

Prelude

Call to Worship C#278 Angels We Have Heard

Advent Candle Lighting

The Crotteau Family

Isaiah 43:1-11

Invocation

HYMN C#273 Good Christian Men Rejoice

Psalm

HYMN C#280 One Small Child

1 Cor 16 Offering: Collection for the Poor

- We drew from Paul's admonition to the Corinthians that care for the poor, especially poor Christians, is both a personal and a congregational privilege for the followers of Jesus
- Four Goals for This Offering
 - To own for ourselves an opportunity for simple obedience
 - To demonstrate in the physical and temporal realm a sensitivity for gospel compassion
 - To practice for the benefit of poor believers a personal express of Christ's love for us and for them, and our own love in Christ for Christ and for them.
 - To prove to ourselves and to the world the conviction that as people of the Book, as the Word of God is applied to our hearts by the Spirit of God and transforms our spirit more and more into the likeness of Jesus,
 - our will complies and aligns with the will and purpose of God, both in our intentions and in our actions.
 - Being people of the Book means both trusting what the Book AND doing what the Book says for the reasons it says it.
- To that end, we have spent 12 weeks preparing for this offering
 - Setting aside on the first day of the week, as an act of worship and a gift of love, some measure of the abundance God has granted us
 - **2 Corinthians 8:7-15 (ESV)** *⁷ But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also. ⁸ I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. ⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich. ¹⁰ And in this matter I give my judgment: this benefits you, who a year ago started not only to do this work but also to desire to do it. ¹¹ So now finish doing it as well, so that your readiness in desiring it may be matched by your completing it out of what you have. ¹² For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have. ¹³ For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of fairness ¹⁴ your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so that their*

abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness. ¹⁵ As it is written, “Whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and whoever gathered little had no lack.”

- God has led us to two pastors in North Africa to whom this offering will be hand-delivered by one of His own servants.
- Let us now, to the glory of God and the joy of His chosen people, complete what we started.

HYMN C#251 It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

Pastoral Prayer

Worship with Tithes and Offerings

Focus Text Luke 2:14-20

Message Pastor Dale McIntire

Christ the Savior of All Men

I. Intro

A. What makes the “good news” good

1. Angel song
2. Ryle
 - a. “The plain truth is that a right knowledge of sin lies at the root of all saving Christianity.”
 - b. Dim or indistinct views of sin are the origin of most of the errors, heresies, and false doctrines of the present day.”
 - (1) Written in 1877
 - (2) Nothing has changed
 - (a) God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
 - (b) God Rest Ye Merry

B. If we are to truly celebrate and model the Good News of the Advent season, we must reestablish a deep and painful understanding of sin

1. Deep because it must reach to the depth of hell as well as the heights of heaven
2. Painful because it must stir within us a regret and repulsion that drives us to Christ-enabled, Spirit-fueled, God-honoring repentance.
 - a. The reason few Christians repent of ongoing sin is
 - (1) because they do not realize what an awful affront sin is to the holiness of God
 - (2) and His sovereign election of them as a gift of love for His Son!

