

September 1, 2024
Worship | 8:15 and 11 am
Livestream | 11 am



LEXINGTON

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

For God's glory, we are making disciples of Jesus as we worship, love, and serve.

WELCOME

Thank you for joining us for worship this morning. We invite you to experience the meaning of the Gospel through this service, which reflects both ancient and modern elements of Christian worship. When we gather as a worshipping community, we enter into a dialogue with the living God. God calls us into worship, we rejoice in the hope of the Gospel, confess our sins, lament the brokenness of our world, give our offerings, and hear God's Word read and preached. We hope that by worshipping with us, you will experience joy and hope from a community of people who love Jesus.

At Lexington Presbyterian Church, for God's glory, we are making disciples of Jesus as we worship, love, and serve.

Complete our Connect Card at lexpreschurch.com/connect to join us on mission!

General inquiries: hello@lexpreschurch.com

LORD'S DAY WORSHIP

* Congregation, please stand if able

Prelude

PRAISE

Updates | Following Christ Together

* **Call to Worship** | Psalm 105:1-5

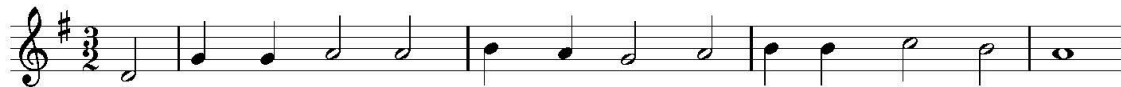
*Leader: Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name;
make known his deeds among the peoples!*

**All: Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wondrous works!**

*Leader: Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!*

**All: Seek the LORD and his strength;
seek his presence continually!
Remember the wondrous works that he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he uttered.**

* Trinity Hymnal #164—O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing [vv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6]



1. O for a thou-sand tongues to sing my great Re - deem - er's praise,
2. My gra - cious Mas - ter and my God, as - sist me to pro - claim,
3. Je - sus, the name that charms our fears, that bids our sor - rows cease;
4. He breaks the pow'r of reign - ing sin, he sets the pris - 'ner free;
6. Hear him, ye deaf; his praise, ye dumb, your loos - en'd tongues em - ploy;



the glo - ries of my God and King, the tri - umphs of his grace.
to spread through all the earth a - broad the hon - ors of thy name.
'tis mu - sic in the sin - ner's ears, 'tis life and health and peace.
his blood can make the foul - est clean, his blood a - vailed for me.
ye blind, be - hold your Sav - ior come; and leap, ye lame, for joy.

Trinity Hymnal No. 164 (vv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6)

TEXT: Charles Wesley, 1739; alt.; Alt. 1961

TUNE (AZMON): Carl G. Gläser, 1784-1829; Arr. by Lowell Mason, 1839

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* Prayer of Invocation

* **Scripture Reading** | Romans 14:1-10 | Pew Bible pp. 948-949

As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.

For the Cause



1. For the cause of Christ the King, we give our lives an of - fer - ing,
2. For the cause of Christ we go, with joy to reap, with faith to sow,
3. For the King once lift - ed high to cries of rage, of "Cru - ci - fy!"
4. For the King who con - quered death, to free the poor and the op - pressed
5. Let it be my life's re - frain: to live is Christ, to die is gain;



till all the earth re - sounds with cease - less praise to the Son. [to verse 2]
as man - y see and man - y put their trust in the Son. [to Chorus]
en - dured the cross as eve - ry sin was laid on the Son. [to verse 4]
for last - ing peace, for life and li - ber - ty in the Son. [to Chorus]
de - ny my - self, take up my cross and fol - low the Son. [to Chorus]



Christ we pro - claim, the name a - bove eve - ry name,



for all cre - a - tion, eve - ry na - tion, God's sal - va - tion through the Son.

Words and Music by Keith Getty, Kristyn Getty, and Stuart Townend
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Sacrament of Baptism

Reception of a New Non-Communing Member by Baptism

Sophie Caroline Holt

RENEWAL

Call to Confession | Romans 13:11-12

Leader: Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Corporate Confession of Sin | From “Valley of Vision”

All: O Holy Father, You have freely given Your Son,
O Divine Son, You have freely paid my debt,
O Eternal Spirit, You freely grace me with salvation.
Prayers and tears could not suffice to pardon my sins,
not anything less than atoning blood,
but my believing is my receiving,
for a thankful acceptance is not paying of the debt.
What did you see in me?
That I, a poor, diseased, despised sinner
should be clothed in Your bright glory?
That one lately groaning, weeping, dying,
should be as full of joy as my heart can hold?
Who can fathom immeasurable love?
As far as the rational soul exceeds the senses,
so does the spirit exceed the rational in its knowledge of You.
Now I know but a small portion of what I shall know,
here in part, there in perfection,
here a glimpse, there a glory.
To enjoy You is life eternal, and to enjoy is to know.
Keep me in the freedom of experiencing Your salvation continually.

