

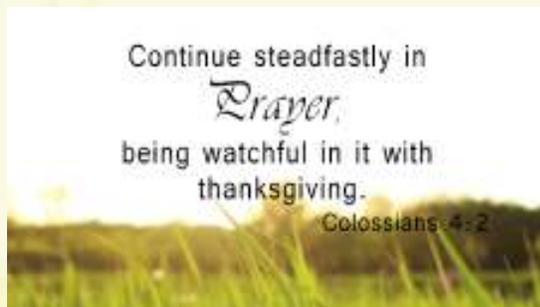


THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

KCPC This Week

"Knowing the love of Christ together with all the saints." - Eph. 3:18-19

Week Ending September 16th, 2017



Prepare for Worship: Your pastor and elders encourage you to spend time in prayer each Saturday evening, preparing your hearts for the Lord's Day and praying for the worship of our God. Pray for the Holy Spirit's blessing on the preaching of the Word and our fellowship!

Home Fellowship: Our monthly fellowship meal will be held this Lord's day after worship at the Vermettes' home in Round Hill. Bring your favorite Greek/Mediterranean themed dish!

Women's Bible Studies: The daytime study meets 2nd & 4th Tuesdays 12:30-2:30pm, studying the book of Ruth with Paul Miller's interactive study *A Loving Life*. Contact Joanie Leake at j2leake@gmail.com for details. The evening study meets 1st & 3rd Tuesdays 7-9pm, enjoying a study of biblical friendship with Ed Welch's *Side by Side*. For more information, contact Margaret Biggs at missmargaretbiggs@comcast.net.

Locust Street Film Night: On September 15th at 7 pm, enjoy a viewing and discussion of Alfred Hitchcock's atmospheric thriller "Rebecca" (1940); dinner at 6 pm.

Biggs Family Vacation Sept. 18th – Oct. 2nd: While Pastor Biggs is out of town, we are privileged to welcome the Rev. Dan Halley to our pulpit once again.

Purcellville Tag Sale Outreach: On Saturday, Oct. 7, join us as we serve our neighbors during this annual opportunity for evangelism, and as we invite them to worship with us. For details, see Elder Rick Weitz.

Ladies' Retreat: The annual OPC ladies' retreat will be held at Machen Camp & Conference Center on October 13th-14th, with speaker Diane Ippolito teaching on "Prayer That Changes." The organizer is looking for a contact person in each local congregation; if willing to serve in this way, email Karen Jones at lynnhavenhome@gmail.com.

Ashburn Saints Bible Study: A weekly study will be resuming at Winger House; details forthcoming.

Reformation Day Service: Mark your calendars for our 500th anniversary Reformation Day service with sister congregations at Bethel OPC in Leesburg on October 29th; pastors Biggs, Hammond, Proctor, and VanDelden will preach on "The Attributes of the Church: One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic."

Winter/Spring 2018 Sunday School: Our beloved deacons will teach on the nature of the Diaconate and how we can show Christ-like compassion through our service and stewardship of God's good gifts in our congregation and community. Pastor Biggs will teach a class on the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.

Congregational Memory Verses 2017:
"God is not man, that He should lie, or a son of man, that He should change his mind. Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not fulfill it?" -Numbers 23:19
"Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it." -John 14:13-14.

"The finer things of life point to a gracious God. Through the eyes of faith, the elect enjoy these things not as momentary pleasures but as the revelation of God's love."

-John Calvin

From Your Pastor
**“John Calvin’s Pilgrim Life and Pastoral Teachings:
Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Part 3”**
Charles R. Biggs

In 1536, young John Calvin penned a theological classic worthy of a place with Anselm’s *Why God Became Man*, Aquinas’s *Summa Theologiae*, and a Kempis’s *The Imitation of Christ*. This book, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, grew out of Calvin’s desire to explain Scripture so that Christians could know what they believed and worship and serve God. Calvin was not interested in merely understanding or explaining the truth, but in doxology. Calvin echoed the Apostle Paul in his thinking: “O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God... For from Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever! Amen” (Romans 11:33-36). Knowledge was to lead to exaltation of the Triune God through transformative change and godly worship, all for His glory alone (Psalm 115:1). This undergirds three important biblical themes found in the *Institutes*: knowledge of God, true religion, and piety. Calvin wrote that “properly speaking, we cannot say that God is known where there is no religion or piety.”

Calvin believed that the true and living God had revealed Himself in Holy Scripture so that sinful creatures could know how to enjoy an intimate relationship with Him, perform true worship of Him, and live godly lives before Him. Calvin’s test of true and biblical theology was this: “Truth that does not seek to transform the knower is only the empty ghost of knowledge.” Further, “the theologian should find himself continually drawn on and inspired in his theological quest by a desire for communion and union with God.” As it was said of the great Aurelius Augustine (387-430 AD): “Truth entire entered the whole man.”

