

Welcome...

*...to all who are spiritually weary and seek rest; to all who mourn and long for comfort; to all who struggle and desire hope; to all who sin and need a Savior; to all who are strangers and yearn for fellowship; to all who hunger and thirst after righteousness; and to whoever will come, this church opens wide her doors and offers welcome in the name of the risen Lord Jesus Christ. Worship consists of a dialogue between God and His people. God speaks and we respond by grace. The pastor and a ruling elder lead us. ***Please stand, if able.***

Order of Morning Worship

January 10, 2021

Prelude *We prepare silently to meet God in worship.*

***Call to Worship**

Psalm 113:1-4

***Song of Approach**

“I Will Glory in My Redeemer”

I will glory in my Redeemer
Whose priceless blood has ransomed me
Mine was the sin that drove the bitter nails
And hung Him on that judgment tree
I will glory in my Redeemer
Who crushed the power of sin and death
My only Savior before the holy Judge
The Lamb who is my righteousness
The Lamb who is my righteousness.

I will glory in my Redeemer
My life He bought, my love He owns
I have no longings for another
I'm satisfied in Him alone
I will glory in my Redeemer
His faithfulness my standing place

Though foes are mighty and rush upon me
My feet are firm, held by His grace
My feet are firm, held by His grace.

I will glory in my Redeemer
Who carries me on eagles' wings
He crowns my life with loving-kindness
His triumph song I'll ever sing
I will glory in my Redeemer
Who waits for me at gates of gold
And when He calls me, it will be paradise
His face forever to behold
His face forever to behold.

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***Invocation and Profession of Faith and Obedience**

Having been led by the Spirit of God to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and having professed our faith, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully renew our covenant with one another in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the enablement of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its faithfulness to God's word; to sustain its worship, sacraments, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel to all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions; to train our children in the Lord's ways; to seek the salvation of our family, friends, and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world, to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all contentiousness and sinful anger; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, and always ready for reconciliation, mindful of our Savior's command to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will as soon as possible, unite with another congregation where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

So help us God, Amen.

***Hymn 1** "All People That on Earth Do Dwell"

All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
Him serve with fear, His praise forth tell,
Come ye before Him and rejoice.

The Lord ye know is God indeed;
Without our aid He did us make;
We are His folk, He doth us feed,
And for His sheep He doth us take.

O enter then His gates with praise,
Approach with joy His courts unto;
Praise, laud, and bless His name always,
For it is seemly so to do.

For why? The Lord our God is good,
His mercy is forever sure;
His truth at all times firmly stood,
And shall from age to age endure.

Old Testament Reading

Psalm 14; 2 Kings 11

Congregational 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 and ever, Amen.

***Hymn 95**

"Though Troubles Assail Us"

Though troubles assail us and dangers affright,
Though friends should all fail us and foes all unite,
Yet one thing secures us, whatever betide,
The promise assures us, "The Lord will provide."

The birds, without garner or storehouse, are fed;
From them let us learn to trust God for our bread.
His saints what is fitting shall ne'er be denied
So long as 'tis written, "The Lord will provide."

When Satan assails us to stop up our path,
And courage all fails us, we triumph by faith.
He cannot take from us, though oft he has tried,
This heart-cheering promise, "The Lord will provide."
No strength of our own and no goodness we claim;
Yet, since we have known of the Savior's great name,
In this our strong tower for safety we hide:
The Lord is our power, "The Lord will provide."

New Testament Reading Revelation 12:1-6

Message "WHEN JACOB SHALL REJOICE"

***Hymn** "See the Destined Day Arise"

See the destined day arise!
See a willing sacrifice!
Jesus, to redeem our loss,
Hangs upon the shameful cross;
Jesus, who but You could bear
Wrath so great and justice fair?
Every pang and bitter throe,
Finishing Your life of woe?

Chorus
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Lamb of God for sinners slain!
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Jesus Christ, we praise Your name!

Who but Christ had dared to drain,
Steeped in gall, the cup of pain
And with tender body bear
Thorns and nails and piercing spear?

Slain for us, the water flowed,
Mingled from Your side with blood;
Sign to all attesting eyes
Of the finished sacrifice.
Chorus

Holy Jesus, grant us grace
In that sacrifice to place
All our trust for life renewed,
Pardoned sin, and promised good.
Grant us grace to sing Your praise
'Round Your throne through endless days,
Ever with the sons of light:
"Blessing, honor, glory, might!"
Chorus Twice

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***God Blesses His People** 2 Corinthians 13:14

***Hymn 734** "Gloria Patri"

Statism

by R.C. Sproul (September 2008)

"A decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered...." In Luke 2, the well-known passage introducing the nativity story, the title accorded to the Roman emperor is Caesar Augustus. Had this census been mandated earlier under the monarchy of Julius Caesar, the Scripture would read: "A decree went out from Julius Caesar...." Had Octavian followed the model of Julius, he would have called himself Octavianus Caesar, and then the text would read: "A decree went out from Octavianus Caesar...." But we note Octavius' explicit change of his personal name to the title *Caesar Augustus*. This indicates the emerging dimension of the emperor cult in Rome,

by which those who were elevated to the role of emperor were worshiped as deities. To be called “august” would mean to be clothed with supreme dignity, to which is owed the reverence given to the sacred. The elevation of the emperor in Rome to this kind of status was the ancient zenith of statism.

