



THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

KCPC This Week

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

Week Ending October 14th, 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!

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 *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.

Home Fellowship: Our monthly fellowship meal will be held at the Weitzes' home in Round Hill this Sunday after worship.

Recommended Resources: Dr. Chad Van Dixhoorn's Westminster Assembly Project makes available writings by and about the Assembly members at westminsterassembly.org. Also, look forward over the next few weeks to audio from the recent Reforming Families Conference at sermonaudio.com/kcpc.

Ashburn Saints Bible Study: A weekly study will be resuming at Wingle 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
“Christ’s Voice in Preaching, Part 2”
Charles R. Biggs

What makes the preaching of weak men called by Christ powerful, effective, and transformative? When the Word is preached, Christ, by His Spirit, is faithful to use these means of bringing about God’s purposes of salvation or judgment (Isa. 55:10-11; Acts 13:48-49). The Spirit and the Word, though they are distinct, must never be separated. When the Word of God is faithfully preached in Christ’s name, God’s people can be confident that what they are hearing is Christ’s very powerful voice! While Christ is pleased to use men as instrumental means of grace, it is His Spirit alone that brings the powerful work of salvation or judgment when the word is rightfully and faithfully preached.

As Christ is pleased to use bread and wine as instruments or means of His holy presence to the faith of God’s people in the Lord’s Supper, so He is pleased to use the lips of His preachers as instruments and means, and their words in the sermon (like the bread and wine) should be received by faith. There is no automatic working in the Lord’s Supper or the preaching ministry of the Word. Both require that we receive Christ’s appointed means by faith. The preaching event requires that we come by faith to receive from the very mouth of Christ with our minds and hearts. God’s people can be confident that what the preacher says is applicable and relevant, whether or not they esteem it so at the time, because Christ has chosen to teach them this on this occasion at this location by His good and kind providence. God’s people should never go forth from a sermon immediately judging the results according to their limited (and often wrong!) estimation, but rather, by God’s Spirit, humble themselves before God and prayerfully ask: “What are you teaching me, kind king? Help me to hear, believe, meditate upon, and live this out! Help me to apply this.” We should be on our knees as we approach the sermon, during this honored and privileged time with Christ, and as we leave the sermon!

Faithful preaching wields a double-edged sword (Heb. 4:12), as both God’s salvation and His judgment come through it. Preaching by the power of the Spirit brings forth salvation for those who receive the truth as from Christ’s own mouth and judgment for those who reject it, because they are rejecting Christ Himself (Acts 7:51-54; 13:42-52). Preaching is a fulfillment of Christ’s promise that when His Spirit comes He will guide the Church into all truth (John 16:13-14) and sanctify them by it (John 17:17), and that He will convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:7-8). He declares to the world through preaching the reality of their sins, the righteousness God requires of every creature to enter heaven (found in Christ alone!), and the need of all to prepare for the Judgment Day. As we learn in Acts 17:31, “[God] has fixed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by a Man whom He has appointed; and of this He has given assurance to all by raising Him from the dead.” Every preaching event or sermon is a preview of Christ’s last day separation of the sheep from the goats (Matt. 25:31-45), whether one receives Christ, showing oneself to be one of his sheep (because they hear His voice!), or whether one rejects Christ, showing oneself at this point in life to be an unbelieving “goat.” Whether Christ is pleased to bring salvation or judgment, we should understand that the preaching event is always successful in bringing about God’s purposes, despite the weakness of His instruments. God says: “For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes out from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it” (Isa. 55:10-11).

Understanding this should change the way we pray for Christ’s preachers (1 Thess. 1:5; Eph. 6:18-20) and cause us to attend worship with joyful willingness and a heightened expectation of God’s special presence in Christ, particularly in the preaching event! Let us pray earnestly that Christ would be pleased to both save and sanctify His church through preaching, that Christ would be magnified and glorified in His enthronement as King through preaching (cf. Heb. 5:12), and that we would attend every sermon with great confidence, NOT in Christ’s preacher, but in Christ Himself as He is pleased to speak through Him. Let our faith “...not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God” (1 Cor. 2:5). Let us pray that in each preaching event we would hear Christ well and see a demonstration of the Spirit and of power! Profitable, spiritual hearing is not merely hearing audibly with the ears—many hear the preaching, but do not profit from it—but learning to be a “doer of the word” by God’s grace and power (James 1:22). As the Parable of the Sower in Mark 4 reminds us, there are four types of soils, or hearts, or ways of receiving Christ’s voice. Although the actual growth and increase of the Word by the Spirit in men is a mystery (Mark 4:27), nevertheless, we are to come with prayerfully prepared and expectant hearts to receive from the very mouth of Christ! May we have a flourishing and fruitful increase of growth in holiness, humility, and honesty as a congregation of Christ because we hear and obey the very words of Christ that come forth from His preachers! Amen.

“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

“Speak!”

-Rev. Charles R. Biggs

Scripture Lesson: Psalm 81:8-13; Acts 3:17-26

Scripture Text: 1 Samuel 3:1-21

Theme of Sermon:

After years of idolatry in Israel, when the word of God was rare, God was gracious and kind to raise up a prophet by His unfathomable power so that the people could be relieved from their spiritual famine of hearing from Him. Will God's people hear and be healed of their sins?

Hymns

Holy God, We Praise Your Name, 103

Teach Me, O Lord, Your Way of Truth, 149

Jesus Shall Reign, 441

Questions for Meditation/Reflection

- *Children: Read 1 Samuel 3:1-4:1a. How does this passage reveal God's goodness to His people even in the darkest of times?*
- *How does God primarily reveal Himself, both His character and His will for His people? What should be our response?*
- *Why was the household of Eli judged (from 2:25-34, and compare with 3:13-14)? What was the particular sin of Hophni and Phineas in relation to their father? How might you learn from this?*
- *After reading chapter 3, what are some important good character traits that you can see in Samuel that might help you in your own walk with the Lord?*
- *How might this chapter point you forward to our Savior, Jesus Christ?*

“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