

Worship on April 11, 2021

Order of worship

We Gather

- Welcome and Announcements
- Responsive Call to worship
- Praise song – BOP # 247 – Christ the Lord is risen today
- Prayer for worship + Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination – BOP #64 – Be still and know that I am God
- Scripture: Matthew 28:16-20
- Sermon: The Great Commission Still Stands
- Prayer for the people of God

We Respond

- Offering (invitation and prayer first)
- Offertory Hymn – BOP # 592 – I, the Lord, of sea and sky

We Serve

- Benediction

Ponder Upon Questions

Announcements:

- . Welcome! Grace and peace to you all who are worshipping God with us live right now and those who are worshipping God through this video. This is Sunday. April 11th, 2021. Let us worship God with whole hearts.
- . For Bible study with discussion questions, please stay after the worship. We will share and pray for each other.
- . If anyone wants to volunteer to participate in worship, please let me know.
- . Thank you for your support with your gifts. May God use us and our gifts for his kingdom.

As we come into the presence of our God, let us calm down our hearts and minds, and focus on our Lord.

Responsive Call to Worship

One: We gather with joy, for Easter continues.

All: Locked doors have been opened and fear has turned to peace.

One: We celebrate the presence of the Risen Christ among us.

All: Doubts have been erased and uncertainty has turned to faith.

One: Let us rejoice and be glad!

All: Let us offer our prayers and our praise with humble, hopeful hearts.

Praise song – BOP #258 – Thine be the glory

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

God of new life, we come to you, rejoicing in the mystery of the Risen Christ, present among us always, even when we least expect him. We marvel at your constant love, your victory over evil and death, and your resurrecting hope which embraces us in every circumstance. Trusting in these gifts, we seek to live as Easter people in every place and time. Strengthen us with the gift of your Holy Spirit in this time of worship, and bless us with your peace through Christ, our Risen Lord.

Merciful God, we confess there are times when our trust in you weakens, and we become anxious about many things. We talk about love, but we are gripped by fear of those who differ from us. We cling to our personal agendas and forget you call us to live as a community of believers. Forgive us for seeking our own interests before the needs of others. Open our eyes to the many signs of your love for us. Through the power of your Holy Spirit, rekindle our passion for you, so we can work together to witness to your love.

This time, we come to you in prayer that you taught us how to pray: (The Lord's Prayer:)
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.

Words of Assurance

Sisters and brothers in Christ at St. Andrew's, Hear the words of the risen Christ: Peace be with you. Receive the peace and forgiveness of Christ, and rejoice in his gift of new life this day and every day. Thanks be to God.

Prayer for Illumination: BOP #64 – Be still and know that I am God

Scripture: Matthew 28:16-20

16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

"This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God."

SERMON: The Great Commission Still Stands (The Rev. Soong Huh)

Today's sermon title is "The Great Commission Still Stands."

We are finally back to the Purpose Driven Life Bible Study. I was going to spend one more week with Easter message, but as I promised, we are back to our schedule.

This book, in our next chapter, talks about the first purpose of our lives. That is, We were planned for God's pleasure. We are here to please God.

While the Easter message is still fresh within our hearts, I wanted to connect the message of pleasing God and the Great Commission. The ultimate goal of Jesus' crucifixion is to make us

follow steps of Jesus. And that is the Great Commission. So, as the people of God who experienced the grace and love of God, as the Easter people, what we are to do in our daily lives is to witness the goodness of God, the love of God, and the grace of God.

On Easter Monday, after dropping off our youngest boy to his daycare, my wife and I took our two older boys to COSTCO. They've not been in a grocery shop for a long time. So, it was very very exciting time for them. They are 8 and 6 years old, still very young.

In Costco, they tried to touch all the things they saw. They jumped and ran in very crowded place. I got very very tired and nervous as well. Finally, it was time to go home. When we were about to line up to pay, John had to go to the washroom. So, I gave my membership card to my wife. At Costco, you need to have membership to shop there. While I was helping John, my phone rang. It was my wife. The cashier needed to see me because it was my membership card. Immediately, I got nervous. Now all I could think of was: 'I needed to go there as quickly as possible.' 'My wife is waiting embarrassed.' 'And the cashier treated my wife with such a suspicion!' 'How can a person treat a lady with a small kid with a suspicious look!!'

So, I grabbed John's hand and forced him to walk fast.

We had to pass the food court. For poor John, it looked awesome. John wanted to see the menu. And his mask got off. I was, "Later.. later... now we gotta go!! Fast fast fast..."

In me, anger anger anger... Dark energy was all over around me.

When I got to the cashier, I was looking at her with the look – "HOW DARE YOU TO ASK MY WIFE FOR A PROOF!!" 'How could you treat my family like this!!' HOWEVER, all she needed was to check the card holder and the face of the card were matching. Simply, she was doing her job right.

On the way back home, I thought...

If she saw my face from my preaching YouTube video,,,

What if she comes to our church one day,,,

Then... I might have driven HER away from the good news because of my immature temper...

For me, the Great Commission for her failed.

Back to our scripture today.

This is the last words of our risen Lord to us. **"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."**

Just before ascending, Jesus said this to his disciples. Evangelizing is important. Going to mission is important. Converting people's religions is important. But, what's the heart of it? It is to be with Jesus. **"I am with you always, to the end of the age."**

"I am not leaving you. You are not alone. You are not doing anything without me. I will always be with you. This is my promise to you. So, don't worry."