Calvin believed in the priority of faith as a gift of God that humbly submits to God’s revelation in Holy Scripture. To have true knowledge, one must be given true faith. Our Lord Jesus said clearly: “If anyone’s will is to do God’s will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority” (John 7:17; cf. Eph. 2:8-10; Heb. 11:1, 6). This biblical-theological methodology is summarized as “fides quaerens intellectum,” or “faith seeking understanding.” Calvin believed with Anselm that the Christian ought to advance through faith in God’s revelation to true knowledge, not to come through knowledge to faith, nor to recede from faith for lack of knowledge. When knowledge is attained, faith rejoices; and when unable to understand, faith reverences that which is beyond its grasp. Both circumstances should bring the Christian to his knees in adoration and glorious praise!

Contrasted with the speculative theology of many medieval Roman Catholics, Calvin’s *Institutes* focused man’s knowledge of God on what God had revealed about Himself. While the Scholastics tended to ask “What is God in Himself [in His essence]?” in their theological methodology, Calvin began by asking “Who is God as He is toward us [revealed covenantally through Scripture to His creatures]?” In a way, Calvin and the faithful medieval interpreters before him had everything in common metaphysically (in relation to God’s essence or being) concerning the knowledge of God, but almost nothing in common epistemologically (in relation to how knowledge is attained). Not only that, but for Calvin, though man was created with rational ability (Eccl. 7:29), without the initiating power of God freeing man’s mind to faith, man would irrationally refuse the reasonable revelation around, within, and in front of him (cf. Rom. 1:19-25; 1 Cor. 2:9-14)!

With this strong covenantal influence upon Calvin’s theology both in methodology and content, Calvin warned against ignorance about God’s revelation, inappropriate and excessive curiosity about what God has not revealed, and theological knowledge that does not transform one’s heart and life. Calvin’s heart as a pastor-theologian was to speak where Scripture speaks and to be silent where Scripture is silent (Deut. 29:29), expecting personal transformation by the Spirit to follow.

True knowledge of God understood that God’s existence was self-evident but rejected by sinful man, that faith seeking understanding surpassed reason tainted by sin, and that only the revelation of Scripture, not arguments for the existence of God, must form the Christian’s theological foundation. Through natural theology, man can prove a god but deny or suppress knowledge of the True, Living, Triune God. Calvin illustrates: “Just as old and bleary-eyed men or those with weak vision, if you thrust before them a most beautiful volume, even if they recognize it to be some sort of writing, yet can scarcely construe two words, but with the aid of spectacles will begin to read distinctly: so scripture, gathering up the otherwise confused knowledge of God in our minds, having dispersed our dullness, clearly shows us the true God.”

Calvin’s *Institutes* was his life’s teaching and writing project to help Christians understand Holy Scripture and use the spectacles sinful man needed, fully dependent upon the illuminating and enlightening of the work of the Holy Spirit.

“For I believe I have so embraced the sum of religion in all its parts, and have arranged it in such an order, that if anyone rightly grasps it, it will not be difficult for him to determine what he ought especially to seek in Scripture, and to that end he ought to relate its contents.”

-John Calvin

THIS LORD'S DAY

Sermon

“Rejoicing!”

-Pastor Charles R. Biggs

Scripture Lesson: Luke 1:46-55

Scripture Text: 1 Samuel 2:1-10

Theme of Sermon:

Hannah exults jubilantly in the LORD for His character and care for His people throughout history. Hannah's psalm-song is like Mary's "Magnificat," revealing key theological themes of the Book of Samuel.

Hymns

Exalt the Lord, His Praise Proclaim, 12

Rejoice, the Lord is King, 310

Approach, My Soul, the Mercy Seat, 507

Questions for Meditation/Reflection

- *Children: Read 1 Samuel 1:19-2:10. Hannah responds to God's affliction (a closed womb, barrenness, 1 Sam. 1:5,6) being provoked not to anger, but eventually to prayer. From last week's sermon, list three things we learn about faithful prayer from Hannah's example. From reading 1 Sam. 1:19-2:10, what are two other important responses that we can learn from Hannah, particularly in response to answered prayer?*
- *What does it mean that Samuel was "lent to the LORD"?*
- *How is Hannah's song like Mary's "Magnificat" (Luke 1:46-55)? What is the central focus of Hannah's song? What might this teach you about worship and living the "good" or "blessed" life?*

"What are God's works of providence? God's works of providence are His most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all His creatures and all their actions."

-Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q&A 11