



## Reedurban Presbyterian Church Morning Worship and Praise

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*Glorifying God, Making Disciples, Meeting Human Needs*  
December 29, 2013                      Liturgist:

PRELUDE

### APPROACHING GOD IN WORSHIP

SILENT MOMENTS OF PREPARATION

CALL TO WORSHIP

*You are my God; be gracious to me, O Lord, for to you I cry all day long.*

**For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you.**

*For you are great and do wondrous things; you alone are God.*

**Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart to revere your name.**

*Let us worship God!*

\*HYMN      O Come All Ye Faithful No. 249

**\*CALL TO CONFESSION**

*The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and saves those who are crushed in spirit. Let us admit our brokenness to God. (Psalm 34:18)*

**\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Gracious God, in Christ Jesus, have mercy upon us. We are not quick to proclaim Christ as our savior. We have our own desires that demand our devotion. Other people have power over us that we dare not deny. We sometimes confuse Christ's will and our own. At times it is awkward to confess him the source of new life. With compassion he suffers, aware of our plight. O God, hear our confession, and through Christ keep us upright.**

**\*SILENT PRAYER**

**\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

*Paul reminds us how we also must consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. "For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his" In Christ we may live anew, with the assurance of Jesus Christ that in him we are forgiven.*

**\*RESPONSE OF PRAISE Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee No.271**

**LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD**

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

*Guide us, O God, by your Word and Spirit, that in your light we may see light, in your truth find freedom, and in your will discover your peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Psalm 39 Responsive Reading**

**ANTHEM**

**OFFERING OF SELF AND SUBSTANCE TO GOD**

**\*Doxology No. 815**

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

**CHILDREN'S CHURCH SCHOOL**

*Children here today from ages 4 and up will be dismissed for the simultaneous Church School worship. Nursery is available for children under age 4.*

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and the LORD'S PRAYER**

**\*HYMN Angels We Have Heard On High No. 259**

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING Luke 12: 13 - 21

SERMON How Practical Is That? Rev. Dr. Darrell Holmes

\*HYMN Go Tell It On The Mountain No. 258

\*BENEDICTION

Wherever you go, God is sending you  
Wherever you are, God has put you there.  
He has a purpose in your being there.  
Christ who indwells in you has something  
He wants to do through you where you are.  
Believe this and go in his grace and love and power.

\* BENEDICTION

\* CHORAL RESPONSE

\*POSTLUDE

*\*ALL WHO ARE ABLE, PLEASE STAND*  
***Bold** print denotes congregational responses*

A businessman was in a great deal of trouble financially and even contemplated suicide.

As a last resort he went to a pastor and told him everything.

When he had finished, the pastor said, "**Here's what I want you to do,**

- ✓ put in your car and drive to the beach with a beach chair and your Bible
- ✓ Sit down at the water's edge and put the Bible in your lap.
- ✓ Open the Bible;
- ✓ When the wind stops rifling your pages .
- ✓ Look down at the page and read the first thing you see.
- ✓ That will be your answer

A year later the businessman reported to the pastor how well he was doing and gave it to the pastor as a donation in thanks for his advice.

The pastor recognized the benefactor, and was curious.

"You did as I suggested?" he asked.

"Absolutely," replied the businessman.

"You went to the beach?"

"Absolutely."

"You sat in a beach chair with the Bible in your lap?"

"Absolutely."

"You let the pages rifle until they stopped?"

"Absolutely."

"And what were the first words you saw?"

"Chapter 11."

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I shared this story with you because **it begs the question "Where do you go to get advice before making any big (or for that matter small) decision in your life?"**

And since this is **the first Sunday of Christmas**, I thought we could **start this morning with a prophecy** which was fulfilled with the birth of Jesus.

It goes like this:

*Isaiah 9:6. "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*

From the very beginning, we **have associated this prophecy** with the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem who we believe is the Messiah.

In his prophecy, Isaiah uses **the word “wonderful”** to describe the Messiah as “someone who is remarkable or amazing” as a counselor.

**In other words, Jesus of Nazareth through His Spirit can be to us an remarkably amazing counselor.**

**The problem is, we don’t always want to be guided in the way we should be going because you and I don’t like**

- ✓ to do something we **have never done** before or
- ✓ **to move out** of the **comfortable world we have created for ourselves!**

So given that the Bible which is one of God’s favorite ways to guide us:

I thought it might be fun to take a look at some passages in the Bible that I believe can guide all of us in this very exciting and challenging year ahead.

