

Worship on May 16, 2021

Order of worship

We Gather

- Welcome and Announcements
- Responsive Call to worship
- Praise song – BOP #476 – Amigo de Cristo
- Prayer for worship + Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination – prayer
- Scripture: 1 Timothy 6:17-21
- Sermon: Most Important Relationship
- Communion

We Respond

- Offering (invitation and prayer first)
- Offertory Hymn – BOP # 434 – For the Beauty of the earth

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. May 16th, 2021. Let us worship God with whole hearts. There will be the Lord's Table during today's worship.
- . After worship, there will be annual meeting. So, please stay online.
- . 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: Clap your hands, all you peoples;

All: We will shout to God with loud songs of joy.

One: For God, the Most High, is awesome, reigning over all the earth.

All: We will sing praises to God this day and every day.

One: Let us worship God with all we have to offer!

All: We will offer God our love – heart, body, mind and soul!

Praise song – BOP #476 – Amigo de Cristo

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

God of promise and purpose, we greet you this day with thankful hearts. As flowers open and buds unfold around us, the beauty of your world lifts our hearts in praise. As children grow and students prepare to graduate, their energy and enthusiasm encourage us toward your future. You lifted up Jesus to be by your side, and so we know he is always by our side as the future opens before us. Draw close to us in this hour of worship and show us the promise and purpose in our own lives— how we can unfurl with new life and move into the future with the energy of your Holy Spirit and the abiding love of Christ our Lord.

Lord Jesus Christ, you have called all your followers to carry the Good News of God's love and forgiveness to the ends of the earth. Yet we confess we cannot always find the words to tell others of our faith. We are often silent when others criticize the church that bears your name. We try to act out your love but it's hard to tell others why we do what we do for you. Forgive our hesitation to share the gift you have given us, and renew our courage to speak of our commitment to you.

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, remember the promise apostle Paul declares: What will separate us from the love of Christ? Hardship? Distress? Peril or sword? Neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Let us rejoice that, no matter what is happening around us, no matter what we have done, God's deep love will never let us go. Thanks be to God!

Prayer for Illumination: Let us pray for the wisdom of God before reading today's scripture. By the power of your Holy Spirit, open our minds and hearts to receive your Word, O God, so that we may recognize your call to serve in the name of Jesus Christ, the Living Word. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Scripture: 1 Timothy 6:17-21

17 Tell those who are rich not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which will soon be gone, but their pride and trust should be in the living God who always richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. 18 Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and should give happily to those in need, always being ready to share with others whatever God has given them. 19 By doing this they will be storing up real treasure for themselves in heaven—it is the only safe investment for eternity! And they will be living a fruitful Christian life down here as well. 20 Oh, Timothy, don't fail to do these things that God entrusted to you. Keep out of foolish arguments with those who boast of their "knowledge" and thus prove their lack of it. 21 Some of these people have missed the most important thing in life—they don't know God. May God's mercy be upon you. Sincerely, Paul

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

SERMON: Most important relationship

Today's sermon title is "Most important relationship."

Continuing from two weeks ago, we are talking about how we become best friends with God. The author of the book, Rick Warren, suggests 6 ways to be best friends with God. We talked about first two last time.

First, to be best friends with God, we are to talk to God constantly.

Second, we are to meditate on his words.

So, it was building two-way communication with God.

Today, we will talk about 4 ways becoming best friends with God.

I have a pastor friend from my university. One day, I saw him wandering around the campus. One of my friends knew him, and she introduced him to me. And that was it. We didn't get to know each other for many many years. We just knew each other barely. One year, we served a youth retreat together. After spending a few days with him, I liked him. I wanted to become a close friend of him. So, I told him. Let us call each other by names. We used to call each other "pastor." Our relationship was very distant: overly polite, as many pastors do. :)

It was not easy to change how we call each other, even though we liked each other. We wanted a good friendship. To change what we were used to in our previous relationship was very hard and awkward. I tried hard. Without any reason, I called him and yelled, "Hey brother, what's going on, you want a coffee?" We both were younger and didn't have much responsibilities, so we could get together and spent time a lot. So, now, we enjoy our good friendship.