Silent Confession

* **Words of Comfort** | John 8:31-32

Leader: So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

* **Passing of the Peace** [stand and greet one another]

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

* **Trinity Hymnal #172—Let Us Love and Sing and Wonder** [vv. 1, 2, 4, 5]



1. Let us love and sing and won - der, let us praise the Sav - ior's name!
2. Let us love the Lord who bought us, pit - ied us when en - e - mies,
4. Let us won - der; grace and jus - tice join and point to mer - cy's store;
5. Let us praise, and join the cho - rus of the saints en - throned on high;



He has hushed the law's loud thun - der, he has quenched Mount Si - nai's flame:
called us by his grace, and taught us, gave us ears and gave us eyes:
when through grace in Christ our trust is, jus - tice smiles and asks no more:
here they trust - ed him be - fore us, now their prais - es fill the sky:



he has washed us with his blood, he has brought us nigh to God.
he has washed us with his blood, he pre - sents our souls to God.
he who washed us with his blood, has se - cured our way to God.
"You have washed us with your blood; you are wor - thy, Lamb of God!"

Trinity Hymnal No. 172 (vv. 1, 2, 4, 5)
TEXT: John Newton, 1774; Mod.
TUNE (ALL SAINTS OLD): *Darmstadt Gesangbuch*, 1698
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Hymn Story

Let Us Love and Sing and Wonder

The text for "Let Us Love and Sing and Wonder" was written by John Newton who was born on July 24, 1725. Newton's father was a sailor and he was raised by his mother who taught him many Scripture verses as a child. Sadly, she passed away when Newton was 7 years old and, at only age 11, Newton followed in his father's footsteps by becoming part of the crew on his father's ship. The life he led as a sailor earned him the reputation of being a "godless scoundrel" and an "enemy of anyone who followed Jesus." Years later, in 1743, he was visiting friends in England when a group of men captured him and forced him to join the British Royal Navy. ("Impressment" was a type of draft that happened to many unsuspecting merchant sailors.) Newton tried to escape, but was caught, "brutally disciplined," branded a deserter, and ejected from the British Royal Navy. Newton then became a slave trader on the ship *Pegasus*. (Slave trading was a common practice at the time and not considered to be something wrong.) The crew did not like Newton and in 1745 he was abandoned in West Africa where he himself became the slave of an African princess for 15 months. Newton's father sent a slave vessel that rescued him. While at sea, a violent storm came up and the ship was in terrible danger. Sailors from the crew were being tossed into the ocean by waves that were coming over the sides of the deck. Newton, who could not swim, was asked by the captain to get something from below deck while a different sailor took Newton's place up on deck. When Newton went below, the sailor who took his place was taken into the sea by a wave and drowned. Newton fell to his knees and cried out to God to save him. God answered his prayer and Newton was saved, both bodily and spiritually.

In 1748, a redeemed Newton returned to London; however, he still was involved on a slave ship until 1754. He also had a short career as a tide surveyor and, eventually, became a pastor in London. George Whitfield, John Wesley, and Charles Wesley helped prepare him for ministry by assisting him in the study of Greek and Hebrew. As a pastor, Newton went around England testifying to "how God has saved a wretch" such as himself. Thirty-four years after he sailed on his last slave ship, Newton began speaking out about the atrocity of slave trading and wrote the circular *Thoughts Upon the Slave Trade* in which Newton documented the horrible conditions that existed on slave ships. He wrote, "I was once an active instrument in a business at which my heart now shudders." Along with politician

William Wilberforce and activist Hannah More, they started the cause which eventually led to the British Parliament passing the Slave Trade Act 1807 which prohibited slave trade in the British Empire.

In 1779, Wesley collaborated with his lifelong friend, William Cowper, to write a collection of 280 hymns, *Olney Hymns*. Included in this collection were such hymns as: “Amazing Grace,” “There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood,” and “Let Us Love and Sing and Wonder.” Newton died on December 21, 1807 in London. He was quite a prolific writer whose published works included sermons, letters, devotional aids, and hymns. Newton called his hymns “The fruit and expression of his own experience.”

