

## PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

Notes from Rodney L. Barbour

February 7, 2010

**Theme:** Pastor Alan writes: *In our celebrity-blinded society, sometimes we forget that football is a team game-and not an individual sport. My hunch is that the best team will win...whoever that is. Anybody around here remember a fellow named Kitna? Bengal folks were sure glad he was on the team when Palmer went down...*

**Preparation for Worship:** We begin today's worship focusing on God's deep love for us. In 1 John 4 we read: *Beloved, let us love one another for love is from God and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God...we love because he first loves us. As we focus on God's love, it is only then we can be welcoming to others, and can see the example of how we, in love, can go and serve others in his name. The Crestview Ringers will be ringing the worship song, **How Deep the Father's Love for Us**. Here is a portion of the text which you can ponder during this time: *How deep the Father's love for us. How vast beyond all measure; that He should give His only Son to make a wretch His treasure.**

**Call to Worship:** Continuing in 1 John 4 we read: *Dear friends, since God loved us as much as that, we surely ought to love each other too. For though we have never yet seen God, when we love each other God lives in us and his love within us grows ever stronger. Today's Call to Worship reminds us of Jesus being the cornerstone, the center and object of our devotion as well as our inspiration to serve our neighbors.*

**Leader:** Lord Jesus, you are our living head. Teach us to be your body here on earth---your hands, your feet, your eyes, and your compassionate heart.

**People:** Lord, send the impulses of your love into the sinews of this church. May your will and thoughts direct us.

**Leader:** Let your hands, through our hands, supply food for our neighbor's hunger.

Let them hear your voice as we visit and talk with them. Let children come to us and sit in our laps, as they sat in yours.

**People:** Without you as our head, Lord, we are lifeless. We wait for your power, your Word, your instruction. Fill us with your life and love, Jesus, as we worship you today.

**Hymn of Praise:** Today's hymn of praise helps us sing and shout "Hallelujah! What a Savior!" As we recognize Jesus as "Friend for sinners" and as our "Strength in Weakness" we also praise him for saving, helping, keeping and loving us.

**Vs1**

**Jesus! What a Friend for sinners! Jesus! Lover of my soul;**

Friends my fail me, foes assail me, he my Savior, makes me whole.  
Hallelujah! What a Savior! Hallelujah! What a Friend!  
Saving, helping, keeping, loving, he is with me to the end.

Vs 2

Jesus! What a Strength in weakness! Let me hide myself in him;  
Tempted, tried, and sometimes failing, he, my Strength, my victory wins.  
Hallelujah! What a Savior! Hallelujah! What a Friend!  
Saving, helping, keeping, loving, he is with me to the end.

Vs. 5

Jesus! I do now receive him, more than all in him I find,  
He has granted me forgiveness, I am his, and he is mine.  
Hallelujah! What a Savior! Hallelujah! What a Friend!  
Saving, helping, keeping, loving, he is with me to the end.

**Confession:** As we approach this time of confession, take a moment to think about your life experiences this week. What are things the Lord asked you to do? Have you been able to respond to each request and do so in accordance to scripture? Today, we ask the Lord to forgive our lukewarm love, our disobedience, our silence, our failures and our shortcomings.

Leader: Lord, you said, "If you love me, you will obey what I command."

People: **Forgive us our lukewarm love and our disobedience.**

Leader: Lord, you said, "You must testify, for you have been with me."

People: **We confess, Lord, that we have been too often silent.**

Leader: Lord, you said, "Love each other as I have loved you."

People: **In this and in so many other ways, we confess our failures and shortcomings.**

**Assurance of Pardon:** To all who confess their sins and resolve to lead a new life, Jesus says, "Your sins are forgiven." He also says, "Follow me." Through his amazing love and grace, we are able to praise Him for the grace he offers by exclaiming: **Now to the one who rules all worlds, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever.**

**Scripture/Sermon:** Be sure and read 1 Corinthians 12:12-30. Despite the church being composed of many types of people, all believers have one thing in common: Faith in Jesus Christ. On this essential truth the church finds unity. All believers are baptized by one holy Spirit into one body of believers, the church. We don't lose our individual identities, but we have an overriding oneness in Christ. When a person becomes a Christian, the Holy Spirit takes up residence and he or she is born into God's family.

**Song of Response:** We respond to the reading and teaching of scripture with this song: **God of Wonders** from the Crestview Ringers. We join all creation in proclaiming the glory of God after contemplating heavens, earth, water, sky in singing the eternal song of creation:

Lord of all creation, of water, earth and sky.  
The heavens are Your tabernacle; Glory to the Lord on high. God of Wonders  
beyond our galaxy, You are holy, holy;  
The universe declares Your majesty.  
You are holy, holy; Lord of heaven and earth.

**Communion:** As you prepare for today's meal of remembrance, it would be good to remember these words from Matthew 5:23-25---*"If you are standing before the altar in the temple, offering a sacrifice to God, and suddenly remember that a friend has something against you, leave your sacrifice there beside the altar and go and apologize and be reconciled to him, and then come and offer your sacrifice to God."*

**See you in Worship this Sunday! Rodney Barbour**