

Resurrection Sunday

(10:00 am) Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship: Isaiah 49:1-7 and Prayer

SonChimes: "Christ the Lord is Risen Today" led by Jane Miller

Congregational Hymn: "And Can It Be?" Song # 347
(Dick, I changed this to let the congregation echo the joy of the Chimes!)

First Reading: "The Betrayal" (Matthew 26:36-46)
Duet: "Go to Dark Gethsemane" sung by.....

Second Reading: "The Judgment" (Matthew 26:57-66)
Men's Chorus: "Man of Sorrows, What a Name"

Third Reading: "Betrayal" (Matthew 27:11-12 & 27-31)
Duet: "What will You Do with Jesus?" sung by.....

Fourth Reading: "Death" (Matthew 27:45-54)
Men's Chorus? "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

Congregational Hymn: "At the Cross" Song # 323

Fifth Reading: "Burial" (Matthew 27:57-60)
JoySong: "Lamb of God"
Duet "Were You There?" Rick and Bev Gentry

Sixth Reading: "Resurrection" (Matthew 28:1-10)
Highest Praise: "Hallelujah"
"Praise the Lamb"
Solo: "Was it a Morning Like This?" Catherine Sweetman
Choir: "Written in Red"

Meditation: "Freedom Fighter" Pastor Bronson

Congregational Hymn: "He Lives" Song # 368

Parting Word of Grace

Resurrection Sunday Morning Message: “Are You Reconciled?”

If you looked at the order of service you saw that the title for today’s message is “Reconciled?” Let me just say to you right now that I am experiencing, within the intense depths of my soul, what it means [takes!] to be reconciled, because I have a forty minute sermon to preach in five. So, if you want to know... If you want to know what I’ve been doing, I have been crossing things out! Snip, snip! So I have cut this down to a bare minimum.

Are you reconciled? In the first chapter of the Gospel of John you read this: *“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only son from the Father, full of grace and truth. No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.”* A little later on Jesus is quoted as making this comment to one of His disciples, named Philip. He said, *“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’”* It is from [on the basis of] these things that in his letter to the Colossians the apostle of Paul would write, *“For in Jesus all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things.”* Now there is the question.

All that we have sung about, all that we have read from the Word is God’s intent that we be reconciled to Him, establishing peace so that there is no continued argument between us, His creatures, and Him, our Maker. Jesus’ desire is that you and I would know the Father.

“For God who said ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’” Paul writes, *“has shown in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus.”* Have you looked upon the face of Jesus? Do you want to?

There is a remarkable but little commented on scene in the Gospels which illustrates this question perfectly. Jesus is in the city of Jerusalem, and he is near the pool of Bethesda. The pool of Bethesda was the place which the Jews understood you could be healed if you could get into the waters after the waters were disturbed by an angel. This is what is written in the Gospel of John (5:2-5): *“There is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades. In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, He said to him – now are you ready? – ‘Do you want to be healed?’”* What?! Thirty-eight years of lying in the dust? Thirty eight years unable to function? Do you want to be healed? You’ve got to be out of your mind!

Is that really a question? Yes, that really is a question. The man had made a life of being sick. It wasn’t, perhaps, the best life he could live, but for thirty eight years he had managed to have other people feed him. For thirty eight years he had managed to have other people dress him. For thirty eight years he had managed to have other people carry him places or bring things to him. It wasn’t the best life, but... For thirty eight years! You know, what would have happened if he became well? He might have had to get a job and help somebody else.

Characteristically we evangelical types ask people “Have you been saved?” “Do you know Jesus?” Those are good questions. A better question is, “Are you reconciled?” Are reconciled to God? Jesus reveals the love of God to us. We’ve spent this whole morning thinking about it, reading about it, singing about it. If we are to be reconciled to a God of love, we must be loving. Jesus reveals a God Who gives, gives overwhelmingly, gives almost without limit. If we are to be reconciled to a God Who gives, we must be giving. Jesus reveals a God Who sacrificed His own Son in order to provide a way of escape from the sentence of death against sin. If we are to be reconciled to such a God, we must be willing to sacrifice that others would know there is a way to escape from sin. So that is the question. Sometime we [all] have to answer that question; sooner rather than later. Am I reconciled to God? Have I come to the place where I am ready to give up the pretence that I am in charge of my own life let alone trying to be in control of everything else, and willing to let God be in charge? Am I reconciled to God? Am I reconciled to the fact that I am a creature, one of His, and that He loves me in spite of what I have done, and what I have thought, and that He is prepared to wash all of that away that I might be one of His glorious creatures, knowing the goodness of His unfailing love rooted in His perfect forgiveness, accomplished for me, for you, when He died on that cross and rose again from the dead that life could be ours! Are you reconciled?

Let us pray: Gracious Father, thank You! Thank You for the overwhelming gift of Your love for us, through our Lord Jesus. Now, Father, it just remains for You to break our hearts, change our minds, cause us by Thy grace to love you as we have been loved. In Jesus’ name, Amen.