

5th Sunday Reflective Service
June 29th Service (7:00 PM, June 24th rehearsal)

Welcome & Announcements (*Karl Crouch*)

Congregation Standing

CTW – Psalm 95:1-7 (*Jim McKay*)

Key of D

Come, Now Is the Time to Worship

Come, Let Us Worship and Bow Down 2x

Holy, Holy, Holy verses 1-4

Worship Prayer (*Jim McKay*)

Key of D

In Christ Alone verses 1-4

Congregation Seated

Kids can leave here

Two Critical Questions (Introduction)

The pastor was known for clarity and brevity. You could set your clock by his well-organized, 20 minute messages.

But, one Sunday, he seemed to wander and drift. He was still preaching after 35 minutes. Finally, at about the 45 minute mark, his wife managed a small signal, which, fortunately, he recognized as a sign to wrap things up.

On the drive home, his wife asked him why he got so muddled and long-winded.

He answered, "I tuck a lozenge in my mouth as I stand to speak. When the lozenge has dissolved, I know it is time to stop.

"So what happened today?" asked the wife.

He explained, "After, I reached into my coat pocket and popped in the lozenge, I realized it was a spare button to my blazer."

I have an offer for you this morning. I am going to strive for brevity on one condition. I need to you to wrap your minds around each verses of each song we sing. My words will affirm the lyric of the songwriters. The songs will affirm the words I bring to you today. It is my prayer that your hearts will affirm both my words and those of the songwriters.

In this culture that condemns religious exclusivism, that denies the existence of one body of absolute truth and that proclaims that all paths lead to God - where do you stand? Where does Abbeyville Road fit in? Who are we? What do we believe? Will we go to the wall for our beliefs? This morning, I place before you **two extremely critical questions:**

1) Is Jesus Really the Only Savior of Mankind? More fully: Is the sinless life of Christ and His atoning death and resurrection the *ONLY* means by which the penalty of sin is paid and the power of sin defeated? The second question is this:

2) Is Faith in Christ Necessary to Be Saved? More fully: Is conscious knowledge of Christ's death and resurrection for sin and explicit faith in Christ necessary for anyone to receive the benefits of His atoning work, eternal salvation?

Our age answers both questions "no." Pluralism believes that Jesus is only one of many paths that lead to God. Since salvation can come through other religions and religious leaders, it surely follows that people do not have to believe in Christ to be saved.

We believe the Bible answers both questions “yes.” Jesus alone accomplished the atoning work necessary to save sinners, and knowledge of and faith in Jesus is essential for anyone to be saved. But, to insist on such an exclusive path to God is becoming more repugnant to our culture. When the early church’s message was condemned by the hostile culture around it, I *SUSPECT* one of the first things each believer engaged in was a gut-check regarding real core beliefs. I *KNOW* that one of the first things the community did was to ask God for “great boldness.”

Key of G

Nothing but the Blood of Jesus verses 1, 3, 4

There Is No Other Name

Is Jesus Really the Only Savior of Mankind?

If I do not understand my sickness, I may not seek the right cure. That is true not only medically but also spiritually. If nothing in particular is wrong, then, nothing in particular is a perfectly reasonable remedy. That is the fatal flaw of pluralism. If our sin estranges us from a holy God, then, ours is a precise problem needing a precise fix. Only Jesus provides this precise remedy.

First, Jesus alone was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. Why does this matter? Only as the Holy Spirit took the place of a human father in Jesus’ conception could it be true that the One conceived was both God and man. Christ *MUST* be God *AND* man to atone for sin, but for this to occur, He must be conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a human virgin. No one else in history was conceived as both God and man. Therefore, Jesus alone qualifies to be Savior.

Second, Jesus alone is fully God and fully man, but not half-God and half-man. A qualified Savior must be fully man in order to take the place of men and die in their stead. He must be fully God in order for His sacrificial payment to be adequate to satisfy the demands of holy justice. He must be man, but a mere man could not make an infinite payment for sin. No one else in history is both fully God and fully man. Therefore, Jesus alone qualifies to be Savior.

Third, Christ alone lived a sinless life. As leitical law made clear, animals offered as sacrifices for sin must be without blemish. This prefigured the sacrifice of Christ Who, as sinless, was able to die for the sins of others, and not His own. No one else in the history of the world has lived a totally sinless life. Therefore, Jesus alone qualifies to be Savior.

