

Worship Service: Sunday January 29, 2017
4th Sunday after Epiphany
Theme: "Celebrating the power of Salvation in Christ"

WE GATHER – A BLESSED PEOPLE

*Call to Worship:

One: God calls us to seek justice,
Many: So that Christ's love for the meek and hungry streams out through the church.

One: God calls us to seek kindness,
Many: So that Christ's light can shine in all places of brokenness and despair.

One: God calls us to walk humbly in the Spirit,
Many: So we can be nourished for the work of the kingdom.

One: Called, blessed and inspired, let us worship our God together.

*Song of Adoration: "**Praise, my soul, the God who crowns you**" BoP#467

*God's Greeting (*from 2 Corinthians 13:14*)

Our Lord has called us to worship and now greets us.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

As God has greeted us with his peace,
so let us pass the peace of Christ to each other.

*The Sharing of the Peace (*We greet each other saying, "The Peace of Christ be with you"*)

Song: "**Good, Good Father**"

I I've heard a thousand stories
Of what they think You're like
But I've heard the tender whisper

Of love in the dead of night
You tell me that You're pleased
And that I'm never alone

Chorus

You're a good good Father
It's who You are
It's who You are
It's who You are
And I'm loved by You
It's who I am
It's who I am
It's who I am

2 I've seen many searching for answers
Far and wide
But I know we're all searching for answers
Only You provide
Because You know just what we need
Before we say a word

You are perfect in all of Your ways
You are perfect in all of Your ways
You are perfect in all of Your ways to us

3 Love so undeniable I can hardly speak
Peace so unexplainable I can hardly think
As You call me deeper still
As You call me deeper still
As You call me deeper still
Into love love love

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WE ARE RENEWED IN GOD'S GRACE

Prayers of Adoration and Confession

God of wisdom and blessing,
On this day we come into the warmth of your presence.
Here we find shelter in the strength of your promises,
here we find welcome in your tender care.
Grateful for the protection you provide,
thankful for the comfort of your community,
we offer our praise to you.
For you give blessing when the world condemns,
you bring freedom when the culture confines.

Understanding God, we know that we cannot hide our faults from you.
You know where we are weakest, and where we most need your help
and forgiveness:

We confess that too often we seek the wisdom of the world instead of your guidance. We value our reputations above reconciliation and for our sins of pride we are sorry. We know that our words are not always loving nor our actions always just. Though our hearts are eager, our wills are weak. Forgive us we pray. Uphold us and renew us by the blessing of your mercy so we may walk more humbly with you each day. Amen.

Assurance of God's Pardon:

Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Though God sees and knows our weakness and sin, forgiveness is ours in Jesus Christ. Rejoice and be glad for our lives are renewed in Him.

Response of Praise: **"Blest Are They"** BoP#624

Youth message: **"A Recipe for Happiness"**

Youth Song: **"Happiness Is The Lord"**

1 Happiness is to know the Saviour
Living a life within His favour
Having a change in my behaviour
Happiness is the Lord

2 Happiness is a new creation
Jesus and me in close relation

Having a part in His salvation
Happiness is the Lord

Real joy is mine
No matter if teardrops start
I've found the secret
It's Jesus in my heart

3 Happiness is to be forgiven
Living a life that's worth the livin'
Taking a trip that leads to heaven
Happiness is the Lord
Happiness is the Lord
Happiness is the Lord

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GOD SPEAKS TO US FROM HIS WORD

Prayer for Understanding

The Reading of Scripture:

Psalm 15
Matthew 5: 1-12

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God!

Special Item: **“Be Not Afraid”** Suzanne McIntosh

Sermon: **“The blessings of Salvation”**

Text: Matthew 5:1-12

Theme: “The Blessings of Salvation

In Matthew chapter 5 Jesus preaches what is known commonly to us as the Sermon on the Mount.

This was his first address to a large crowd after he had called his disciples to follow him in doing God's will.

It is no accident that the Sermon on the mount is placed near the beginning of the New Testament as it sets the tone for Jesus' ministry and also for the plans and promises for those who would follow him.

The fact that this sermon comes so early indicates its importance.

In it Jesus summarizes the character and conduct expected of his followers.

This sermon is not a presentation of the plan of salvation; nor is it teaching for unsaved people. It was addressed to the Disciples (5:1-2) ***When Jesus[a] saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2 Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:***

This sermon by Jesus was intended to be somewhat of a constitution that would govern their lives as they followed him and in their own way bring other into salvation.

In fact, it was meant for all of Jesus' followers, past, present and future who acknowledge Christ as King.

These beatitudes set out for us a description of what we are to strive for as God's people and also shows us how these blessings set us apart in the world.

