

# An Order of Worship for the Home

June 14, 2020

The Book of Joel – week 2

---

*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](http://www.calvaryslz.org) to give online.*

## **Invocation**

Reader 1: The prophet Joel wrote, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord

shall be saved." (Joel 2:32)

Reader 2: And so, we call on His name as we begin our worship.

Reader 1: We gather in the name of our God...

Reader 2: who is Father, Son and Spirit...

Together: Amen.

## **Psalm 100**

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!

<sup>2</sup> Serve the Lord with gladness!

Come into his presence with singing!

<sup>3</sup> Know that the Lord, he is God!

It is he who made us, and we are his;

we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

<sup>4</sup> Enter his gates with thanksgiving,

and his courts with praise!

Give thanks to him; bless his name!

<sup>5</sup> For the Lord is good;

his steadfast love endures forever,

and his faithfulness to all generations.

## **Confession & Absolution**

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

*“...rend your hearts and not your garments.” – Joel 2:13*

Christian Confessing: God, you’ve asked that my repentance be inwardly true, and not just an outward show. I confess that I too often pay attention to outward appearance, without addressing the ugliness inside my heart. You hate the sin which clings to me. Help me hate it too. By your grace and mercy, let me know your love for me. Change my heart and in so doing, change my life. Lord, have mercy!

Christian Responding: Your God is “gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.” (Joel 2:13) He knows your sin, and he knows your struggle. He sent his own Son, Jesus Christ, to deal with your sin. By his death your sin is put to death. By his life, you have new life as well. You are forgiven. You are loved. He is making you new day-by-day.

Together: Amen.

### **Mark 6:30-44**

*Please read from your own Bible. This is the gospel reading for today.*

### **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.

### **Joel 2:18-32**

*Please read from your own Bible. This is the basis for the message which follows.*

## Message

### God Removes Threats, Restores Life, & Empowers You!

As we began our study of Joel last week, we opened with this question, “When disaster strikes, how do God’s people respond?” At Joel’s time, disaster looked like a plague of locusts, causing food scarcity and disconnecting people from worship. Our disasters include a pandemic, racial injustice, and economic recession, as a start. The question still fits. When disaster strikes, how do God’s people respond?

Joel’s answer to the question is pretty straight-forward. We respond with prayer and fasting, repenting of our sins and expecting our God to hear and act. That’s what we’ve done. We spent the last week fasting as a church. We each chose something to “go without.” We’ve allowed ourselves to experience the discomfort, pain, and loss of fasting as a way of bringing the discomfort, pain, and longing of our world before God.

Your fasting may have reminded you of personal longings and unmet desires. It may have been an occasion to reflect on your own sin. Your fasting may have brought you closer to the longing others have for healing, justice, change, or hope. It may have been an opportunity to reflect on sin in our world and how it affects others.

Today we break our fast. Today we hear God’s answer to our prayers. Today, Joel will tell us how our God responds when his people repent and seek him.

*Then the Lord became jealous for his land  
and had pity on his people. (Joel 2:18)*

God hears the prayers of his people. He has pity. He shows compassion. What we hear from Joel, we’ve also seen in Jesus.

*When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had  
compassion on them, because they were like sheep  
without a shepherd.  
(Mark 6:34)*

When God’s heart is stirred for the sake of his people, he takes action. As Joel relates to us God’s response, we can see three actions from our God.

God removes threats

God restores life

God empowers his people

## God Removes Threats

In Joel's time, God removed the swarms of locusts.

*I will remove the northerner far from you,  
and drive him into a parched and desolate land...  
(Joel 2:20a)*

This language alludes to something beyond the locust swarms. It was true, God removed the locusts from the land, but other invaders would also come from the north. The nations of Assyria and Babylon would attack and defeat Israel and Judah. God's promise points to the removal of these other threats as well. Joel directs our attention to those actions and more.

Some of God's work is accomplished in the short-term and some is worked out in eternity. Last week we acknowledged that Joel's prophecy speaks to both realities of the immediate and realities of the eternal. The locust plague and the day of the Lord are not the same thing, yet Joel uses the same words and phrases to tell us about both at once. So, we see God removing locusts, and enemy armies, and all threats to the survival of God's people.

What are the threats you and I face? For some, the threat of sickness and death loom large. For others there may be a threat of financial loss – maybe for yourself, maybe for others, maybe for your church. Possibly, you feel safety threatened for yourself, or your children, or your grandchildren.

Our God removes threats. He does so in his timing, but he does so completely. That's the first response of our God. Our God also restores life.

## God Restores Life

*The threshing floors shall be full of grain;  
the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.  
I will restore to you the years  
that the swarming locust has eaten... (Joel 2:24-  
25a)*

God alone can restore life! When his people call on him, he brings the promise of life to them. What's more, he restores all we need for both physical and spiritual life. The grain, wine and oil will feed the needs of the body. These were also essential elements for worship in the temple. The restoration God brings to his people is both physical and spiritual.

Ultimately, we see this restoration in Jesus' death and resurrection. His death was physical. He was human and he really died. It also put to death every sin plaguing your life and mine. His resurrection, likewise, was real and physical. He rose bodily from the grave. Beyond that, his resurrection gives life to you and I, and all who believe in him. God's restoration is always complete – physical and spiritual at the same time.

The next verses build on this. Notice how verse 26 highlights the physical life God provides, and verse 27 focuses on the relationship God has with his people. This is physical and spiritual restoration. Both verses culminate with the same declaration.

*You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied,  
and praise the name of the Lord your God,  
who has dealt wondrously with you.  
**And my people shall never again be put to shame.**  
<sup>27</sup> *You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel,  
and that I am the Lord your God and there is none else.  
**And my people shall never again be put to shame.***  
(Joel 2:26-27)*

When God's people call out to him in the midst of disaster, how does God respond?

- God removes threats
- God restores life
- God empowers his people

### God Empowers His People

Two times, God promises to pour out his Spirit. The Spirit is given to men and women of all ages – sons, daughters, old and young. The Spirit is also given without regard to class or position – “Even on the male and female servants...”

*And it shall come to pass afterward,  
that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh;  
your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,  
your old men shall dream dreams,  
and your young men shall see visions.  
Even on the male and female servants  
in those days I will pour out my Spirit. (Joel 2:28-29)*

Your God wants to involve you in the work he's doing. That's why the Spirit is given. Now that you've seen him remove threats and restore life, he wants you to do this for others. That's why he's given his Spirit. He wants you involved in his work.

You've received the gift of the Holy Spirit, but there's an even bigger audience the gift is intended for. God desires to share this gift with the whole world.

*And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls of the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Joel 2:32)*

People will call out in the midst of disaster. They are calling out in the disasters of our time – COVID-19, systemic racism, political backbiting, job losses, homelessness. You and I are empowered by the Spirit of our God to be part of his response.

We remove threats  
We restore life  
We empower others

Lord, help us know our place in this work. 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** (Joel 2:27)

Reader 1: God's word was given to the prophet Joel...

Reader 2: *You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel...*

Reader 1: *and that I am the Lord your God and there is none else...*

Reader 2: *And my people shall never again be put to shame.*

Reader 1: We live in this promise of God's presence.  
Reader 2: We live in this promise of God's protection.  
Together: Amen.

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

---

Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.