About thirty years ago, I shared a taxi cab in St. Louis with Francis Schaeffer. I had known Dr. Schaeffer for many years, and he had been instrumental in helping us begin our ministry in Ligonier, Pennsylvania, in 1971. Since our time together in St. Louis was during the twilight of Schaeffer’s career, I posed this question to him: “Dr. Schaeffer, what is your biggest concern for the future of the church in America?” Without hesitation, Dr. Schaeffer turned to me and spoke one word: “Statism.” Schaeffer’s biggest concern at that point in his life was that the citizens of the United States were beginning to invest their country with supreme authority, such that the free nation of America would become one that would be dominated by a philosophy of the supremacy of the state.

In statism, we see the suffix “ism,” which indicates a philosophy or worldview. A decline from statehood to statism happens when the government is perceived as or claims to be the ultimate reality. This reality then replaces God as the supreme entity upon which human existence depends.

In the nineteenth century, Hegel argued in his extensive and complex study of Western history that progress represents the unfolding in time and space of the absolute Idea (Hegel’s vague understanding of God), which would reach its apex in the creation of the Prussian state. The assumption that Hegel made in the nineteenth century was made before the advent of Hitler’s Third Reich, Stalin’s Russia, and Chairman Mao’s communist China. These nations reached an elevation of statism never dreamed of by Hegel in his concept of the Prussian state.

In America, we have a long history of valuing the concept of the separation of church and state. This idea historically referred to a division of labors between the church and the civil magistrate. However, initially both the church and the state were seen as entities ordained by God and subject to His governance. In that sense, the

state was considered to be an entity that was “under God.” What has happened in the past few decades is the obfuscation of this original distinction between church and state, so that today the language we hear of separation of church and state, when carefully exegeted, communicates the idea of the separation of the state from God. In this sense, it’s not merely that the state declares independence from the church, it also declares independence from God and presumes itself to rule with autonomy.

The whole idea of a nation under God has been challenged again and again, and we have seen the exponential growth of government in our land, particularly the federal government, so that the government now virtually engulfs all of life. Where education once was under the direction of local authorities, it now is controlled and directed by federal legislation. The economy that once was driven by the natural forces of the market has now come under the strict control of the federal government, which not only regulates the economy, but considers itself responsible for controlling it. Where we have seen the largest measure of the loss of liberty is with respect to the function of the church. Though the church is still somewhat tolerated in America (in a way it was not tolerated in Mao’s Red China and under Stalin), it is tolerated only when it remains outside of the public square. In other words, the church has been relegated to a status not unlike that given to the native Americans, where the tribes were allowed to continue to exist as long as they functioned safely on a reservation, outside of any significant influence on the government. So although the church has not been banished completely by the statism that has emerged in America, it has been effectively banished from the public square.

Throughout the history of the Christian church, Christianity has always stood over against all forms of statism. Statism is the natural and ultimate enemy to Christianity because it involves a usurpation of the reign of God. If Francis Schaeffer was right — and each year that passes makes his prognosis seem all the more accurate — it means that the church and the nation face a serious crisis in our day. In the final analysis, if statism prevails in America, it will mean not only the death of our religious freedom, but also the death of the state itself. We face perilous times where Christians

and all people need to be vigilant about the rapidly encroaching elevation of the state to supremacy.

“WHEN JACOB WILL REJOICE”

Psalm 14; 2 Kings 11; Revelation 12:1-6

Today I will illustrate the text using the history of ancient Israel, namely during the reign of Athaliah during the 9th century B.C. in Judah. *It will show us that whoever is on the throne, God reigns supreme from heaven. He always has a gracious plan at work, even though we cannot see it.*

I. GOD MAY ALLOW WICKED RULERS FOR A LIMITED TIME

A. Athaliah’s Story Begins with Jehoshaphat’s Compromise

B. Athaliah: A Corrupt Leader Who “Eats Up God’s People”

II. BUT GOD HAS A GRACIOUS PLAN WAITING IN THE WINGS!

A. Enter Jehosheba, The Preserver of the King

B. Find Your Refuge in God’s Plan