

Life From Above

A lone man went his way in the streets of Jerusalem by night. Perhaps he traveled at night because this was a convenient hour to speak to the one whom he sought. Perhaps he had chosen the dark hours to escape the notice of those who would not sympathize with his mission. Why Nicodemus came to Jesus by night we shall never know for sure. It is, however, certain that he came, to ask for himself and for his fellow Pharisees certain questions about the Kingdom of God.

Nicodemus was a teacher; but he came to Jesus seeking greater wisdom than he himself possessed. His words befitted the greatness of the one whom he approached, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that you do, except God be with him.”

Jesus answers, however, in a way that leaves Nicodemus nonplussed. Jesus veers off sharply from Nicodemus’ beginning: “except a man be born from above, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.”

That was not what Nicodemus had expected; but it was exactly what he needed to know.

Entrance to the Kingdom of God does not come by merely adding a bit here and taking away a bit there, by making corrections on the margins of our lives. Jesus was preaching that man suffers from a radical disease which demands a radical cure. It was not enough to cut at the outside here and there to remove spots; the entire core was affected.

Jesus continued, “except a man be born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.”

Mankind is like a valley of dry bones, white and parched in the sun. Can these bones live? That was a deeper question than any Nicodemus had asked; but it was a question that Jesus himself answered, not only in words, but also in the sacrifice of himself on the cross for the sins of all who put their trust in him.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
(John 3:16)

*Except a man be
born again, he
cannot see the
kingdom of God.*

John 3:3

Covenant Presbyterian Church
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THE LORD CALLS US TO HIMSELF

Salutation and Call to Worship

*Hymn of Praise # 125

“Let All Things Now Living”

*Invocation

*Hymn of Praise # 38

“Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

CONFESSION OF SIN AND THE LORD'S ASSURANCE

The Law of God

Exodus 20:1-17

Confession of Sin (Congregation in Unison)

Almighty God, we are unworthy to come into your presence, because of our many sins. We do not deserve any grace or mercy from you, if you dealt with us as we deserve. We have sinned against you, O Lord, and we have offended you. And yet, O Lord, as we acknowledge our sins and offenses, so also do we acknowledge you to be a merciful God, a loving and favorable Father, to all who turn to you. And so we humbly ask you, for the sake of Christ your son, to show mercy to us, and forgive us all our offenses. Forgive the sins of our youth, and the sins of our old age. By your Spirit, O God, take possession of our hearts, so that, not only the actions of our life, but also the words of our mouths, and the smallest thought of our minds, may be guided and governed by you. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

Assurance of Forgiveness

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1John 1:9)

OFFERING OURSELVES IN THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER

Worship in Giving

Hymn of Thanksgiving # 460

“Amazing Grace!”

Worship in Prayer

Interlude

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

THE LORD FEEDS US FROM HIS WORD

*Hymn of Preparation # 147 *“O God of Light, Your Word, a Lamp Unfailing”*

Sermon Text

Luke 21:20-24

Sermon

DAYS OF VENGEANCE

THE LORD'S TABLE

Hymn of Preparation # 426

“Till He Come!”

Celebrating the Supper

*Hymn of Response # 319

“Day of Judgment! Day of Wonders!”

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. We remember the Lord's death in the Communion service during morning worship. Our Communion service is open to those who have been, or are now, communicant members of an evangelical church.

Today, 12:30pm. A potluck luncheon will be held in the church. 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.

Saturday, Sept. 7, 12:00pm – 4:00pm. Our annual Fall church picnic takes place at Picnic Area #4 (near the concrete slide) at Codornices Park in Berkeley (1201 Euclid Ave., Berkeley, CA 94708). The online potluck sign-up is <http://www.luckypotluck.com/potluck/ChurchPicnic2024>.