the Lord want to tell us?

- This: should you not know the Bible then this kind of thing of you and those around you starting to commit these terrible sins takes place.
- Then we cannot correct those who sin because we also lack to knowledge to do so!
- Then the Lord PUNISHES us! To Him ignorance is no excuse! You must see to it that you have the knowledge.

Verse three tells about the judgement of the Lord. He must punish these sins. He cannot do anything else.

- He will let the land wither away, man and beast, until nothing is left over.
- BUT hear also that the Lord is referring here to the final judgement.
  - The Lord puts it so unequivocally that it is not only relevant to Israel of those years.
  - It puts us to facing the same God, the same demand and the same judgement.

Now consider verse 5:

**Therefore you shall stumble in the day.**

Do you notice the reproach?

- It deals with the words “**in the day**”. In the day you can see where you walk
- Then you do not stumble and fall over all sorts of things

*The meaning of the Lord is that the sin can easily trip us up because we do not have the knowledge to see the sins until we eventually stumble over the judgement day when we land in hell.*

We as church council, reverend and congregation are put guilty.

- In the night the prophet will stumble together with you says the Lord.
- The church leaders also do not know enough. Our knowledge is also too poor.

Brothers and sisters is it not possibly high time for us to do something about the matter? It does not help knowing where to search for everything in books, we must have the knowledge, that is what the Lord wants.

Verse 6:

**My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.**

- My people sin in their daily lives because they do not know the Bible! Because they do not know Me!
- Then they go to hell because nobody who does not know Me can enter My Kingdom.

Do you understand the great sincerity in which the Lord is speaking to us?

Come, let us gather and investigate the Word of the Lord so that we may have the knowledge!

- So that we can deepen in faith and so that we can admonish those who do not want to hear!
- Not to thereby earn the heaven, because we cannot.
- To thereby prove our gratitude because Christ has already earned the heaven for us!

Now consider how Jesus earned the heaven for us, and paid for our sins – seen from the viewpoint of this text: In Isaiah 53:11 it is written:

**By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many.**

This is a Christ-prophecy from the Old Testament.

The Lord Jesus teaches and admonishes us because He knows what He is talking about.

- When the devil quoted from the Bible during the temptation in the desert then Jesus could say: It is also written
- Through His knowledge of God and His Word He teaches His disciples.
- Through His knowledge He knows every chosen because He refers to those given to Him by the Father.
- He knows our sins and weaknesses. Therefore He died for us and He also sent the Holy Spirit back to us.

It was not just a matter of the Lord Jesus Christ dying.

- He knew exactly what He died for.
- Therefore His Spirit can the command to teach us in the truth. And to know about the truth is to have knowledge. John 16:13:

**However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth.**

The whole truth is the full word of the Lord. It is the entire Bible.

- We must study and investigate it.
- The Holy Spirit will inspire us to do it and to understand and believe the contents thereof!

Congregation, watch and pray because what is written here that the Lord has a case against the people is relevant to us as well.

- Because we commit ugly sins and we are lax in our lives of faith and we are loveless towards each other because we do not know the Lord.
- There is no longer knowledge about God in the land (1).

It is to you and to me that the voice of the Holy Spirit says:

**My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge!**

This will be the reason why the Lord will tell everybody going lost: Due to your lack of knowledge about the Lord you cannot enter my Kingdom

**Amen.**

Closing prayer.

Lord be merciful to us in our sins. Let Your kingdom also come in our conversion so that we may investigate and study Your Word with zeal and joy, so that our knowledge of You and our salvation may expand. Gather us here again this evening in the presence of Your Word so that we may render to You the glory and devotion befitting to You. For the sakes of Christ

**Amen.**

Closing Psalm: 100:2, 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  
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