



MaundyThursday

April 9, 2020

SONG OF PREPARATION – “*As I Have Done for You*” by Dan Shute

<https://youtu.be/m9oBFRjmuIA>

(Use Ctrl and click mouse to follow link)

For video of service go to...

<https://messiahmech.com/messiah-digital/>

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Brothers and sisters in Christ, in this Lenten season we have heard our Lord's call to struggle against sin, death, and the devil—all that keeps us from loving God and each other. This is the struggle to which we were called at baptism.

Within the community of the church, God never wearies of forgiving sin and giving the peace of reconciliation. On this night let us confess our sin against God and our neighbor, and enter the celebration of the great Three Days reconciled with God and with one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Most merciful God,

C: *we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen*

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

*THE GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: *And also with you.*

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray together:

C: *Sovereign God, you have established your rule in the human heart through the servanthood of Jesus Christ. By your Spirit, keep us in the joyful procession of those who with their tongues confess Jesus as Lord and with their lives praise him as Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen*

***THE FIRST LESSON**

Exodus 12:1-4, 11-14

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: 2This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. 3Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. 4If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbor in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. 11This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the passover of the LORD. 12For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. 13The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. 14This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance

***THE SECOND LESSON**

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, 24and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' 25In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' 26For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

***THE GOSPEL READING**

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. 2The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper 3Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, 4got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. 5Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. 6He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' 7Jesus answered, 'You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.' 8Peter said to him, 'You will never wash my feet.' Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.' 9Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!' 10Jesus said to him, 'One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.' 11For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, 'Not all of you are clean.' 12After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? 13You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. 14So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. 16Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. 17If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. 31b'Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. 32If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. 33Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, "Where I am going, you cannot come." 34I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. 35By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'

SERMON: PASTOR RICHARD CARBAUGH

As we begin these three holiest days of the church year, we hear of Jesus stepping into an upper room where He shared a meal with His disciples, where He washed their feet to show what it meant to be a servant, and where He stepped out into the dark and stormy night of betrayal, beatings and crucifixion. Look with me at the way Peter, and then Jesus, faced those storms so they can speak to us in the midst of the storms of our lives.

When I was very young, our family went on a vacation. We stayed at a place where there was a long swinging bridge over a deep gorge that you had to cross to complete the trail we were on. At first, it seemed really 'cool' - that's what I said when I was young. We stepped out. The bridge swayed in the wind, and everything was fine - fine, at least, until I looked down. The moment I took my eyes off the other side and looked into the deep gorge below, my knuckles whitened, my knees weakened and my heart raced a little faster - okay, a lot faster. I had learned what we all learn at some point in our lives, that where you keep your focus matters.

We can't think about Peter without remembering his attempt to walk on water. When Peter stepped out, everything was going great - until, that is, he shifted his focus off of Jesus who was before him, and instead saw only the storm and the waves that were beneath him. In the moment he did that, he became afraid and started to sink. The moment Peter looked down, he went down. And Jesus, after reaching out to save Peter, asked him: "Why did you doubt?" Now I don't know if Jesus was blaming Peter or expressing disappointment in Peter, but perhaps Jesus asked that question because he wanted Peter to think about what had happened - and why. "Do you know why you went down, Peter? It was because you took your eyes off of me; it was because you lost your focus. And when that happened, everything around you - the storms, the waves, the wind - all of that became bigger and more ominous.

Now, I will be the first to admit that it is hard to ignore the storms that are blowing all around. Whether it is a storm of illness, a storm of loss, a storm of difficulty, a storm of a virus and its effects - whatever the storm is, when it hits you can't just pretend it is not there. You definitely notice it. What Jesus asked Peter, and us, is what we will notice more - the storm, or the One who stands before us in the midst of the storm? Does the storm make us take our eyes off of Jesus?

When Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, He was observing the Passover meal. When the Jewish people were preparing to leave Egypt, they were given instructions as to what they needed to do so they would be protected when the Lord came to set them free. As a part of that instruction, God said: "This day shall be a remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord throughout all your generations." It is interesting that when that is said to the people, nothing has happened yet. Still, they are told they will remember this experience throughout their generations. Plans were in place and the victory of God is being announced as if there is no question that what God is saying, God will do - that what God is saying will indeed happen. That promise, you see, was to be their focus - and if they kept that focus, they would experience God's saving arm reaching out to them in victory.

What God offers us, you see, is a life filled with hope. It is as if God is standing on the other side of the gorge, as if God is standing out in the midst of the storm, and saying: "Keep looking ahead at me". Yes, the gorge is deep; yes the storm

is scary - but keep looking at me, and you will make it. Rather than losing heart, Jesus says: "Take heart!"

Now, there is a difference between optimism and hope. Our world talks a lot about optimism. I am optimistic that a certain sports team will win - whenever they start up again. I am optimistic that the economy will get better. I am optimistic that this virus will one day be a thing of the past. Optimism suggest a belief in progress, a belief that things will get better.

Hope, however, is something deeper than that, When I hope as a Christian, I believe that God is at work to redeem all things regardless of how things happen to turn out for me today or tomorrow. The hymn says: "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness". Hope, you see, is placed not so much in a particular outcome as in a particular presence. If the worst should happen, optimism would be crushed - but hope would remain because Christ would remain.

So how do we remain hopeful? How do we keep our eyes focused on Jesus, even in the midst of the storm? On this Maundy Thursday, when we remember how the storm swirled around Jesus, we also remember how the Lord left us a meal that has the power to refocus our thoughts, to refocus our hearts, on Jesus. He said: "Do this in remembrance of me." In this time, we are not able to share physically in that meal - but we will. We will receive the living presence of our Lord and receive the gift of grace through the bread and wine - and we will remember! In the meantime, surely we must know that through scripture, prayer and promise, Jesus is present still with His love and grace. Jesus is here to remind us of a victory that has happened, and a victory that is yet to come. It is the same feast of victory for our Lord that we receive in the bread and wine, but that we also receive wherever and however and whenever Jesus is present with us. During this time, don't look down; look up - and see the One who is with you in the storm. Like it was for Peter, this is the One who will not let you sink beyond the reach of His loving hand. Amen.

***APOSTLES' CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen**

***PRAYERS**

A: Turning our hearts to God who is gracious and merciful, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need. (*A brief silence.*)

A: God of love, unite your church in its commitment to humble service. Make us your faithful disciples. Speak words of truth and grace through us. Encourage us in self-giving acts of kindness. Let us love one another as you have loved us. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God of love, tend to flocks, fields, and vineyards. Bring favorable weather for crops to grow. Guide the hands of those who cultivate, farm, and garden. Let the earth flourish so that all may eat and be satisfied, and researchers who find ways to restore creation to health and wholeness. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God of love, you give us a new commandment, to have love for one another. We give thanks for organizations that respond to disasters and for agencies that offer relief and humanitarian aid to populations in need (particular organizations may be named). Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God of love, give ear to all who call upon you for any need of body or spirit (especially). Provide for those who do not have enough to eat, those who are unemployed or underemployed, and those who rely on the generosity of others. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God of love, you invite us to your table of mercy. Heal all divisions between members of this assembly. Extend the hospitality of this table beyond these walls, that your love and welcome be made known to all. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

P: According to your steadfast love, O God, hear these and all our prayers as we commend them to you; through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

***THE LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray:

**C: *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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.***

SONG OF REFLECTION – “*In Christ Alone*” A cappella

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rjiiF83q7G0&feature=youtu.be>

(Use Ctrl and click mouse to follow link)