

REFORMED CHURCH CLANWILLIAM : SUNDAY 12 AUGUST 2012

MORNING SERVICE

Sing before: Psalm 84:6

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 2:6

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 Psalm 65:2

Law

Psalm: 65:2

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 43:3

Scripture reading: Leviticus 10

Scripture text: Leviticus 10:1

Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them.

(Leviticus 10:1)

What Nadab and Abihu did, because they entered the temple carrying censers with fire, appears to be good

- The crux of the matter is that the Lord did not issue them such a command.
- Some translations claim it to be contrary to the commands of the Lord, but literary it is written that the Lord did not tell them to do so.

Be aware that the Lord does not just for a joke, kill two men with a bolt of lightning.

1. **What the Lord commands**
2. **Human persuasion**
3. **Where is the border?**

1. What the Lord commands

What happened here is very important:

- It does not only deal with that man may only do what the Lord commands you to do.
- It is very clear that you also may not do what the Lord did not tell you to do.

This is what happened here:

- Via Moses the Lord commanded Aaron to manage the ceremonies for that day.
- The other priests were not commanded to partake in the specific tasks.
- They only did the normal duties like gathering the blood of the offer-animal and then handing the vessel containing the blood to Aaron – the Lord did not tell them to do something more than that.

Aaron first had to slaughter a calf for himself.

- He had to offer the fat, kidneys and liver to the Lord.
- He had to spread some of the blood thereof onto the horns of the altar.
- The remaining blood had to be poured out against the base of the altar.
- The remainder of the calf was burnt outside of the encampment.

Only after Aaron was cleansed from his own guilt by this offer could he bring the burnt offer for the people.

After everything was readied on the altar Aaron blessed the people.

- At that moment the Lord appeared to the people.
- There was a fire consuming the entire burnt offer and pieces of fat.

- The people broke into great jubilation towards the Lord. With joy and rejoicing the people bowed their faces to the ground.

At this moment Nadab and Abihu took censers, put coals and incense in it and entered the tabernacle.

- It was a great moment: the Lord was appearing to the people and everybody experienced joy and ecstasy.
- Was that possibly the motivation why these two men went beyond their duties? Or was it due to conceitedness that they wanted to do something on their own?
- Whatever their drive or motivation was, one matter is clear, they were disobedient and wanted to enter God's holy place without being commanded to do so.

The question is: About what place inside the tabernacle is the Bible referring to? Should we know about what specific place reference is made to you would be able to understand the strict conduct of the Lord.

- Here the Bible refers to "**before the Lord**" (V.10.1)
- In Leviticus 16:1-3 we read about the Lord appearing in the cloud above the mercy seat of the Arc.
- From that we can deduct with reasonable certainty that the sons of Aaron were entering the Holy of Holies. This is a room behind the veil where the arc was.

To the Lord this room was a very special place.

- He allowed only the high-priest entrance to that room and also only once per year.
- On that occasion the high priest must offer a young bull and a ram as a burnt offer in the Holy of Holies.

As indicated here by the Lord, He took a very serious view on any other way of entering this room.

- The act of the Lord on that specific day also proves it. The Lord emphatically prohibited admission to that room.
- He immediately punishes it by death.
- This is why it is translated by these words: **which He had not commanded them.**

2. Human persuasion

The internal persuasion of these two men was thus completely wrong.

- The way of the Lord is that He does not allow people He calls as officials to hold wrong examples to the believers.
- For the sake of the community of the believers the Lord always makes such people as an example.
- He always punishes such people so severely that to all who saw their wrong example it is clear that the Lord is not satisfied by such a life style.

These matters must serve to you as a clear warning that human attributes may not be imported into the worshipping service.

- The deed of these two men appeared innocent and sincere and even seemed as if it could add joy to the worshipping service.
- The Lord calls it strange fire – it is fire He rejects. It is a deed He hates so much that He, quick as lightning, killed two men.

Should, in our case, there possibly not be a lightning bolt striking us down, we would at any rate die spiritually and eventually so progress in the sin that we completely die off the Lord. The end result is exactly the same: eternal death.

In the life of faith, do only what the Lord expects from you. Nothing more and nothing less.

- Other things we do, and that may look innocent and harmless, are audacity and disobedience.
- Even should we intend it sincere and believe it not to be doing more from ourselves than adding to the enrichment of the worshipping service.

The reverence we hold for the Lord here also comes to play because the way in which we live out our faith shows how much reverence we have towards the Lord Himself.

- It thus also deals with our personal neatness of faith.
- We deduct that Nadab and Abihu were under the influence of liquor when they committed these wrong acts.
- This we deduct from the fact of the Lord Himself speaking to Aaron after the event and telling him not to drink wine or strong liquor when entering the tent of congregation. Should he do so, he would die.

You must keep in mind that we as mankind are very small and heavily tainted by sin. Compared to us the Lord is extremely large in glory and majesty. Our lives – but especially our worshipping – must stand in reverence and fear to the holy God.

In our times we could possibly think about this again because in our times we relinquish principles in many instances.

- We will have to strongly guard against doing things that will result in bringing the punishment of the Lord upon us.
- That we do not relinquish principles should we, during the worshipping service, do things in the way we do it in the street!
- We cannot set new borders overriding those set by the Lord.

3. Where is the border?

The border is the offer-blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the language of the Old Testament: the blood of the offer-beast.

- Nadab and Abihu knew the laws of offering very well because Moses taught it to them.
- But they did not heed it – and paid the price.

That day they have had just held the dish with the offer-blood for Aaron so that he himself, by spreading the blood of the cleansing offer onto the horns of the altar, could atone for his own sins before offering for the people.

- In both offers he poured the remaining blood onto the base of the altar.
- This blood was prophetically to the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ that would be spilled to the forgiving of mankind's sins.

That day the two men had only coal and incense in their censers.

- You cannot appear to the face of God outside of the atonement by Jesus Christ.
- Therefore even in our times all functions in the worshipping service must be tested for compliance to the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Himself says: **No one comes to the Father except through Me.** (John 14:6)

You can only believe and pray in the offer blood of the Lord Jesus Christ covering your sins.

- The moment you move outside of that you, like Nadab and Abihu, expose yourself to death.
- The reason then is that you cannot face God without first being cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ.
- There is nothing you can present instead of that, because even the coals and incense of Nadab and Abihu was not sufficient to the Lord. He rejected it and held it as something strange and unacceptable.

There also were all sorts of other decorations on them, as an example they wore priest's clothing specially made for them.

- That simply was not enough. They were carried with their priest clothing and all from the encampment and buried.
- The warning is very clear that no form of exterior show or external change in the worshipping service can save mankind.
- Salvation is only possible in one way and that is to do exactly in your worship what the Lord commanded you by Jesus Christ and under leadership of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord wants to be known as the Holy and Almighty in Jesus Christ.

- Therefore the Lord Jesus Christ lives devoid of any sin.
- And He also conquers the death.

But now we must let ourselves be led by the Holy Spirit in our worshipping.

- That means that in our entire life we must be aimed so seriously onto God that we will not seek our salvation by strange fire or by changeable exteriors.
- That is the road of death.

Therefore one of the sermons with the most beautiful words ever heard is the sermon by John the Baptist when he said: "**Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!**" (John 1:29)

- Out of himself mankind is so sinful that he cannot any longer face the Lord.
- He can although face the Lord, but then only by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Closing prayer.

Closing Psalm: 89:6

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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