Isn't this what Jesus wants his disciples to know?

Back to our book. **We were planned for God's pleasure.** Pleasure? How do we experience pleasure? What pleases your life? Money? Fame? Friends? Food?

But think about it. When you are doing something pleasing you, imagine doing it with the person you hate the most or vice versa. Does it still please you? Eating your favorite dish, but you have to share it with your enemy. That's not pleasing, is it?

God can do anything, but he wants to do it with us. Whatever we do, if we are doing it with God, then that pleases God. And that is called worship. Anything we do that brings pleasure to God is an act of worship.

Then, anything is worship? YES. YES. Everything is worship if we do it for God's pleasure.

The author of the book gives a beautiful example. "When I first fell in love with my wife, I thought of her constantly: while eating breakfast, driving to school, attending class, waiting in line at the market, pumping gas – I could not stop thinking about this woman. I often talked to my self about her and thought about all the things I loved about her. This helped me feel close to my wife even though we lived several hundred miles apart and attended different colleges. **By constantly thinking of her, I was abiding in her love. This is what real worship is all about – falling in love with Jesus.**"

Falling in love with Jesus is worship. The Great Commission is all about falling in love with Jesus. **"Make people fall in love with me!" - Jesus**

Human being is programmed with the desire of worship. **Pascal said that "There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of each man which cannot be satisfied by any created thing but by God the Creator, made known through Jesus Christ."**

So, if we fail to worship God, we always find a substitute, even if it ends up being ourselves. The reason God made us with this desire is that he desires worshippers. And he desires people fall in love with him.

The Great Commission is to go and make disciples of all nations.
And that is to make all nations fall in love with Jesus.

Like the example of the author of the book, when we fall in love with someone, what do we want? We want to think about that person constantly and we want to make that person happy. We want to benefit that person with many different ways. Worship is like that too. We worship God for the benefit of God, not for our own benefit. Worship is for God's benefit. When we worship, our goal is to bring pleasure to God, not pleasing ourselves.

So, let us, in our daily lives, think about God and think about how to please God. Let us make our lives worship to him. May God be pleased with our lives.

Let us pray.

Father God, you are a good good Father. You are an awesome God. You loved us first. You came to us to save us. You gave your everything for us. What are we to you that you are so gracious and generous! Thank you. With the grace and love of the Risen Lord, we are here before your presence. As we think of the Great Commission, let us be joyful. Let us enjoy in your love first. Let us offer you our best worship. And let us long to follow your steps as we raise other worshippers from our families, from our churches, from our communities, from our

countries, and from all nations! We are offering all nations upon your hands so all the people of the earth you created worship you with our whole hearts! You deserve all our worship and praise! Be lifted up and be glorified and be worshipped in every moment of our lives. Thank you. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

Prayer for the people of God

This time, Lord, we come to your presence with humble hearts. Please fill our hearts with your love and open our hearts and ears as you speak to us while we are praying to you.

The world is in panic with Corona Virus. The Vaccine is available and many got their shots. But, still, virus is spreading and the confirmed cases are increasing. The government orders to stay home and the shops are closing non-essential sections to stop people coming to buy stuff. But, still, we desire to buy, we desire to go out, we desire to gather, ... our desires are endless. We still try to get more. We still try to use all the things we can. We don't think of others. We don't think of nature, we don't think of anything, but us. Selfish. Greedy. Ignorant.

We come to your feet with repentance. Please come into our hearts and stir our thoughts and our desires. As we pray, please open our hearts and please come into our hearts and take your LORDSHIP in our lives. So, as your good stewards, let us take good care of what we are given by you. Let us have the mind of steward, not owner of everything. You are the Lord. You are the Creator, You are the Master, You are God, not us. And please help us become humble.

With our humble hearts, we offer up our church and all the members into your hands. Especially, we pray for the people who are experiencing physical pains. Place your hands upon them right now, with your love and grace, heal them. Strengthen them. Comfort them. Make them humble before you, so they come to you with praise and worship. And we pray for the people who are facing important life matters. Mahdi's hearing is coming very soon. Lord, give confidence to him and comfort his heart. And make the hearts of judges gracious and generous, so when they hear his stories, let them be moved and grant what he needs. Be with this and lead Mahdi's life in your good will. Also, there are people who are experiencing difficulties and challenges. Help them with your mighty hands and be present in their lives and be the guiding light for their lives. All the power, wisdom, praise, honour, glory, are yours. Be worshipped in every situation. Thank you that you are our God and thank you for your love for us. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: This is the time for offering. In this season of Easter, we celebrate God's most precious gift to us in Christ's dying and rising. As we present our gifts to God, may our generosity reflect God's goodness to us and the hope we have found in Christ Jesus. Let us pray.

Offering prayer:

Generous God, we thank you for the hope and joy we find in your resurrecting power. Bless the gifts we bring so they may spread that hope and joy in the world you love. In the name of your greatest gift, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Offering – BOP # 592 – I, the Lord of sea and sky

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world.

Benediction

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and always. Amen.

Ponder Upon Questions:

1. What common task could I start doing as if I were doing it directly for Jesus?
2. How is “living my whole life for God’s pleasure” different from the way most people understand “worship”?