

ASH WEDNESDAY, February 17, 2021
The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit

(P: pastor; C: congregation)

HYMN: “I Lay My Sins on Jesus” LBW 305

(Text: Public domain)

**I lay my sins on Jesus, The spotless Lamb of God
He bears them all and frees us From the accursed load.
I bring my guilt to Jesus To wash my crimson stains
Clean in his blood most precious Till not a spot remains.**

**I lay my wants on Jesus; All fullness dwells in him;
He heals all my diseases; My soul he does redeem.
I lay my griefs on Jesus, My burdens and my cares;
He from them all releases; He all my sorrows shares.**

**I rest my soul on Jesus, This weary soul of mine;
His right hand me embraces; I on his breast recline.
I love the name of Jesus, Immanuel, Christ, the Lord;
Like fragrance on the breezes His name abroad is poured.**

EXHORTATION

P: Brothers and sisters: God created us to experience joy in communion with him, to love all humanity, and to live in harmony with all of his creation. But sin separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, and so we do not enjoy the life our Creator intended for us. Also, by our sin we grieve our Father, who does not desire us to come under his judgment, but to turn to him and live.

As disciples of the Lord Jesus we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from the love of God and neighbor. Repentance, fasting, prayer, and works of love – the discipline of Lent – help us to wage our spiritual warfare. I invite you, therefore, to commit yourselves to this struggle and confess your sins, asking our Father for strength to persevere in your Lenten discipline.

There is silence for reflection and self-examination.

CONFESSION

P: Most holy and merciful Father:

C: We confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word, and deed; by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

P: We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.

C: Have mercy on us, Lord.

P: We have been deaf to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

C: Have mercy on us, Lord.

P: We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness. The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives,

C: we confess to you, Lord.

P: Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people,

C: we confess to you, Lord.

P: Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

C: we confess to you, Lord.

P: Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,

C: we confess to you, Lord.

P: Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

C: we confess to you, Lord.

P: Accept our repentance, Lord, for the wrongs we have done. For our blindness to human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

C: accept our repentance, Lord.

P: For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,

C: accept our repentance, Lord.

P: For our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

C: accept our repentance, Lord.

P: Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us.

C: Hear us, Lord, for your mercy is great. Amen

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

*This year out an abundance of caution, IMPOSITION OF ASHES and/or Individual Confession and Absolution is being offered by the pastor **before and after this service**, so that the pastor may wash his hands between individuals receiving ashes. Those who desire to receive ashes may meet with the pastor by the parlor following the service.*

P: Brothers and sisters in Christ, even as God formed man from the ground and gave us life, our sin has brought death and destruction into God's wondrous creation. Therefore....

Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return. (Genesis 3:19)

But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:57)

And so we pray...

P: Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation.

C: that we may show forth your glory in the world.

P: By the cross and Passion of your Son, our Lord,

C: bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

P: Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, does not desire the death of sinners, but rather that they may turn from their wickedness and live. Therefore we implore him to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit that those things may please him which we do on this day, that the rest of our life may be pure and holy, and that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

SALUTATION AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, You despise nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts that lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness we may receive from You full pardon and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C: Amen**

FIRST LESSON: Jonah 3:1-10, *God calls the people of Nineveh to repentance*

Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you.” So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days’ journey in breadth. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s journey. And he called out, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, “By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish.” When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

P: The word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God!**

SECOND LESSON: 2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10, *Now is the day of salvation*

We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

^{6:1}Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ²For he says, “In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you.”

Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. ³We put no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; ⁷by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

P: The word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God!**

LENTEN VERSE

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a-bound-ing in
stead - fast love, and a-bound - ing in stead - fast love.

GOSPEL: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21, *The practice of faith*

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the sixth chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord!

“Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

²“Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ³But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁵“And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ⁶But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁶“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁹“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

P: The Gospel of the Lord. **C:** Praise to you, O Christ!

SERMON

HYMN: “Chief of Sinners though I Be” LBW 306

(Text: Public domain)

**Chief of sinners though I be, Jesus shed his blood for me,
Died that I might live on high, Lives that I might never die.
As the branch is to the vine, I am his, and he is mine.**

**Oh, the height of Jesus’ love! Higher than the heav’ns above,
Deeper than the depths of sea, Lasting as eternity.
Love that found me – wondrous thought – Found me when I sought him not.**

**Only Jesus can impart Balm to heal the wounded heart,
Peace that flows from sin forgiv’n, Joy that lights the soul to heav’n,
Faith and hope to walk with God In the way that Enoch trod.**

**Chief of sinners though I be, Christ is All in All to me;
All my wants to him are known, All my sorrows are his own,
He sustains the hidden life Safe with him from earthly strife.**

**O my Savior, help afford By your Spirit and your Word!
When my wayward heart would stray, Keep me in the narrow way;
Grace in time of need supply While I live and when I die.**

PRAYERS

Prayers and intercessions are said by the pastor. In concluding the prayers the pastor says:

P: Let us pray with confidence in the words our Savior gave us:

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

PREFACE

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P: Blessed are you,
Lord of heaven and earth.

In mercy for our fallen world
you gave your only Son,
that all those who believe in him
should not perish,
but have eternal life.

We give thanks to you
for the salvation
you have prepared
for us through Jesus Christ.

Send now your Holy Spirit
into our hearts,
that we may receive our Lord
with a living faith
as he comes to us
in his holy supper.

C: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P: In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper,
he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

The COMMUNION follows.

After all have returned to their places, the minister continues.

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen

BLESSING FOR THE LENTEN JOURNEY

P: Along the ways of peace may the almighty and merciful Lord lead us. Show us your ways, O Lord,

C: and teach us your paths,

P: so that our ways are directed

C: to keeping your commandments.

P: The crooked shall be made straight

C: and the rough places smooth.

P: Lord, hear our prayer,

C: and let our cry come before you.

P: Let us pray. Almighty God, you led the children of Israel through a mighty sea to freedom and to the promised land. So lead us now on our journey through these forty days of the Easter renewal. Bless what we do in your name during these days, that it may lead to a greater commitment of faith in you and in your Son, into whose death and resurrection we were baptized. Hear us, Father, for his sake.

C: Amen

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

C: Amen

DISMISSAL HYMN: “Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me” LBW 327

(Text: Public domain)

**Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in thee;
Let the water and the blood, From thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure; Cleanse me from its guilt and pow’r.**

**Not the labors of my hands Can fulfill thy law’s demands;
Could my zeal no respite know, Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone; Thou must save, and thou alone.**

**Nothing in my hands I bring; Simply to thy cross I cling.
Naked, come to thee for dress; Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly; Wash me, Savior, or I die.**

**While I draw this fleeting breath, When mine eyelids close in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown, See thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in thee.**

We strive to use our gifts and the best resources available to support people in their faith. To inquire about our sermons and/or the resources used to produce them please contact us through our church office. To God be the glory!

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