ALL SAINTS OLD, the hymn tune name for “Let Us Love and Sing and Wonder,” was composed in 1698. It is one of only a few tunes that are still used today from the German collection Darmstadt *Geistreiches Gesangbuch*.

“To Him who loves and has freed us from our sins by His blood ... to Him be glory and power for ever and ever!” (Revelation 1:5,6) ... *Let Us Love and Sing and Wonder!*

Sources:

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* Affirmation of Faith | Westminster Confession of Faith

Chapter 20, sections 1, 2, 3

Leader: Christians, what do the Scriptures teach about Christian liberty?

All: 1. The liberty which Christ hath purchased for believers under the gospel consists in their freedom from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, the curse of the moral law; and, in their being delivered from this present evil world, bondage to Satan, and dominion of sin; from the evil of afflictions, the sting of death, the victory of the grave, and everlasting damnation; as also, in their free access to God, and their yielding obedience unto him, not out of slavish fear, but a childlike love and willing mind. All which were common also to believers under the law. But, under the new testament, the liberty of Christians is further enlarged, in their freedom from the yoke of the ceremonial law, to which the Jewish church was subjected; and in greater boldness of access to the throne of grace, and in fuller communications of the free Spirit of God, than believers under the law did ordinarily partake of.

2. God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are, if anything, contrary to his Word; or beside it, in matters of faith, or worship. So that, to believe such doctrines, or to obey such commands, out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience: and the requiring of an implicit faith, and an absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience, and reason also.

3. They who, upon pretense of Christian liberty, do practice any sin, or cherish any lust, do thereby destroy the end of Christian liberty, which is, that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

Friendship Register

Kindly remember to give your neighbor the Friendship Register. Once it reaches the end of the pew, then please pass it back. Making acquaintances with guests and fostering friendships within the larger church family is the goal of this register. Starting from the middle aisle, the register is located at the head of each pew. Please, make sure to write your name legibly.

Worship Through Giving

The offering is a way for members and friends of Lexington Presbyterian to present the substance of their whole lives to God. Please feel no pressure to give.

Ways to give:

- You may use the offering plates.
- Go to “Giving” on your Church Center mobile app or lexpres.churchcenter.com.
- Text2Give: text any dollar amount to 84321.

Beneath the Cross



1. Be - neath the cross of Je - sus I find a place to stand and
 2. Be - neath the cross of Je - sus, His fam - ily is my own. Once
 3. Be - neath the cross of Je - sus, the path be - fore the crown. We



won - der at such mer - cy that calls me as I am. For
 strang - ers chas - ing self - ish dreams; Now, one through grace a - lone. How
 fol - low in His foot - steps where prom - ised hope is found. How



hands that should dis - card me hold wounds which tell me come. Be -
 could I now dis - ho - nor the ones that You have loved? Be -
 great the joy be - fore us to be His per - fect bride. Be -



neath the cross of Je - sus my un - wor - thy soul is won.
 neath the cross of Je - sus, see the chil - dren called by God.
 neath the cross of Je - sus, we will glad - ly live our lives.

Words & Music: Keith and Kristyn Getty

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* The Doxology

Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye heav'n - ly host:
praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1674

Tune (OLD HUNDREDDTH): Louis Bourgeois, 1551

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* Offertory Prayer

HEARING GOD'S WORD

Corporate Prayer

Children's Sermon | Shadow and Substance

* Scripture Reading | Colossians 2:16-23 | p. 984

¹⁶ Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. ¹⁸ Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, ¹⁹ and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.

²⁰ If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations— ²¹ “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” ²² (referring to things that all perish as they are used)— according to human precepts and teachings? ²³ These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

Communion Homily | Our Sufficiency in Christ

An Exposition of the Letter to the Colossians

18. Our Sufficiency in Christ's Freedom

Rev. Dr. Curt McDaniel

Sermon Notes

One of the more impactful speeches ever given in American history occurred on March 23, 1775, in an historic church in Richmond, VA. On that day, the fiery and rhetorical statesman Patrick Henry concluded his now famous address with these memorable words:

“Gentlemen may cry, ‘Peace, Peace,’ but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!”¹

There is a passion for freedom in this world. Freedom of all kinds: political freedom, as Patrick Henry boldly declared, financial freedom, freedom of speech, freedom of religious worship, freedom to pursue opportunities, freedom to vote, freedom to live where you want, and freedom to do what you desire within the law.

All of these freedoms are good, and many have an appropriate place in life. But for Christians, there is a freedom that is seldom understood and often poorly applied in their discipleship journey. This is especially true of new believers in the Faith who are on the one hand seeking to learn and to grow in their relationship while on the other hand trying to understand what they can and cannot do in their newfound walk with Christ.

