

REFORMED CHURCH CLANWILLIAM : SUNDAY 3 AUGUST 2014 MORNING SERVICE

Sing before: Psalm 43:4

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 84:5

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 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 72:11

Scripture reading: Philippians 4

Scripture text: Philippians 4:7

and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

(Philippians 4:7)

To the true believer Holy Communion is an event of joy because it assures him again that the Lord has forgiven all his sins and that the Lord supplies a place of residence to him in the hereafter.

This joy must always be part of the lives of all believers.

1. **The joy of the Philippians.**
2. **What is the result of knowing the peace of God?**

1. **The joy of the Philippians.**

The church in Philippi was very exceptional.

- The people of the town, and therefore the church, comprised people of a variety of nations. Philippi was initially established as a place where Roman soldiers could retire.
- All these soldiers were not Romans. They were soldiers from all the nations the Romans had conquered.
- Other people also resided there.

One can imagine that these people were tough and easily ended up in conflict situations.

- Now the Lord sends word to them: Rejoice in the Lord. Joy – in other words joy of faith and joy of love – is the ground-note of the passage we've read.
- Verse 4: Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! This means that the church of Philippi should not only speak about joy. - They must reflect joy.
- Their entire being, and everything they do, should demonstrate the joy they draw from their relationship with the Lord

This is why verse 5 adds that their gentleness should be evident to all people.

- The behavior of the members of the church towards one another and towards other people should be such that everyone would become aware of their goodwill to other people.
- Everybody should be able to see that they are indulgent towards other people and that their way of life does not allow rudeness, slander or any form of malice.

The word "all" bears special emphasis.

- It means that the people of the church should not only show love and cordiality to one another.

- They should literally involve all people in the way they live their gentleness and their motivation to carry forth the message of the Lord.

The intention of this text is important.

- The believers are not threatened with the judgement of the Lord when He returns. It does not say that we will be punished when the Lord returns and finds that we've been unfriendly and inhospitable.

Its point of departure is the complete opposite:

- You must rejoice in the Lord!
- The idea is that there's not much time left. We must live our joy in full so that we are what we should be when the Lord comes again.

Verse 6 contains a beautiful motivation for being completely joyful. Only joy of life in the Lord can make our troubles disappear.

- There simply is no one who does not experience some kind of trouble or anxiety at some time or another.
- These things are the exact opposite of joy of life.

This kind of stress very often leads to depression.

- But there is a way out of it – we can take precautions so that it does not hit us too hard.
- We have the means to handle anxiety and fear. This is why the Scriptures tell us the following: Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:6)

This verse is all about your personal relationship with the Lord.

- How do you pray? And when do you pray?
- Many people know the Lord only when they are in trouble. This is so wrong.
- The Lord teaches us very clearly that He wants us to worship Him. In other words, we must honour and serve Him, and then also call upon Him for what we need.

And, importantly, we must also thank him for what we receive! Hence the Lord wants our prayers to be filled with our joy of life.

- In this passage the Lord portrays the believer as a person whose heart is overflowing with joy in God
- and who will not have his joy disturbed by the malice of people or the evil of the devil.

If your relationship with the Lord is such that you expect all help and blessings from Him, then you know the peace of God.

- The peace of God is to receive the grace of God and to embrace it.
- The peace of God is the certainty within us that tells us that we belong to the Lord and that He completely controls our body and soul for the good of us.

- The peace of God is to realise that God loves me so much that He grants me all this grace without me deserving any of it, and that his grace is a completely free gift from Him.
- The peace of God is to know without doubt that I have been reconciled to God through Jesus Christ. The peace of God is worked by God – something completely beyond my understanding.
 - It surpasses:
 - all cleverness,
 - all reasoning, and
 - all human capabilities.

Thus, the peace God gives us is something given to us by grace through Jesus Christ, and it is at such a high level that we cannot grasp it with our cleverness or intelligence. It exceeds everything.

2. What is the result of knowing the peace of God?

You will at once live an honest and good life

- Because you know the joy of belonging to the Lord and have inner peace for having been saved. You will only do what is honorable and pure and clean.
- You will reflect the loveliness of the Lord's presence!

But your life will be distinguished by a particular style.

- You will not be doing good and commendable deeds heavy-heartedly and regarding it as a lot of trouble – dragging your feet through your righteous life.
- You will live joyfully and with a zest for life.
- Everyone will notice that you approach your work, or whatever you attempt, joyfully, that you live a commendable life, and this will reflect your relationship with God.
- People who notice this and do not have these gifts will then of course be encouraged to also acquire the peace and joy of life from God. - Then we win our neighbour for Christ!

Now apply all these things to our lives. We must realize that the Lord calls all of us to sit at the table of Holy Communion. We are busy preparing for it.

- At that table He will reveal the greatest deed of grace possible, namely you must live in joy and happiness because He bore all misery and worries for you on the cross.
- We will again hear that He forgave us our sins – all our sins! Not only selected ones.
- It is not so that we do not have joy and happiness to celebrate. It only is so that we often do not want to see and live it out! And that is sin.
- At the table of Holy Communion the Lord will also assure you that you can totally live in this life with power and majesty over all that is bad and disheartening because you were freed from it in Jesus Christ.
- You also receive the assurance that the Lord Jesus made provision for you in the hereafter.

Brothers and sisters, carefully reflect upon the meaning of this and then you will realize that our attitude towards life must be so that we mirror the joy and happiness and peace of the Lord – until the Lord comes.

- We have the calling that when the Lord comes we must await Him with peace and joy.
- It will come to being in our lives of the moment: Thus do everything that is true and honorable; Live justly and holy; Do things that are good and praiseworthy.

Amen.

Closing prayer.

Closing Psalm 68:2

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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