Rick Warren said, "It is our choice. We are as close to God as we choose to be."
With my example of becoming a friend with him, I know exactly what it means.

I am sure that all of you, who are worshipping God with us now, have experiences of building close relationships. God has personality, so he's not different from anyone when building relationships. No relationship happens naturally, even in family. And, just like we read today's scripture, **v21, "Some of these people have missed the most important thing in life – they don't know God,"** the most important relationship in life is the relationship with God.

Let us keep two things in mind before we talk about 4 ways of becoming best friend with God: ONE, my example of building close friendship with some distant pastor, and TWO, what the most important relationship in our life is the relationship with God.

ONE - We must choose to be honest with God. Do you know that God knows all? Do you believe that God knows all? Even though he knows what we think and how we feel, he wants us to express plainly. Sometimes, we hide our feelings and our shames to God and covers them with pious cliché. We don't even know what we are saying. God does not feel good about it. On the other hand, God does not mind our frustration. Do you know my favorite moment? It's my wife talking to me about her day including her difficult feelings. All day long, I am looking forward to it. God is the same! God waits for us to tell him about our life, our honest feelings and difficulties. In many Psalms, David poured out his honest feelings including anger, sadness, desperateness, and many other negative feelings. God never minds of them. Instead, when we read David's psalms, we can find that he is filled with joy and praise after pouring out his feelings to God. When we honestly come before God, God fills our hearts with joy. Let us come to God with our honest hearts.

TWO - We must choose to obey God in faith. Friends? Obey? It doesn't go well. But, we are not equal to God. He's our Creator and God. He invites us to be his friends. But it does not mean that we are becoming same as the Creator and God. We must have respect to our God and we must be able to follow him. God is King and we are King's friends, not kings. Think about Parent-Child friendship. We can have friendship with our parents and with our kids. We respect and follow our parents out of love, not out of duty. And we want the same to our children. The obedience to God comes from the love for him, not from any duty or obligations.

THREE - We must choose to value what God values. We maintain our friendship with the people who share similar values. That's how churches look for their pastors too. With what they value, they decide whether the pastor is a good fit or not. If we value different things, we will constantly have conflicts. The reason why I decided to become a close friend with my pastor friend, in my example, is that our values are very very similar. As followers of Christ, what do we value? May our agenda become what God is passionate for. May our values and interests become like God's.

Lastly, **FOUR - we must desire friendship with God more than anything else.** King David was called the man after God's heart. And he is the favorite man of God. Whenever I think of him, I think of **Psalms 27:4, "One thing I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and do inquire in his temple."**

And **Psalms 63:3, "My lips praise you because your faithful love is better than life itself."**

How precious is God to us? How much do we desire the relationship with God?
Do we really desire God more than anything? Is the intimacy with God more important than our immediate needs?

Let us choose to come to God with honest hearts, let us obey God, let us value what God values, and let us desire God with our whole hearts.

Let us pray.

Father God, thank you for your love for us. We thank you that you want us. It's amazing that the Creator God cares for us, small, weak, and many times wicked. We learned that we can have intimate relationship with you if we decide to. Yes, we want to have close relationship with you. Strengthen our hearts and help us come to you with honesty, with obedience and help us become Christ-like, and help us desire to be with you. We want to be with you always. Hold our hands. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

The Lord's Supper – Communion

It is the Lord's Table. It is the time that we are reminded that we are in our Lord. He invites us to remember who we are and to whom we are belong to.

Come, not because you are strong but because you are weak.

Come, not because of any goodness of your own but because you need mercy and help.

Come, because you love the Lord a little and would like to love him more.

Come, because he loves you and gave himself for you.