Too often believers get confused when it comes to understanding Christian freedom. There is no doubt that in Paul’s day, the Colossian Christians did not understand how their beginning relationship with Christ should look on a daily basis. Apparently one or more mystics (false teachers) were exerting some degree of persuasive influence upon them to observe in legalistic ways the ceremonial practices of circumcision, festivals, and food preparations. To some degree, these new Colossian believers were pushed and lured to keep many of the old Judaistic practices, all for the sake of obtaining spiritual fullness and completeness. The trick that these false teachers used on them was simple: “One is led firmly to the conclusion that the mystics believed Gentile converts were to observe these very features of the Torah and its necessary halakic rulings.”²

The apostle Paul knew the danger that existed in this kind of belief and practice, so he confronted this issue head-on at the end of this second chapter. In true apostolic fashion, he gives the Colossian believers two commands, a reason, and a question that will help them understand what true freedom in Christ means—then and now. Too often Christianity is perceived by the general public as a weighty series of “dos and don’ts,” a tiring list of legalistic actions and duties that people must do to keep favor with God. The Bible’s presentation of genuine Christianity is remarkably different. In Jesus Christ, you are free from the religious dictates and laws that humans attempt to offer peace. These human-generated regulations and rules will never bring God’s favor or peace; instead, they breed fear, insecurity, and relentless anxiety. God has a better way! Look at your freedom in Christ!

1. The Two Commands (2:16, 18). With the doctrinal section in chapters 1 and 2 laid, the “therefore” (2:16) marks a noticeable transition where Paul begins now to show how the theology that he has taught them is brought to practical application throughout the rest of the letter. Up until this time, he has presented some incredible truths about Christ’s identity and work, showing every time how He is superior and more than sufficient for their life and faith. But now the time has come to show how their sufficiency in Christ is seen in an everyday way. So, in verses 16 and 18, he gives them two stern commands that deal with their relationship to the false teachers.

a. *Let no one judge you (16).* “Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.” Here we get an insight into the kind of influence that was pressuring these new believers. All of these elements—eating and drinking, ³ festivals and new moons, Sabbath observances—have a strong Jewish element associated with them: “Paul and Timothy are describing what some call badges of identity, identity markers, or boundary markers.” ⁴ Continued scholarship coming from historical studies in the *halakah* (the use of the rituals in the Torah through the centuries) and from the Dead Sea Scrolls reveal that either the Jewish mystics and/or the Essenes (a 3rd Jewish sect behind the Pharisees and the Sadducees that lived in the Qumran community by the Dead Sea) had a persistent influence on the Lycus Valley cities in the First Century. Their lifestyles superimposed a rigid, ascetic practice and lifestyle on those whom they sought to persuade. They stressed the practice of many ceremonial regulations and laws in an attempt to

convince people that these rituals and observances were essential to their spiritual experience and obedience to God: “The observances spoken of here—festivals, new moons, and Sabbaths—when coupled with other practices such as fasting and self-denial, suggest that the false teachers were urging these practices not as means of initiation into the body of Christ but as practices to be followed after such initiation, practices designed to initiate one into another realm of spiritual experience.”⁵

They would insist that these were *not* optional practices. In their minds, they were essential expressions of a person’s belief and identity in God. If you did not follow them, you faced criticism, judgment, and even condemnation for not following them. “What stands out about the visionaries is that they pass judgment against their fellow believers on illegitimate bases. This illegitimate passing of judgment constitutes the primary reason that Colossians reject the visionaries. Their ascents into heavenly realms and even their admiration for what they see there are not particularly problematic. Many members of the early church, including Paul, had such experiences. The problem is that these teachers make such experiences mandatory for all.”⁶

In 2:16, Paul uses the same verb as Jesus used in Matthew 7:1, “Judge not, that you be not judged.” The apostle wanted these Colossian believers to understand that a spirit and practice of judgment over other Christians for what they did or did not do was out-of-line and out-of-character for the Christian walk, especially in light of the fact that Jesus Christ fulfilled all the requirements of the ceremonial law; therefore, we are no longer under its demands and restrictions. So, it is fitting that the apostle commands these believers not to crumble under the condemning pressure of this legalistic spirit: “Christians, do not let anyone judge you for what you are doing. God is the Judge of all the earth in these matters, not humans.”

