



Grace Hill Church

The seasons of well-being in human life are times of orientation; the seasons of hurt, alienation, suffering, and death are times of disorientation, seasons of new orientation are those when “we are overwhelmed with the new gifts of God, when joy breaks through the despair” (Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 19, quoted in Tate, *Psalms*)

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, ... he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance. Heb 9.11-15
September 14, 2014

Expressing Our Love and Praise: Worship in Song

Declaring What We Believe: Lord's Prayer

*Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen*

Welcoming Each Other (Kids may go to Sunday School)

Giving Worship to God: Offering

(Gifts to Grace Hill support the life and work of our church community. Twenty percent of gifts also go to local and global mission, including Samaritan Health Clinic, Justice Matters, Young Life, and church planting in N. American and Asia.)

Hearing God's Word: Scripture Reading *Psalms 73*

73 A Psalm of Asaph.

1 Truly God is good to Israel,
to those who are pure in heart.
2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled,
my steps had nearly slipped.
3 For I was envious of the arrogant
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.
4 For they have no pangs until death;
their bodies are fat and sleek.
5 They are not in trouble as others are;
they are not stricken like the rest of mankind.
6 Therefore pride is their necklace;
violence covers them as a garment.
7 Their eyes swell out through fatness;
their hearts overflow with follies.
8 They scoff and speak with malice;
loftily they threaten oppression.
9 They set their mouths against the heavens,
and their tongue struts through the earth.
10 Therefore his people turn back to them, and
find no fault in them.
11 And they say, “How can God know?
Is there knowledge in the Most High?”
12 Behold, these are the wicked;
always at ease, they increase in riches.
13 All in vain have I kept my heart clean
and washed my hands in innocence.
14 For all the day long I have been stricken and
rebuked every morning.
15 If I had said, “I will speak thus,”
I would have betrayed the generation of your
children.

16 But when I thought how to understand
this, it seemed to me a wearisome task,
17 until I went into the sanctuary of God; then
I discerned their end.
18 Truly you set them in slippery places; you
make them fall to ruin.
19 How they are destroyed in a moment,
swept away utterly by terrors!
20 Like a dream when one awakes,
O Lord, when you rouse yourself, you despise
them as phantoms.
21 When my soul was embittered,
when I was pricked in heart,
22 I was brutish and ignorant;
I was like a beast toward you.
23 Nevertheless, I am continually with you;
you hold my right hand.
24 You guide me with your counsel,
and afterward you will receive me to glory.
25 Whom have I in heaven but you?
And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides
you.
26 My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart and my
portion forever.
27 For behold, those who are far from you
shall perish;
you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to
you.
28 But for me it is good to be near God; I
have made the Lord God my refuge,
that I may tell of all your works.

Understanding God's Word and Our Lives: Sermon

1. *How Our Hearts Can Stumble in Culture*
2. *Finding Footing for Our Hearts*

Our Hearts in Cultural Engagement



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Recognizing our Brokenness: Confession of Sin

Public Prayer

Father, you call us to yourself: out of the world, to follow you, and then sent back into the world to be your salt and light. But there are many opportunities to almost stumble or nearly slip. Our hearts are often tempted, envious, and we find ourselves teetering. Forgive us.

But you have called us to stability, not wobbling. Help us to see our situation of disorientation. Lead us to find your stabilizing grace by pondering, reflecting, and especially worshiping in your sanctuary. Enable us to say with Asaph that Your right hand holds us (v.23), that we desire ultimately nothing on earth besides you (v.25), and let us tell with satisfaction and confidence of all Christ's great works (v.28).

Private Reflection

The Grace and Forgiveness of Christ

My shield is with God, who saves the upright in heart. (Psalm 7.10)

Remembering Jesus with Bread and Cup: Lord's Supper

Jesus called those who find their life in His death and resurrection to receive the bread and cup as a tangible sign to remember and be strengthened by His Gospel. It is a spiritual meal for all who believe in Him. While Jesus spent time with everyone, he also shared the bread and cup only with those who followed him. Children who have not yet become *communing members* should not take the bread and cup but talk with our pastor or an elder about their personal faith.

On the fourth Sunday of the month, we come forward as families, groups and individuals to receive the bread and cup and for a prayer of blessing. The second Sunday, we remain seated, with time to personally remember Jesus' death and resurrection for us with the bread and cup. Whether you take the elements or not, we encourage you to either come forward for prayer or use the time for personal reflection about your relationship with Jesus.

**Juice is in the outer ring; wine is in inner rings.*

Taking hold of the Good Word: Benediction ("the good word")

Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. (Heb 13.20-21)

Prayers for Those Not Taking the Bread and Cup

Prayer for Those Searching for Truth

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reason for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me and open me to the reality of your identity. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to you yourself and the life you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus Christ, I admit that I am more wicked and sinful than I ever dared allow, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt on the cross, to give me complete forgiveness and rightness with God. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, in joy I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Amen.



1. What is "almost stumbling" or "nearly slipping," v.2, for you?
2. Where are you most vulnerable to envy? What is the closest area of similar temptation for you?
3. How much does it change when you are thinking of it vs. when you are actually confronted by it personally or directly as when you may go to visit or are amongst this group of people?
4. How does it feel to you? What are the symptoms in your life when this "almost stumbling" is occurring?
5. How are you at finding "understand," at "discerning," v.16-17? What role does "faith" play ("Where is your faith?")? How is "Prayer" helpful? Especially, how does Worship in the Sanctuary of God help?