*(Great Prayer of Thanksgiving:) (Please say **BOLD print** together)*

L: The Lord be with you. **P: And also, with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts. **P: We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **P: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

L: Holy God, Creator of heaven and earth, we praise and worship you for your glory and power and majesty. You care for us with your love and power. You guide us with your wisdom. We are so grateful that you call us friends. How amazing your love is for us! With your strong arms, you are holding us. At this time of worship, **we lift our hearts in joyful praise.**

(Sanctus) Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of Your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

L: We praise you, most holy God. You gave your Son for our life. Thank you. You cleansed our sin and opened the way to God, the most Holy. Thank you for bearing all the pains in the place of ours. Thank you for giving up your life for ours. And we praise you that you overcame death and you rose from death and reign in power and wisdom. You are our friend and King, not because we want to be your friend, but because you called us. Thank you. Your creation, your miracles, your powerful deeds are awesome, but at this time, we are more amazed by your love for us and by your kind caring for us, and by your calling us your friends. You are big and powerful, at the same time, you are kind and gentle. As we take this bread and this cup, we remember who you are and what you did for us. We give you praise and thanksgiving **as we proclaim the mystery of faith:**

P: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

L: Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour are yours, almighty God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Breaking of the BREAD and Pouring the WINE

When we break the bread, it is a sharing in the body of Christ. (BREAD)

“This is the body of Christ broken for you.” (Let us take it)

When we bless the cup, it is a sharing in the blood of Christ (CUP)

“This is the blood of Christ shed for you.” (Let us drink it)

Prayer after Communion:

Precious God, we value this time of worship. We love to be in your presence with our church family members. As we take the bread and cup, we remember that you are always with us and you are always taking care of us. You are giving us power to carry out our lives. You never leave us alone. With your body and blood, help us clothe with you. Help us become more like you. Help us restore your image in us.

We are praying for our church members. At this time, visit each member of our church and stir our hearts. We have all kinds of things in our hearts. Pride, shame, joy, sorrow, and love and hate. We want to be faithful to you, but we have our own desires in us. Many times, our own desires overcome the desire to follow you. Come into our hearts and change our minds. Change our desires. Change our eyes, so we see with your eyes. Let us think like you and become like you. Change us. Restore your image in us.

At this time, we remember those who are suffering with physical pain. Place your hands upon them and with our healing power, heal them. Help them with their recovery. Comfort their hearts and comfort their bodies.

We also pray for our aching world. We pray for India. It's suffering from COVID 19 so badly. Father God, you blessed many countries with riches and power. Now it is the time to share your blessings. Send many helping hands to India. Send many supplies for them. And let all the resources be reached to the people in need. We believe that you are holding your earth in your arms. And you are heart-aching too. Let many of your children stand up sharing your hearts. We also pray for the war in Israel and Palestine. Many are dying including young children. They are constantly fighting. No peace. Just violence. Heavenly Father, in the name of religion, they are killing each other and too many of innocent people are dying. Help them. Have mercy upon us and fill their hearts with compassion and love for life.

Many things are going on in our lives. Inside and out. Too many things to think about. Gracious Father God, in this fast-changing world, help us be in your presence, calm and quiet. So, we can gather ourselves and be strengthened by your power and wisdom. We are yours. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: This is the time for offering. The season of Easter comes to a close this Sunday. Yet we will continue to receive the blessings God pours out for us in Christ and in creation, for God is so good to us. Our gifts to God tell of our gratitude for these blessings and our commitment to share them with the whole world. Let us pray.

Offering prayer:

Eternal and ever-present God, bless the gifts we offer you today with the power of your Holy Spirit. Use them and use us to witness to the love of Jesus Christ and bring healing and hope to the world in your name. In Jesus Christ precious and beautiful name, we pray. Amen.

Offering – BOP # 434 – For the beauty of the earth

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. The King invites us to be with him. The God who created the whole universe calls us to be his friends. We pray to God to hold our hands. But, God is asking us to hold his hands. Let us hold his hands and walk with him.

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. Honest with God: to know that God knows everything and confessing with our lips and minds might be different. God wants us to confess our hearts with honesty.
2. Obedience: how much can we obey God?
3. Value: which value system are we accustomed to? God's or world's?
4. Desire: what's my heart's deepest desire?