- b. *Let no one disqualify you (2:18)*. “Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind.” The verb “disqualify” is an interesting word in the original. It conjures the imagery of an umpire who rules against you on a play in a game. I am sure you, like me, have watched a game or two when you saw the umpire make a bad call against your team. That is the idea presented here. Apparently these mystics, or Essenes, were acting as umpires in the field of religious worship and devotion. They were making bad calls against these new believers, telling them that they must obey and follow all these

ceremonial rituals and practices, such as angel worship (not the worship *of* angels, but rather doing ritualistic practices that condition and prepare the mind to enter a state where you participate *with* the angels in worship, a practice apparently cherished and pursued by the Qumran community ⁷), new moon festivals, and feasts. If the Colossian believers did not do them, these false teachers were pronouncing judgment and acting as umpires over them, telling them what they could and could not do. You can imagine that this kind of rhetoric could generate a festering, demoralizing spirit within these new Christians. Paul knew he needed to confront this tactic head-on in this letter.

In verse 18, the apostle tells them bluntly not to listen to the words of these self-proclaimed “religious umpires” who have *not* been assigned by God to call the game! Paul goes on to tell them that these rulers delight in a kind of pretentious piety and humility that is not rooted in godliness. They obtain their humility from practices, not from God Himself. Consequently, their profession of humility is a cloak for religious bigotry and pride. Their knowledge and practice of these mystic observances inflated and puffed up their religious egos so that a “holier-than-thou” attitude oozed from their conversations and dealings with others. It is no wonder why Paul gives the Colossians a stern command to reject these ascetic eccentrics: “Do not let others put themselves as umpires over you! They are religious bigots! They live in vain conceit! They do not understand the sufficiency of Christ! Do not cave in to their pressure tactics! You have something much better—superior and sufficient—in Christ!”

2. **The Reason (2:20).** Why would the apostle be so emphatic about this? Why was it so imperative that he command the Colossian Christians not to sit under the judgment of this band of false teachers? His reason is seen in verse 20, “If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations?” Here again is a vivid return to what he stated in 2:12: “You (plural) died with Christ.” When God called them to saving faith, He joined them exclusively to Jesus Christ. When Christ died, I died. When Christ was buried, I was buried with Him. All my past, all my shortcomings, all my failures, and my sins were nailed to the cross, and the record of that “paid-in-full” transaction was buried in the grave with Christ with His dead body. When Christ rose from the dead, I emerged with Him with new spiritual life and vitality. All this is possible because of the work of Jesus on our behalf. He did it all. I need to do nothing but rest by faith in His finished

death and resurrection. His work is sufficient.

Notice how this death is pictured in verse 20. It is a death *with* Christ (Greek preposition *soon*), and it is a death that separates us *from* the basic or “elemental spirits” or “elementary forms of religion”⁸ that were practiced before the coming of Christ. Many of these forms were seen in religious festivals, food laws, and ceremonial rituals. That is why Paul states in verse 17 that these kinds of observances and rituals were “a shadow,” or as some have translated it, “a foreshadowing” of the One who was to come—Christ—Who is seen as the reality. In other words, in the OT, all of these religious ceremonies and spiritual observances had a purpose. They pointed to a final fulfillment—Christ—the Central Figure of human history. In this verse, we have one of the prominent principles in Bible study and interpretation: things in the OT “foreshadowed” or pointed to the final reality: Christ. We understand the OT more clearly when we see how its objects, events, people, ceremonies, and prophecies lead to Christ and find their fulfillment in Him.

When God the Father cast the spotlight on Him from heaven’s throne, everything that was practiced and done *before* Christ’s time stood in the shadow of His great light and appearance. Paul’s reason and command to these believers (and us) could not be clearer. Since Christ is the real thing, why are you living in the shadows? Why are you thinking about practicing things that talk *about* Him when you can be joined directly *with* Him? Christians, you (plural, the church) are vitally joined with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. Live in Him! Spend your time and energy with Him, not with things that talk about Him!

This reminds us of a danger that Christians of all times have to contend with on a constant basis. So often we can get wrapped up in doing things for Christ or observing things that point to Christ. Certainly, in and of itself, there is nothing intrinsically wrong with observing or forelooking (as in Lent). In fact, it can strengthen faith. **The problem comes when these things become primary and the person of Christ becomes secondary.** It is like a husband saying, “I’ll do things for my wife. I’ll think about her in my daily life, but I do not want to be with her and grow in our relationship.” A similar idea is seen here. Christ is primary—the reality. Everything else that talks about or points to Him is secondary, or a shadow. Paul’s words call us to keep this priority in mind.

