

Irresistible Grace

Saul of Tarsus, a sworn enemy of the Christian faith, was enroute to Damascus to break up the church. As he drew near to the city a strange thing happened. The risen Christ appeared to him in person. Saul fell to the ground. The Lord said, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” He parried the question with a question: “Who are you, Lord?” And Christ said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.”

Thus did Saul, the self-righteous moralistic Pharisee, turn into Paul, the fully accredited apostle and champion of the very movement he had detested. He never forgot that experience. “It is God that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ,” he wrote.

Note the details of his awakening. The Lord did not come to him and say, “Now Saul, let’s sit down at a summit conference and work out the details of your salvation”; or, “Saul, do the best you can, try to keep my law, and I will take up the slack and together we will be mutually reconciled”; or, “Saul, you carry out the golden rule and my grace will complement your effort and thus we will enjoy sweet fellowship.”

These are travesties of the gospel of free grace and eternal love. After Damascus the apostle could say, “By the grace of God I am what I am.” Grace, in his vocabulary, meant divine, sovereign, irresistible favor to the sinner who merits the miseries of this life, death itself, and the pains of hell forever.

R. B. Kuiper used to say, that the spirit of God does not believe for us. It is equally true that the spirit of God, in the operation of grace, “convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of the truth, and renewing our wills, does persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ freely offered to us in the gospel.”

*All that the Father
gives me will come to
me, and whoever
comes to me I will
never cast out.*

John 6:37

Covenant Presbyterian Church
1623 University Avenue, Berkeley, California 94703
www.berkeleyopc.org

MORNING WORSHIP – 11:00 A.M.

Wayne K. Forkner, Minister

510-928-8024

THE LORD CALLS US TO HIMSELF

Salutation and Call to Worship

*Hymn of Praise # 16

“Come, Let Us Sing unto the Lord”

*Invocation

*Hymn of Praise # 32

“Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

CONFESSION OF SIN AND THE LORD'S ASSURANCE

The Law of God

Matthew 22:37-40

Confession of Sin (Congregation in Unison)

Almighty, eternal God and Father, we confess and acknowledge unto thee that we were conceived in unrighteousness and are full of sin and transgression in all our life. We do not fully believe thy Word nor follow thy holy commandments. Remember thy goodness, we beseech thee, and for thy Name's sake be gracious unto us, and forgive us our iniquity which, alas, is great.

Assurance of Forgiveness

Psalm 103:8 The LORD is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

Psalm 103:10 He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.

Psalm 103:11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;

Psalm 103:12 as far as the east is from the west,
 so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

OFFERING OURSELVES IN THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER

Worship in Giving

Hymn of Thanksgiving # 221

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”

Worship in Prayer

Interlude

*Congregation Standing
We extend a cordial welcome to each visitor!

THE LORD FEEDS US FROM HIS WORD

*Hymn of Preparation # 170

“Fairest Lord Jesus”

Sermon Text

Luke 20:9-18

Sermon

A PARABLE ON AUTHORITY

*Hymn of Response # 98

“Now Thank We All Our God”

THE LORD DISMISSES US WITH HIS BLESSING

*Gloria Patri (Praising our Gracious Lord)

734

*The Lord's Benediction

Announcements

Today, 10:00am. Sunday School.

Today, 12:30pm. A potluck luncheon will be held in the church following the morning worship service. All are welcome.

Tuesday, 7:30pm. Weekly Bible Study at the church or via Zoom. Our Bible study at the church begins with dinner at 7:00pm, followed by a time of study at 7:30pm. For information on attending the study via Zoom, please send an email to Pastor Wayne at wforkner86@mac.com.