The poor in spirit....theres is the kingdom of heaven

The first beatitude is pronounced on the poor in spirit. The poor in spirit are those who acknowledge their own helplessness and rely on God's omnipotence. They sense their spiritual need and find it supplied in the Lord. The kingdom of heaven where self sufficiency and self exaltation has no place belongs to such people.

Those who mourn.....they shall be comforted

Those who mourn are blessed; a day of comfort await them. This mourning has nothing to do with the vicissitudes of life. It is the sorrow which one experiences because of fellowship with the Lord Jesus. It is an active sharing in the world's hurt and sin with the Lord Jesus.

Therefore it includes not only sorrow for ones own sin but also sorrow for the world's appalling condition. The mourners shall be comforted in the coming days when **God shall wipe away every tears from their eyes. (Rev. 21:4) Believers do all their mourning in this life for unbelievers.**

The meek.....shall inherit the earth

A third blessing is bestowed on the meek; they shall inherit the earth. By nature, these people might be volatile, temperamental and gruff. But by personally taking Christ's spirit upon them they become meek or gentle. Meekness implies acceptance of one's lowly position.

Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness....shall be filled

Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness are those who long to see honesty integrity and justice in society. These people will be abundantly satisfied at the coming of Christ.

The merciful....shall obtain mercy

To be merciful means to be actively compassionate.

The pure in heart.....shall see God

A pure hearted person is one whose motives are unfixed, one who is not selfish, one whose thoughts are holy and one whose conscience is clean.

The peacemakers....shall be called the children of God

Not those who are peaceful but those who actively intervene to make peace. The natural approach is to watch strife from the sidelines. The divine approach is to take positive action towards creating peace.

John 1:12

¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God,

10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely[b] on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

As Jesus listed these beatitudes that were so critical for his follower’s satisfaction we can realise that there was one pre-requisite in order to live these out; You have to be saved. This constitution for Christian living was being given to those who had already received salvation. This is what it means to be saved.

In this life, it is only salvation that covers us as we face hardships, brokenness, pain, loss and all the sad things that happen in our lives. Salvation by faith in Jesus Christ helps us get up when we fall and carries us along when we barely have the strength to go on. Salvation comprehensively covers us so that we can face our trials and tumults and go forward in hope.

It is a tremendous blessing to have the gift of salvation because it is the greatest gift that our sinful world could ever have. Without salvation we would be far worse off as a people because it is salvation that gives us lasting hope through Christ.

This was what Habakkuk was reflection in chapter 3:17-18

“Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior.

Jesus was also trying to make the point that salvation and happiness are synonymous; if you have one, you have the other but it was Salvation that came first. In order for us to live out those beatitudes we have to be saved. To be happy is to be saved and to be saved is to be covered for life from all that we will face in the years and days to come.

There was a radio programme that came on at 6 p.m. every Sunday on Radio Jamaica when I was growing up called, "Think on these things." The song that began that program spoke glowingly about the blessings of salvation.

If you only knew the blessings that salvation brings
You would never stay away,
If you only saw the table spread with lovely things
You would come to the feast today,

When the door is open wide and the saviour bid you come
There is nothing you have to pay
So be wise and step inside and don't be like those
Who will throw their only chances away.

If you are saved, you should be happy because you are blessed.
Amen.

Song of Response: "**He Hideth My Soul**"

1 A wonderful Savior is Jesus my Lord,
A wonderful Savior to me;
He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock,
Where rivers of pleasure I see.

Chorus
He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock

***That shadows a dry, thirsty land;
He hideth my life in the depths of His love,
And covers me there with His hand,
And covers me there with His hand.***

2 A wonderful Savior is Jesus my Lord,
He taketh my burden away;
He holdeth me up and I shall not be moved,
He giveth me strength as my day. *Chorus*

3 With numberless blessings each moment He crowns,
And, filled with His fullness divine,
I sing in my rapture, oh, glory to God,
For such a Redeemer as mine! *Chorus*

4 When clothed in His brightness, transported I rise
To meet Him in clouds of the sky,
His perfect salvation, His wonderful love,
I'll shout with the millions on high. *Chorus*

*Fanny Jane Crosby | William James Kirkpatrick
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Prayers of God's People, concluding with the Lord's Prayer

WE BRING OUR GIFTS

Work and Witness of our Church

A Time of Giving

*Sung Response: "**Praise God, from Whom all Blessings Flow**" BoP#79

WE ARE SENT...A BLESSED PEOPLE

*The Benediction

*Recessional Song: "**May the God of Hope Go With Us Every Day**" BoP#726