3. **The Question (2:20).** The apostle concludes chapter 2 with a penetrating question, “Why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations?” To say it another way, “Why are you succumbing to the swaying influence of the mystics who are telling you to follow their ceremonial laws of purification—things you do not taste, touch, or handle.”⁹ In Paul’s mind, they are practices that do not match their profession. If Christ has set you free (John 8:32), why are you still living in bondage to a set of rules and regulations that were fulfilled in Him? This makes no sense! Why do you want to do something that is steeped in self-made religion and that appears to be wise, but in reality it is a form of wisdom that has no substance? These kinds of things punish the body, all for the sake of religious duty, but are they of any value? **NO!** Your value is found in Christ. Wisdom is seen in Christ. Worship is centered on Christ. These worship festivals and ceremonial laws pointed to Christ. The angels fall down in adoration to Christ. All the universe stands before Christ.

Christ is the center of time and history. He is the reason for everything. When God called you, converted you, and gave you saving faith, you were also joined to Christ in His life, death, and resurrection. Why are you holding on to something else when you can have Him? Colossian Christians, and believers today, dwell on Christ! Do not let religious bigots judge you! Do not let the legalists burden you with a set of dos and don’ts. Do not follow the human-centric attempts of self-imposed religion. Your life is in Christ. Stay there.

Personal Application:

- Are you holding on to anything other than Christ?
- Are you doing things for Christ or in memory of Christ and not prioritizing time with Christ to pursue a relationship with Him?
- Christ has set you free from self-imposed human religion. Are you living like it?

Reflection:

“The dividing line for Paul was that the way of Moses anticipated the way of Jesus, and that the way of Jesus radically reshaped how one lived the way of Moses. Paul became a Jesus-shaped Pharisee, but he did not surrender his Jewishness. He no doubt thought he had become fully Jewish, not less so. Others thought Paul had hopped the rails, but Paul would

counter that the rails were better on the new-creation line. Our point, then, is that Paul's own conversion prompted Paul's hermeneutical question, which led to his reading the Bible anew. This hermeneutic is found at Colossians 2:17, one that is as personal as it is theological." ¹⁰

Study and Discussion Questions:

- Discuss and comment on this statement: "Too often Christianity is perceived by the general public as a weighty series of "dos and don'ts," a weighty list of legalistic actions and duties that people must do to keep favor with God. The Bible's presentation of genuine Christianity is remarkably different."
- Review and discuss the two commands in verses 16 and 18. How do they find practical applications for us today? Try to be specific.
- Review and discuss 2:17, one of the more significant statements in the NT on "foreshadowing and reality." Think of things in the OT (people, events, ceremonies) that were a "shadow" or that pointed to Christ. How significant is this verse? How does it find impact in Paul's argument here?
- Why do people want to follow human-generated rules of religion and not seek Christ directly? Think of your own experience in this reflection.

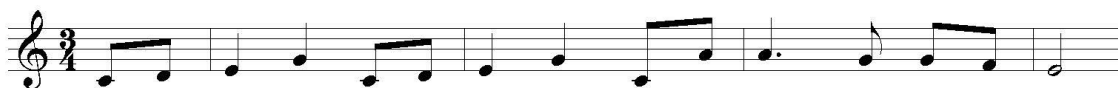
Footnotes:

1. Patrick Henry, "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death."
https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/patrick.asp
2. Scot McKnight, The Letter to the Colossians. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Ed. Joel B. Green. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018, 265.
3. Jerry L. Sumney, Colossians: A Commentary. The New Testament Library. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008, 150 gives an apt summary, "Food and drink regulations commonly played a part in religious practices of the Hellenistic world that supposedly led to mystical contact with the gods."
4. McKnight, 261.
5. Marianne Meye Thompson, Colossians and Philemon. The Two Horizons New

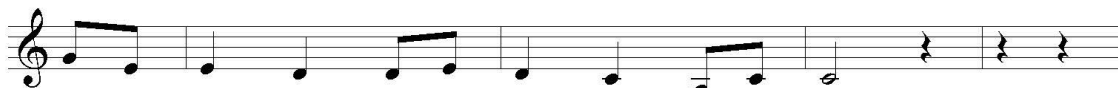
Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005, 60.

