

May 17-Written Service

Praise Team- Lesley and Neil Bartholomew, Katie Kirby, Jeremy Russell, Collen Turner

Special Music: Abby and Brooke LaDage; Emma Jensen

Prelude

Welcome

Call to Worship

Leader: The Lord has come to us, bringing the power of healing and new life.

All: Lord, we are not worthy that You should enter under our roof.

Leader: Yet, by Your great mercy, You draw near to us.

All: We need only a word from You, and we will be healed.

Leader: Come, let us worship with the humble faith of the Centurion.

All: Say the word, Lord, and our souls will be healed!

Song: Here I Am to Worship

Light of the world, You stepped down into darkness,

Opened my eyes, let me see

Beauty that made this heart adore You,

Hope of a life spent with You.

So here I am to worship;

Here I am to bow down;

Here I am to say that You're my God.

You're altogether lovely,

Altogether worthy,

Altogether wonderful to me.

King of all days, O so highly exalted,

Glorious in heaven above,

Humbly You came to the earth You created,

All for love's sake became poor.

So here I am to worship;

Here I am to bow down;

Here I am to say that You're my God.

You're altogether lovely,

Altogether worthy,
Altogether wonderful to me.
Here I am to worship.

Prayer

Song: Revelation Song

Worthy is the Lamb Who was slain;
Holy, holy is He.
Sing a new song to Him who sits on
Heaven's mercy.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty;
Who was and is and is to come.
With all creation I sing
Praise to the King of Kings;
You are my everything and I will adore You.

Clothed in rainbows of living color,
Flashes of lightning, rolls of thunder.
Blessing and honor, strength and
Glory and power be
To You the only wise King.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty;
Who was and is and is to come.
With all creation I sing
Praise to the King of kings;
You are my everything and I will adore You.

Filled with wonder, awestruck wonder,
At the mention of Your name;
Jesus, Your name is power, breath and living water,
Such a marvelous mystery.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty;
Who was and is and is to come.
With all creation I sing
Praise to the King of Kings;
You are my everything and I will adore You.

Announcements

Baptism

Special Music: Jesus Loves Me sung by Abby and Brooke LaDage and Emma Jensen.

Congregational Prayer

Song: #355- There's a Wideness in God's Mercy (vs. 1,2,4)

There's a wideness in God's mercy
Like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in His justice
Which is more than liberty.

There is welcome for the sinner
And more graces for the good;
There is mercy with the Savior;
There is healing in His blood.

If our love were but more simple,
We should take Him at His word;
And our lives would be illumined
By the presence of our Lord.

Offering/Offertory

Offering Song: Spirit of the Living God

Offering Prayer

Children's Message

Scripture: Luke 7: 1-10

When Jesus had finished saying all this to the people who were listening, he entered Capernaum. ²There a centurion's servant, whom his master valued highly, was sick and about to die. ³The centurion heard of Jesus and sent some elders of the Jews to him, asking him to come and heal his servant. ⁴When they came to Jesus, they pleaded earnestly with him, "This man deserves to have you do this, ⁵because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue." ⁶So Jesus went with them.

He was not far from the house when the centurion sent friends to say to him: "Lord, don't trouble yourself, for I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. ⁷That is why I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁸For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

⁹When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, “I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel.” ¹⁰Then the men who had been sent returned to the house and found the servant well.

Message

Intro-55% of Christians believe in karma according to a 2022 survey sited on the internet (so take the number with a grain of salt)

Another Barna survey in 2023 found numbers that were high, but less than half
Karma, often explained as what goes around comes around, is strictly speaking tied to a cosmic force and linked to belief in reincarnation both of which Christians would disagree with
And yet, the idea behind karma is still appealing to Christians
It can dressed up in “you reap what you sow” language
Or linked to a solid work ethic that tells us we need to earn what we want
But as much as we may like the idea behind karma and want a world that is explainable and fair, that is not what we see
People who do evil things frequently seem to prosper with little or no consequences
And people that we would all consider good suffer with injustice and illness and poverty all the time
As Gandalf says to Frodo in the Lord of the Rings, “Many that live deserve death. And some that die deserve life. Can you give it to them?”
Our passage today includes a look at who is deserving of God’s goodness

Scripture-Luke 7:1-10

Good News for all

Again a good news for all
This centurion isn’t Jewish
He has shown kindness, generosity, and respect to the Jewish people among whom he lives and serves
But he is an outsider, part of the Roman empire that so many want to drive out
And even he wasn’t asking for healing for himself, it was for a servant
Someone who would often have been viewed lesser/lower than/expendable
None of that stopped Jesus
He came to bring good news for all the people, including servants of Roman military commanders

Let’s look over the timeline in the story

Because when we put the pieces of the story together something interesting starts to jump out
Jesus doesn’t even meet the centurion
First, the centurion sends Jewish elders to talk to Jesus and get him to heal the servant
The elders that the centurion sent told Jesus that this man deserves to have Jesus do this
None of us *deserve* anything from Jesus

Money, generosity, being a good person-none of these merit God doing what we want

The elders highlighted that the centurion was a good, generous, and caring man

Second, Jesus is getting close to the home when a 2nd group arrives with another message

Why would there be a 2nd message?

And how did the centurion know that they were getting close to his house?

After getting Jesus to agree to come and heal the servant, someone must have run ahead and told the centurion that Jesus was on the way

Seems like they also told the centurion what was said because his 2nd message seems like a correction of the first one

What changed?

The centurion follows up with a 2nd message that he doesn't deserve Jesus entering his house. But still asks that Jesus would help him

What we can learn from the centurion

When we focus on the change in the message, this becomes a bigger, theological lesson

How often do we feel like someone deserves something from God?

Or a step further, that we deserve something?

Two central themes that were emphasized in the reformation were:

Grace alone-that we are only saved through the grace of God

This strips away the idea of deserving God's action

And working for a reward from God

Faith alone-that we receive God's grace only through faith

Jesus never addresses whether or not this centurion deserves to have his servant healed

Jesus does, however, commend the man's faith

How this connects to baptism

Promises of baptism are a gift

Baptism symbolizes

Purification/washing-we can't purify ourselves

Death to life-we are powerless against death

Adoption into family of God-this is work and will of God, not our decision

Everything we see and signify in baptism is pure grace

Whether you are an infant or an adult believer

There is nothing we can do to earn God's grace

That is just as true for me or you or Macy

In baptism, in any stage of life, when we experience God's mercy and grace

We can remember that it was not deserved because it happens by grace alone

And we can respond with faith that God's promises are true and His power is infinite

Song: #43- All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name (vs. 1,3,4)

All hail the power of Jesus' Name!

Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown Him Lord of All;

Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Let every kindred, every tribe
On this terrestrial ball,
To Him all majesty ascribe,
And crown Him Lord of all;

To Him all majesty ascribe,
And crown Him Lord of all!

O that with yonder sacred throng
We at His feet may fall!
We'll join the everlasting song,
And crown Him Lord of all;

We'll join the everlasting song,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Benediction

Postlude