

An Order of Worship for the Home

The Fourth Sunday of Easter – May 3, 2020

Teaching through 1 Peter during the Easter season. (week 3, chapter 3)

This service is written for two speakers. Ideally, family members can speak and declare God's grace to one another following this format. For those who live alone, this worship outline can be followed with a brother or sister in Christ over the phone. You may call on a friend to fill this role, or your elder or pastor can worship with you by phone.

There is an "offering prayer" included in this outline. As we shelter in place, please continue to worship through giving. You can mail offering envelopes and checks to Calvary or visit www.calvaryslz.org to give online.

Invocation

Reader 1: He is risen!
Reader 2: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!
Reader 1: All thanks and praise to God...
Reader 2: Father, Son and Spirit...
Together: Amen.
Reader 2: He is risen!
Reader 1: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
² He makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters.
³ He restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
⁴ Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

⁵You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.

Confession & Absolution

Make sure each person present has opportunity to confess to a brother or sister in the fellowship. Go through both parts as many times as needed to accommodate all who are gathered.

Christian Confessing: I want to walk in the light of Jesus.

Christian Responding: *If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:6-7)*

Christian Confessing: I want that friendship with Jesus and his people. I want to walk in the light of Jesus.

Christian Responding: *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (1 John 1:8)*

Christian Confessing: I know I am a sinner. I admit it. There is darkness in my life, but I want to walk in the light of Jesus.

Christian Responding: *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)*

You have confessed, and your God is faithful. He forgives you for Jesus sake! Jesus is the light, and his life is yours. Go, and walk in that light.

[John 10:1-10](#) (Gospel for the Fourth Sunday of Easter)

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. ² But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵ A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶ This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷ So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

[Apostles' Creed](#)

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was 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 thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

[1 Peter 3:13-16](#) (message text)

Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, ¹⁵ but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.

Message from Pastor Matt

Serve, Suffer, Share

Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? (1 Peter 3:13)

It's a good question. This follows several statements calling for good works on behalf of our neighbors. Peter even quotes from Psalm 34 to make the point that God's people are called to do good. The question here may be rhetorical, but it's intended to challenge nonetheless. Peter moves beyond a call to do good and proposes you and I be "zealous for what is good".

When I first moved to suburban Austin, I noticed that the measure of being a "good neighbor" often amounted to smiling and waving from a distance, keeping your lawn neat, and keeping your trash cans out-of-site on non-pickup days. That was a very passive measure of "good." That's not what Peter calls for at all.

God's people are *zealous* for good. Our eyes are always searching for ways to serve. We're constantly asking the question, "How can I help?"

God's people strive to serve. This is the servant mindset of the Christian. Who do we serve? Whoever can benefit. We serve our neighbor; we serve where we can meet needs; we serve wherever we can.

But, even if we are zealous to do good, Peter's question anticipates people will make life difficult for us. That's where he goes next.

But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. (1 Peter 3:14a)

Writing "even if" is like setting the words in wet cement. It's only a matter of time before the possibility becomes solid reality. Yes, you'll likely get hurt. Yes, people will eventually think poorly of you. The words "even if" invite us to *expect* this will happen.

God's people expect to suffer. It may be something you endure, or something I face, or one of our friends' experiences. It may come now, or maybe we won't see it for some time. As Christians, we expect suffering will come.

However, Peter also gives hope. “You will be blessed” is a big statement. Where does Peter get that from? Maybe he’s thinking back to a day spent on a Judean hillside some 30 years earlier when he heard Jesus say, “*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*” (Matthew 5:10)

We strive to serve, and we expect suffering. All the same, Peter encourages us to look forward with purpose.

Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; (1 Peter 3:14b-15)

“Always be prepared” Peter says. The Greek word for “defense” is a verbal explanation, not a counterattack (that’s important to note). And this explanation is given to those who *ask*. The questions come because we strive to serve. Serving opens doors. Being zealous for good will capture people’s attention and bring their questions. Be ready for that.

God’s people are ready to share. It’s a trait of this family.

This is the kind of people we are in Christ:

We strive to serve.

We expect to suffer.

We are ready to share.

And the next verse is important, because Peter wants us to understand these things in the right context.

yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. (1 Peter 3:15b-16)

Peter is revisiting something he’s mentioned before. Your enemies will not be able to say anything which will stick. Here’s what he wrote in chapter 2.

Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. (1 Peter 2:12)

And also this:

For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. (1 Peter 2:15)

Peter is coming back to what he mentioned earlier in his letter, because this has been the thrust of the entire section. You are the people of God, and in this life you **strive to serve**, you **expect to suffer**, and you're **ready to share**. He's not bringing it up in chapter 3 for the first time. He's been saying this all along.

Once we see the bookends to this section of Peter's letter, we can see more clearly the foundation for this calling as well. Peter can give us this view of our lives, because it reflects what we see first in Christ. Peter emphasized this in chapter two.

But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure; this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. ²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. ²² He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ²³ When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. (1 Peter 2:20b-24)

Christ strove to serve. Christ expected to suffer. Christ stands ready to share forgiveness, new life and salvation with you. In the new life he shares, you look like him.

You strive to serve. You expect to suffer. You are ready to share.

You don't do this on your own. You can't. Instead, you are living in Christ. He is serving, suffering, and sharing for you and through you. Amen.

Offering Prayer

If you have an offering present as you worship, you may place your hands over it during the offering prayer.

Reader 1: With thankful hearts we receive from you, O Lord.

Reader 2: With thankful hearts we respond.

Reader 1: Receive our thanks and praise.
Reader 2: Receive our offerings.
Together: Receive us as your own.

Prayers and the Lord's Prayer

Share prayer requests with one another. Pray over the requests shared, then pray the Lord's Prayer together.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Blessing (2 Corinthians 12:14)

Reader 1: He is risen!
Reader 2: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Reader 1: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ
Reader 2: ...and the love of God
Reader 1: ...and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you
Reader 2: ...and with you
Together: Amen

Reader 2: He is risen!
Reader 1: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

As applicable, please share this resource with others who would benefit. An electronic version is available at www.calvaryslz.org. We can also add friends to our mailing list if that is preferred.

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