6. Sumney, 149.
7. See James D.G. Dunn's extended discussion on the fascinating topic of "angel worship" in *The Epistles to the Colossians and Philemon*. *New International Greek Testament Commentary*. Eds. I. Howard Marshall and Donald A. Hagner. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996, 179-185. McKnight, 277 also gives helpful insight, "They are convinced that ascetic rigor can lead to exalted angel-like worship experiences that are quasi entrances into heaven, where they perhaps discover revelation."
8. W.F. Arndt and F.W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Fourth Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957, 776.
9. Sumney, 161, gives good insight: "The way he phrases the question allows that the readers have not yet adopted these rules and that the rules are being imposed on them. Though the readers have not yet acquiesced to the other teaching, they are moving closer to accepting it. Colossians' sharp response to that teaching indicates that it is indeed attractive."
10. McKnight, 270.

* Come to Jesus (Rest in Him)



1. Are you wear - y, heav - y la - den? Come and lay your bur - dens down;
 2. Are you hope - less, are you guilt - y? Caught in shame for all your sin?
 3. Are you wait - ing in your sor - rows For this bro - ken world to heal?



Je - sus calls you, Je - sus draws you; rest in Him.
 He pur - sues you to for - give you; rest in Him.
 He is com - ing, soon re - turn - ing; rest in Him.



He is gen - tle, He is low - ly, He de - lights to bring us peace;
 He has paid for ev - 'ry fail - ure, Mer - cy flows in end - less streams;
 We will see Him, we will know Him, O what heights of grace re - vealed;



Ten - der Shep - herd, might - y Sa - vior: rest in Him.
 Come and fol - low, free - dom calls you: rest in Him.
 From His kind - ness ev - 'ry prom - ise then ful - filled.



How sure his com - pas - sion for us! Oh how deep is his



love; So come, come to Je - sus and rest in Him.

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THE LORD'S SUPPER

* Confession of Dependence | The Lord's Prayer

All: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread,
 and forgive us our debts,
 as we also have forgiven our debtors.
 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
 For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.
 Amen.

Introduction to the Table

A few words on how we celebrate the Lord's Supper at LPC:

- We invite everyone to proceed down the middle aisle as the ushers dismiss your row and to individually, or as a family, go to one of the tables.
*If you are unable to go forward, we will bring the elements to you in your seat but please let us know with a wave of your hand! For those sitting in the transepts, please come to the tables first.
- We use real bread at the tables but there are gluten free wafers on the center table that you may pick up on your way to a table.
- We have both red wine and white grape juice in our trays. The red wine is in the tinted cup.
- If you are not partaking of the Supper, we encourage you to come forward and refrain from taking the elements, but to consider the death and resurrection of Jesus, and the welcome that is offered in the Gospel. There are cards on the tables where you will find printed prayers that offer honest words for those who are seeking truth.
- Please discard cups in the black trash cans placed at the front of the sanctuary.
- We encourage you to sing along with us as everyone proceeds forward and is served!

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Consecration

Words of Institution

Eating and Drinking at the Table of the LORD

* Yet Not I but Through Christ in Me



1. What gift of grace is Je - sus my re - dee - mer There is no
 2. The night is dark but I am not for - sak - en For by my
 3. No fate I dread, I know I am for - giv - en The fu - ture
 4. With eve - ry breath I long to fol - low Je - sus For he has



more for hea - ven now to give He is my joy, my righ - teous - ness, and
 side, the Sav - ior he will stay. I lab - or on in weak - ness and re -
 sure, the price it has been paid. For Je - sus bled and suf - fered for my
 said that he will bring me home. And day by day I know he will re -



free - dom My stead - fast love, my deep and bound - less peace. To this I hold, my hope is on - ly
 joi - cing For in my need, his pow - er is dis - played To this I hold, my Shep - herd will de -
 par - don and He was raised to o - ver - throw the grave. To this I hold, my sin has been de -
 new me Un - til I stand with joy be - fore the throne To this I hold, my hope is on - ly



Je - sus For my life is who - lly bound to his. Oh how
 fend - me Through the deep - est val - ley he will lead Oh the
 fea - ted Je - sus now and ev - er is my plea Oh the
 Je - sus All the glo - ry ev - er - more to him When the



strange and di - vine, I can sing: all is mine! Yet not I, but through Christ in me.
 night has been won, and I shall ov - er - come! Yet not I, but through Christ in me.
 chains are re - leased I can sing: I am free! Yet not I, but through Christ in me.
 race is com - plete, still my lips shall re - peat: Yet not I, but through Christ in me.

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* Sending

* **Benediction** | Galatians 5:1, 13-14

Leader: For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Postlude

Serving This Morning:

Updates: Andrea Fuller

Liturgist and Pastoral Prayer: Doug Inman

Readers: Ted Brewer and Kim Gamble

Musicians: Butch Bost, Vicki Bowles, Dianne Britton, Katie Drayton, Jeff Francis, Barb Howell, and Tim McConnell

Audio/visual and livestream: Chris Hollis

Communion Preparation: Eddie and Karen Williams

Faith Promise Giving:

LPC fiscal budget year is July 1st to June 30th.

