

REFORMED CHURCH CLANWILLIAM : SUNDAY 25 AUGUST 2013 MORNING SERVICE

Sing before: Psalm 31:15

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 107:4

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 119:6

Law

Psalm: 119:6

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 86:2

Scripture reading: Romans 12**Scripture text:** Romans 12:12

rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;
(Romans 12:12)

Who of us still possess true joy of life?

- Have we all not become people who have lost the true Christian joy?
- People who have lost hope?

The Christian worship is a worship of joy. It is clearly written.

- The Lord Jesus says that He told us these things so that His joy could live in us and our joy could be fulfilled.
- Paul wrote: **Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!** (Philippians 4:4)

Do we not sometimes treat our worshipping in such a way that it seems to be befitting a funeral but not a wedding?

- Our young people are sometimes under the impression that, because it is too serious, worshipping is a matter more befitting older people.
- It does not suit younger people!

Beloved, it is false practicing religion in this way. Should we exclude the joy from our hearts then we in fact exclude from our hearts the true depth of our religion.

Here Paul is thinking about the battle every person must experience in life. All the matters complicating our lives here come to the foreground.

- It is everything. Drought. Our children disappointing us. Too much rain. Failed crops. Death. Heartache. Setbacks in our lives.

Against these matters the Lord teaches about hope.

- The hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the power of our lives and a source of joy and gladness in the life of every Christian.

- This hope and joy of life is what keep us patient in all the oppressions coming over us.

But we must first realize what the Lord teaches by the word *hope*, before we can understand why we must be glad about it and why the Lord says that the joys thereof must overrule our lives.

- This text deals with the preliminaries of this life and the glory we will receive when this dispensation comes to an end.
- The Lord wants that this young congregation of Rome must still expect the Lord Jesus Christ in their prayers.
- The things promised by the Lord for the hereafter must in fact give them the strength in this life.

We must hope upon the life with God hereafter.

- This hope must give resilience to our lives.
- It must cause us to live with joy through all the attacks.
- But it must also give strength to our life so that we may overcome every setback.

Here hope has two meanings.

- The first meaning of hope is the action. It is to hope.
 - We have the possibility of expecting something better. That is hope.
 - The people who do not have Christ as their Saviour cannot hope because they have nothing to live for.
 - Therefore be glad that the Lord granted you the hope that the non-believers do not have.
- The second one is hope as an object. This means that we hope for.
 - It is the hope for the new dispensation here after.
 - It is the fulfillment of the time that already started by the resurrection of Christ – it is the glory that would be granted to us with the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - Inbetween all the miseries of the world we who still believe have reason for joy, because this heartache is busy running out – we have the promise that at the end of all our grief we will be allowed entry into the everlasting glory of God's kingdom.

Then this text means: Rejoice in the matters that God guarantees you. The letter to the Romans is filled with this encouragement to hope. In Chapter 8:18 it is written:

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

(Romans 8:18)

Also listen to verse 24 and 25:

24 For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?

25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

(Romans 8:24 & 25)

At another place we are also encouraged not to lose hope: (Chapter 5:3-5):

3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;

4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

(Romans 5:3-5)

Here we are taught in as many words that in our battle we have the hope on God and salvation so close to us. So close that God the Spirit is inside of us to ensure us about the salvation by the Lord.

In 1 Thessalonians 1:6 the Bible calls the joy: *joy of the Holy Spirit*

- Then joy and joy of life is a sign of God living inside of you.
- Joy of life is the hope on the love of Christ.
 - What is there that can separate us from the love of Christ? Not oppression or anxiety and not even danger, persecution or hunger.
 - During the moments of the deepest misery and anxiety Christ and the hope on salvation is still with us.
 - It is this hope making us patient during oppression and still giving the strength to pray.

Calvin one said that nobody could bear his cross with a calm mind should he first not have learned to search for his glory outside of this world. This consolation softens the bitterness of our tribulations.

Rejoice in the hope! This also teaches us to have a positive outlook on life.

- Do not sit and decay in your misery. Do something about the matter. Turn the matter around. Change if from negative to positive.
- You must be the victor and not the difficulties in life.
- Rejoice in hope. Get your life attitude in Jesus Christ right!

The hope upon the kingdom of God is the life-responsibility of the Christian.

A dark life devoid of hope and without joy and thankfulness is a life that does not fit a Christian.

- Somebody who is continually dissatisfied or somebody unable of heartily laughing and who cannot be deeply glad is somebody without hope.
- Somebody not having the joy and the life in Christ.
- The heathens are like this. They have no hope and therefore their lives are sad. They hide their loss behind a hollow life with empty joyousness.

Here the Lord teaches us that it does not necessarily mean that in life we must avoid misery and trouble or that we are exempted from it.

- He teaches us how it is possible for a Christian to, amongst all his difficulties, be a victor in the joy and power of the Lord.

- Martin Luther wrote with this text that a Christian must not try avoiding but should bear the oppression.

The hope of the Christian is upon the love of God giving escape.

- His hope is on God who softens the suffering.
- His hope is on the expectation of the unsurpassable glory God will give after our suffering here.
- Our hope is on that which solidly stands in the council of God.

Therefore we must give expression to our hope. It is not something that we can be silent about. It is why we, under guidance of the Spirit of God, confess in Psalm 42:8

The Lord will command His loving kindness in the daytime, And in the night His song shall be with me-A prayer to the God of my life.

(Psalm 42:8)

Our hope is upon the day that God will dry our tears.

- The day when there will no longer be grief and disappointments.
- The day when the death has also passed and only jubilation remains in life.

Then we at least have hope. Then we must also show our joy.

- Man can only be glad when you know this richness of a life in God.
- If we did not have this what would this life of today have been worth?
- Should we not have known that God would provide in the needs of our land and in the personal need of everyone, why would we have wanted to continue living?

But we have the power of the hope in the Lord Jesus Christ and the prayer.

- The prayer silences the ridicule of the devil.
- The prayer and hope bind the power of satan so that his violence over us comes to an end.

The day of the arrival of the Lord the power of satan will be finally broken and the power of satan finally be destroyed.

- The devil cannot rob us from God, therefore he must just try to erase the joy in Christ from our lives.

But beloved, beware of a false or dishonest joy. A worldly joy but without God. Let the continual hope on the glory of God give you joy in life.

Amen.

Closing prayer.

Closing Psalm: 84:5

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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Scripture: Modern King James Version**