II. Three Facts Christians Must Retain About Sin

A. There is no sin God will coexist with, especially after the cross

1. Definition of sin
 - a. “Sin is doing, saying, thinking, or imagining, anything that is not in

- perfect conformity with the mind and law and purpose of God.”
- b. Sin is anything that fails to meet the standard of God’s glory and holiness
 - (1) **Romans 3:23 (ESV) *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,***
 - (2) The glory of God, the sum of all God’s perfections, provides the single standard for what is sin and what is not sin, for what is unholy and what is holy.
2. What He overlooked in the past, He judged at the cross.
 - a. **Acts 17:30 (ESV) *The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent,***
 - (1) “Overlooked” - does not mean that He didn’t care and let you get away with it
 - (2) “Overlooked” means He didn’t strike you dead with the death you deserve at the moment you sinned.
 - b. **Romans 2:4 (ESV) *Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?***
 3. Do not think that God will simply live with the sin you are willing to live with, for He will not!
 - a. **Hebrews 10:26-27 (ESV) ²⁶ *For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.***
 - b. **Matthew 7:21-23 (ESV) *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’***
 - (1) Unless our sin is covered by the blood of Jesus Christ our Savior, through faith in Him according to the Father’s saving and electing and justifying grace, we have no hope.
 - (2) And if we are content to dwell with sin, then we must give careful consideration to the state of our soul regardless of our religious practice.
 - (3) **Our sin demands a Savior and the presence of a Savior demands confession, repentance, and abandoning sin!**

B. Sin is insidious and cannot be excused but must be eradicated

1. Extent of sin in the human heart
 - a. **Genesis 6:5 (ESV) *The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.***

b. **Jeremiah 17:9 (ESV) *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?***

2. Ryle: Sin is a disease which pervades and runs through every part of our moral constitution and every faculty of our minds. The understanding, the affections, the reasoning powers, the will, are all more or less infected. Even the conscience is so blinded that it cannot be depended on as a sure guide, and is as likely to lead men wrong as right, unless it is enlightened by the Holy Ghost. Holiness: Its Nature, Hindrances, Difficulties, and Roots.

a. So insidious, invasive, and aggressive is sin in the human heart that only the death of the sinless Son of God can address it and only the indwelling of the infinite Spirit of God can keep us from it.

b. God alone can provide the means for man to overcome slavery to sin.

(1) Because God is fully able, and because God is fully worthy

(2) **Romans 6:1-4 (ESV) ¹ *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.***

3. **God sent His only begotten Son to the cross not to excuse men's sin but to remove men from slavery to sin through His death on the cross on our behalf.**

a. **Colossians 2:13-14 (ESV) ¹³ *And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.***

b. **Christ bore in His body our sin, your sin, my sin and God nailed that sin to the cross not excusing it but crucifying it!**

C. Sin, when we put it in the right perspective, will always be more disgusting, more revolting, more awful than we think it is.

1. As long as we define sin in light of ourselves, or in light of others, we will never realize how awful sin is in light of God in all His holy glory.

2. **Psalm 51:3-4 (ESV) ³ *For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. ⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.***

a. David is not saying that he did not sin against Uriah, whom he murdered, or Bathsheba, whom he stole.

- b. David refuses to consider the awfulness of his sin in any context other than the holiness and purity of God.
- c. David knows that sin is first and foremost a personal denial of all that God is, and he refuses to allow his sinful heart to make less of sin than sin deserves or continue to make less of God than God deserves.
- d. David's response to the sinfulness of sin is repentance:
 - (1) **Psalm 51:7-12 (ESV) ⁷ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. ⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. ⁹ Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. ¹¹ Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.**
 - (2) The right response to the reality of sin is repentance
- 3. What does your sin look like when you hold it up to the glory of the Father or the love of the Son or the purity of the Spirit?
 - a. It make not seem like a such a big deal when you compare your sin
 - (1) With the consequences
 - (2) With the emotional impact
 - (3) With the sins of others
 - b. But how does your sin appear to you when you consider God calls you to faith in order to make you a give of love for His Son?

III. Congregation Response:

- 1. The good news of the angel is Good News
 - a. Christ the Savior has come, and through his life and death has satisfied the requirements of divine justice on your behalf.
 - b. Christ the Savior has come, committed himself, and accomplished all that is necessary for your deliverance from slavery to sin
 - c. Christ the Savior has come and we know that through him, those God has called he will also justify and glorify
 - d. So, what will you do with your sin?
 - (1) Will you embrace it
 - (2) Will you surrender it
- 2. On the card: One sin you dismiss as insignificant that you are willing for the Spirit to reveal how awful it is to you.

Choral Benediction C#258 Go, Tell It On The Mountain