Fourth, Christ alone died a penal, vicarious death, meaning a death that paid a divine penalty imposed on others. The wages of sin is death. Because Jesus was sinless, He did not deserve to die. Rather, His death was owing to the fact that the Father imputed our sins to Him. His death was in our place. No one else in the history of the world has died because He bore the sins of others and not as the judgment for His own sin. Therefore, Jesus alone qualifies to be Savior.

Fifth, Christ alone rose from the dead triumphant over sin. The Bible tells of a few people other than Christ who were raised from the dead, but only He was raised never to die again, having triumphed over sin. The wages of sin is death, and the greatest power of sin is death. So, Christ’s resurrection from the dead demonstrates that His atoning death for sin accomplished both the full payment of sin’s penalty and the full victory over sin’s greatest power. No one else in history has been raised from the dead triumphant over sin. Again, Jesus alone qualifies as Savior.

The conclusion is unquestionable: If you believe the Bible record, then Jesus alone qualifies as Savior He alone *IS* Savior. His own words could not be clearer: **“I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me”** (John 14:6). And the Apostle Peter confirms those words: **“And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved”** (Acts 4:12). These claims are true of no one else in history. Indeed, Jesus alone is Savior.

The biblical conclusions are clear, but what is not so clear in this age of “many alleged paths to God” is whether God’s people believe these truths about Jesus as well as the conclusion that they demand; that He *ALONE* is Savior. And, do we believe it enough to refuse to be shamed or intimidated into silently going along with the voices of this age?

Key of G

No Other Plea verses 1-4
Jesus Saves! verses 1, 4

Is Faith in Christ Necessary to Be Saved?

There are some who believe all these things we have said about Jesus but also believe that His saving work will be universally applied to all people, whether or not they explicitly put their faith in Him. But, the teaching of the Apostles is clear. Their message centers directly upon the atoning death and resurrection of Christ, and their proclamation consistently insists that it is only by faith in Christ that anyone receives the forgiveness of his sin and eternal life.

Jesus' own teaching shows that the nations need to hear and repent in order to be saved. He commands that "repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations ... Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). Jesus here describes people that are currently both unrepentant and unforgiven. Jew and Greek alike, to be forgiven they must repent. But to repent they must hear the proclamation of Christ's work. Jesus does not envision the "nations" as already having saving revelation available to them. Rather, believers must proclaim the message of Christ to all the nations for people in those nations to be saved.

Just being good and pious is not an adequate remedy for the fact all have sinned and fallen short of God's holy standard. Paul teaches that even pious Jews must hear and believe in Christ for salvation. He prayed for the salvation of his fellow Jews, but even with their zeal, an informed decision for Christ was required. The story of Cornelius reveals that even a very good Gentile must hear and believe in Jesus. Far from being saved before Peter came to him, Cornelius was a really good man who still needed to hear of Christ and believe in Him in order to be saved.

Whoever will call upon the name of Christ will be saved, but this requires that believers speak up. Someone must tell unbelievers what they need to believe. And, this requires that some are sent. Missions is essential, since people **MUST** hear the Gospel to be saved. But our witness and our boldness and our unwillingness to be conveniently indifferent are also a **MUST**.

Again, the biblical picture of Jesus is clear: He is the only Savior, and people must believe in Him to be saved. In this age of feel-good alternatives to truth that question no belief and respect equally all alleged paths to God, a people who will adhere fiercely but lovingly to the truth can be a relevant bunch. Are you up to that degree of relevance in a culture that does **NOT** want to hear you? Are we up to honoring Christ and His Gospel by resisting our culture's mindless mantra of "everything is true, and nothing is true?" Can you stand on these two premises: Jesus is the only Savior of mankind and only through faith in Him is there salvation from sin?

Prayer (*Karl Crouch*)

Invitation (*Jim McKay*)

Key of D

There Is a Redeemer verses 1-3

Scripture and Prayer (Pastoral) (*Dave Mueller*)
Psalm 119:81-88 Guest Bible, page 438

Communion Service

Key of C

Meekness and Majesty verses 1-3 (*acapella*)

Communion Meditation (*Gerry Stanek*)

Lord's Supper (no music)

Offering Prayer (*Tom Arnold*)

Offertory (lively)

Closing

(Key of G)

You Are Crowned 2x