Join me in prayer.

**Our first stop is a passage of Scripture that can be of tremendous help to you as you look forward to 2014.**

Ephesians 5:15-17

*"Be very careful, then, how you live - not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is."*

**When Paul’s writes: *Be very careful how you lives*, he’s sharing some lessons **he remembered that the Psalms have taught him****

<sup>4</sup> *“Show me, O LORD, my life’s end  
and the number of my days;  
let me know how fleeting is my life.  
[Psalm 39:4].*

<sup>10</sup>*The length of our days is seventy years—  
or eighty, if we have the strength;  
yet their span is but trouble and sorrow,  
for they quickly pass, and we fly away.  
[Psalm 90:10]*

**Or to be quite blunt about it:**

**Be very careful, how you live because your days or shorter than you think**

**Second Paul says “make the most of every opportunity because the days are evil.”**

The story of Mary and Martha is **a perfect example of how you and I can get so preoccupied with what we are doing we never realize that God is right there with us, wanting to guide us.**

**Are you getting the picture?**

**There are just 8,760 hours in 2014.**

**Don't miss the Lord because you have made yourself so busy that you rush right past him .**

**Paul's last piece of advice?**

*Do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.*

You can understand what God's will is for your life if you don't let Him into your life to begin with.

He has to be your top priority or other things will get in the way and you will miss what he is showing you what is most important.

**Hermonie and Harry Potter**

*"Be very careful, then, how you live - not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is."*

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**Next, turn in your Bibles to Proverbs 3: 1- 35 because it is there you will find the Bible's top ten New Years resolutions**

**LET LOVE AND FAITHFULNESS NEVER LEAVE YOU; BIND THEM AROUND YOUR NECK, WRITE THEM ON THE TABLET OF YOUR HEAR**

Wow, Carol and I have experienced what the writer of proverbs is talking about both from you personally and as this church. Never let that wonderful gift of yours get away from you again.

**TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND LEAN NOT ON YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING;**

Good advice but how do you go about doing that!

Well you are in luck because the next three verses tell you how.

- ✓ **DO NOT BE WISE IN YOUR OWN EYES**
- ✓ **HONOR THE LORD WITH YOUR WEALTH,**
- ✓ **MY SON, DO NOT DESPISE THE LORD'S DISCIPLINE AND DO NOT RESENT HIS REBUKE,**  
Nothing should **interfere with the Lord as the center** of your life which means **trust the Lord with everything he gives you** including your wealth because if you don't you will **run the risk making gods of the Lord's gifts to you.**

And please know that if he does **pull you up short it is because you are heading down a path** that will only bring you heart ache and trouble.

**BLESSED IS THE MAN WHO FINDS WISDOM, THE MAN WHO GAINS UNDERSTANDING,**

And you **only find the wisdom and courage** proverbs is talking about when you **are spending time with the Lord and His word on a regular basis** Nothing and I mean nothing else will work

**DO NOT WITHHOLD GOOD FROM THOSE WHO DESERVE IT, WHEN IT IS IN YOUR POWER TO ACT**

Simply put, **when you see someone is growing or that they have done something wonderful acknowledge them please.**

It only will cause them to do more.

**DO NOT PLOT HARM AGAINST YOUR NEIGHBOR, WHO LIVES TRUSTFULLY NEAR YOU.**

**DO NOT ENVY A VIOLENT MAN OR CHOOSE ANY OF HIS WAYS**

And these last ones are **how the devil gets into your heart and the heart of your church.**

**He loves it when you plot against people and/or blow up in their face Because he knows your actions are going to destroy relationships and tear down everything the Lord has done.**

And I don't need to tell many of you here what all of this is about because you have experienced it and have vowed never to let the devil do it to you again.

**And the promise to you from the Lord if you do these things?**

*33 The LORD's curse is on the house of the wicked, but he blesses the home of the righteous.*

*34 He mocks proud mockers but gives grace to the humble.*

*35 The wise inherit honour, but fools he holds up to shame.*

2014 can be time for growth

- in your life,
- the life of your family
- and this church

You can further stagnate!

The choice is yours.