Through the end of July 2024:

General Fund transfer to missions \$ 10,833

Faith Promise Giving: \$5,080

Missions Disbursements \$15,137

Stewardship

LPC fiscal budget year is July 1st to June 30th.

Through the end of July, 2024:

Budget FYTD \$101,773

Received FYTD \$89,588

Expenditures FYTD \$95,918

Updates

Elder and Deacon Nominations | Deadline is today

We are currently accepting nominations for Ruling Elder and Deacon. Please be sure and speak to your nominee to get their "OK" that they are willing to serve first. Then find a form on the table in the back of the sanctuary to fill out and give it to an elder.

Church Administrator and Director of Youth Ministry

LPC is seeking a full-time Church Administrator (aka Business Manager), and also a Director of Youth Ministry. Please visit lexpreschurch.com and click on “Jobs” at the bottom of the home page to view the full job description and learn how to apply. Thank you!

Office Closed

Our office will be closed on **September 2** in observance of Labor Day. If you have plans to stop by, we kindly ask you to reschedule.

Congregational Meeting | September 22

We will have another Congregational Meeting on **September 22nd** during CE class in order to vote for Pastoral Search Committee members.

5th Sunday Cover Dish Luncheon

During the last 4 months, our congregation really enjoyed Covered Dish Luncheon. We’ve heard many stories from people meeting for the first time, getting to know each other better, and about so many opportunities for mutual prayers. This luncheon was a good cause for our congregation to grow closer to each other and to Christ. From now on, every 5th Sunday LPC is going to have a Covered Dish Luncheon. The next one will be on **September 29**. We hope to see you there again!

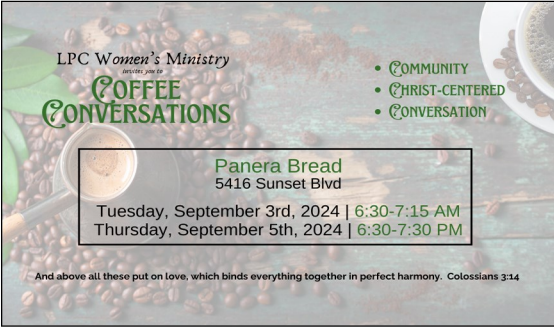
Church Facility Booking

Wednesday Midweek Reset is upon us; many church groups are starting their meetings back, as well as new committees are in full working mode. This is to let you know that if you would like to have any meeting on the church premises, we kindly ask you to book it before your meeting by using the Event Request form in the ChurchCenter app., or by emailing the church office at hello@lexpreschurch.com, or by calling the church office at 803.359.9501. Thank you for understanding.

Wednesday Nights
 Midweek Reset
 Kid's Quest
 Youth & Adult Small Groups
 Dinner at 5:30-6:15pm
 Activities for all ages
 6:15-7:30pm
 Returns September 11th



Pastor Search
COMMITTEE
Nominations accepted through September 8, 2024



LPC Women's Ministry
COFFEE CONVERSATIONS

- COMMUNITY
- CHRIST-CENTERED
- CONVERSATION

Panera Bread
 5416 Sunset Blvd
 Tuesday, September 3rd, 2024 | 6:30-7:15 AM
 Thursday, September 5th, 2024 | 6:30-7:30 PM

And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. Colossians 3:14



MODGNIK
 Middle School Fall Modgnik
 October 18-20, 2024



Register Here!



Registration is now open!




LPC Women's Ministry
 Women's Ministry Fall Groups begin the week of September 9th



CAMP
 Catechism And Scripture Memory Program



Registration is now open!



Begins September 10th

Mentor Moms
 at LPC



Scan to Register

Connect Card

Thanks for joining us today.
We would love to come alongside you in your walk with Jesus, whether you're new to our community or you've been here a while.

Visit lexpreschurch.com/connect or scan the QR code to fill out our Connect Card!

If you're not familiar with QR codes, we're here to help!

1. Open your smartphone's camera and point it at the QR code so that it shows clearly on your screen.
2. Wait for the camera to recognize and scan the QR code.
3. Click the link banner or notification when it pops up on your screen. Our Connect Card will automatically load in your browser.



Women's Ministry website and Facebook group:

<https://lexpreschurch.com/womens-ministry/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LPCWomen>

Youth Ministry Newsletter Subscription

Please, scan this QR Code with your phone camera.



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