

August 30 Worship

Readers- Deb Dancause/ Nancy Rogers

Announcements/Joys

Time Of Quiet Meditation- *“Besides this you know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.”* Romans 13:11

Opening Scripture- Psalm 26:1-8(page 477)

Opening Chorus- 294- Spirit Of The Living God

Responsive Call To Worship-

Leader; Give thanks to the Lord, call on His name.

People: Make known His deeds among the peoples.

Leader:Sing praises to Him; and tell of all his wonderful works.

People: Glory in His holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice!

Hymn of Praise- 26- The God Of Abraham Praise

Unison Prayer/Lord's Prayer- Liberating God, we seek your journey. With parted waters, set us free. With cloud and fire, guide us. With gushing waters, quench our thirst. With food from heaven, feed us. Draw us out with joy and singing, that we might know your ways. We pray as Jesus taught us, saying...,*Lord's Prayer...*

“Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”

Gloria Patri- Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. World without end.
Amen, Amen.

Old Testament Scripture- Psalm 105:1-6(page 523)

Special Music-

Gospel Scripture- Matthew 16:21-28(page 851)

Children's Time/Echo Prayer/Passing of the Peace

Hymn- 349- I Love Your Kingdom Lord

New Testament Scripture- Romans 12:9-21(page 987)

Message

“Is It Time Yet?”

In last week's gospel reading we heard Simon/Peter claim that Jesus was “the Christ, the living Son of God.” In this week's gospel, as Jesus is showing His disciples about His impending suffering and death, the same Simon/Peter rebukes Jesus, saying “God forbid, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” Peter has the audacity to tell the Son of God that He is wrong, that He does not know what He is talking about! In the short period of a few minutes, Peter went from declaring Jesus as the Son of God to telling Him that He was wrong and did not know what He was talking about. I guess that Simon/ Peter is no different from the rest of us. We are quite capable of changing our opinions from one moment to the next.

What I am attempting to explain is that anything can change in a short period of time. We all can experience change in the blink of an eye. Someone can be energetic and lively one second and facing death the next. We can feel love for someone and a moment later find hatred. We can agree and then disagree in the same sentence. Any one of us can be lost and then found in between breaths. Time can pass so slow and then speed up as we watch. How can we tell what is happening from moment to moment?

Can you remember when you were young and on a trip with your parents? It felt like forever and then you began asking; “are we there yet, how much longer?” In reality, it was probably only half an hour into the trip and from that moment on time slowed to a crawl. Not only for you but for mom and dad also. It is amazing how a couple of whining children can cause time to stand still. Once we reached our destination, if we were having a good time, it was over way too soon. “Why do we have to leave so soon?” Time passes at different speeds depending on whether we are having fun or not.

There is a great difference in how we perceive time and how God perceives time. God does not measure it the same as we do. We live in a physical world with its four known space-time dimensions of length, width, height (or depth) and time. However, God dwells in a different realm, the spirit realm, beyond the perception of our physical senses. It's not that God isn't real; it's a matter of His not being limited by the physical laws and dimensions that govern our world. Knowing that “God is spirit”, what is His relationship to time? In Psalm 90:4, Moses used a simple yet

profound analogy in describing the timelessness of God: "For a thousand years in Your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night." The eternity of God is contrasted with the temporality of man. Our lives are but short and frail, but God does not weaken or fail with the passage of time. In a sense, the marking of time is irrelevant to God because He transcends it.

To us, however, time is quite relevant. We are almost obsessed with time and we spend more of our energy thinking about it than we probably should. In our existence, time is in 3 parts; past, present and future. Most of our thoughts are spent on the past than on the other 2. Studies have shown that we think about the past 150% more than the future. The present, because it is so fleeting, gets almost no thought. We tend to dwell on the past since it is something concrete and permanent in our minds. It happened and we fix or retain it in our memories. The future is an abstract that we can contemplate but can not experience until something actually happens which is considered the present. Our main problem arise when we expend so much effort on the past at the expense of the present or the future. The future cannot affect the past but the past can have a profound affect on the future.

I want for us to take a few moments to reflect on something from the past. Just close your eyes and bring to mind something bad or even terrible that has happened to you.(silence) OK, lets come back to the present. As we are sitting here, right now, at this moment, Think about what we can do to change that bad event from the past. As hard as we try, there is absolutely nothing that we can do to change even one second of that past event. What is past is gone and finished and no matter how much we agonize over it, it will never change. So then, why do we allow the past to override and have such a profound affect on our present and future? For one thing, those memories of our past are meant to stick with us so that we might learn from them. Allowing our memories of the past to dominate our living in the present is something that we all should take seriously.

We have a problem with how we consider time. Our concept of time is linear while God's time is all encompassing. Time for us is a straight line. I was told once that if I wanted to visualize my lifespan to lay out a 100 foot tape measure and the place myself at the number of feet that represented my age. Then I was to look back towards the 0 mark and then to look at the end of the tape. Trust me when I tell you that once you pass 60, the end is much closer than the beginning. God's concept of time is more like an extremely large ball. Time has no beginning and no end, it just is all around us. God sees the past, present and future as one glorious event. Where does a ball or a circle begin and where does it end?

We mark time as before, now and later. When we contemplate eternity, we find it almost impossible to understand but eternity is what we are promised, by God, if we live a life that is pleasing to Him. When do we decide that we want to spend eternity

with God? How long does God give us to make up our minds to follow Him and receive the promise? Don't make the mistake of thinking that there is always enough time to make up your mind. In God's time, He already knows what is going to happen. We do not have eternity to decide where we want to spend eternity. Ask yourself; Is it time yet to say yes to God? Please don't wait until it is too late and time runs out. Praise Be to God. Amen.

Prayers of the People- Gracious God, in love You created us, and in love You sustain us, day after day. So it is with confidence that we bring our prayers to You, knowing that You hear us, and will respond. We pray for the world around us, for the many who continue to suffer and call out for help: for those without enough to eat in places all around the world; for those caught up in violence and political uprisings; for those picking up the pieces after a natural disaster; for those desperate to find work to support their families. We also pray for family and friends who are suffering: those struggling physically or emotionally, those working to overcome mental illness; those facing challenges at home or at work; those grieving the death of a loved one. God, You have called us to pray for our enemies; to bless, rather than curse, those who deliberately seek to harm us. We bring their names before You now, those who have hurt us, physically or emotionally; those who have stolen from us, or cheated us of what was rightfully ours; those who have spread rumors about us, or turned our friends against us. We ask You to bless them. Open our hearts so that we may see them as You see them, and be able to respond to them with Your love. We pray for Your church around the world, that it would be a living demonstration of Your coming kingdom: offering hospitality to all, ready to help in times of need, showing love to friends and enemies alike, seeking to live in peace with all. God, we praise You for Your faithful love, and for the mercy You have shown toward us. Open our eyes to recognize Your presence in our lives. Give us grace to hear Your call, and courage to follow without hesitation, knowing that Your way is the only way that leads to life. In the name of Jesus, our Savior and Lord, Amen.

Closing Hymn- 508- O Love That Will Not Let Me Go

Benediction- Go now and follow Jesus in the way of the cross. Rejoice in hope, hold fast to what is good, persevere in prayer. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. As far as is possible, live peaceably with all. And may God hear your cries and deliver you; May Christ Jesus repay you with fullness of life; And may the Holy Spirit be with you always, nourishing you in love and hope. We go in peace to love and serve the Lord, In the name of Christ. Amen.