

VERITAS REFORMED CHURCH

*Clay Staggs,
Leading Elder*

*Sunday Liturgy
May 14
Anno Domini 2023*

*The Sixth Sunday
of Easter*

Reflections

The Bible is not a self-help book. The Scriptures present one, consistent, organic message. They tell us how we must seek Christ, who alone is our Savior and source of strength to be and to do what God requires.

Bryan Chapell
from Christ-Centered Preaching

The only real life of the Christian is his resurrection life in and with Christ.

Henry Alford

We need not wonder that so much importance is attached to our Lord's resurrection. It is the seal and headstone of the great work of redemption, which He came to do. It is the crowning proof that He has paid the debt which He undertook to pay on our behalf, won the battle which He fought to deliver us from hell, and is accepted as our Surety and our Substitute by our Father in heaven.

J.C. Ryle

God is not an actor within the larger scheme of things. He is not a muscle-bound Jupiter, bullying the littler ones. He is the Author of the whole thing. We never ask how much of Hamlet's role was contributed by Hamlet, and how much by Shakespeare. That is not a question that can be answered with 70/30 or 50/50 or 90/10. The right answer is 100/100. Hamlet's actions are all Hamlet's and they are all Shakespeare's.

Douglas Wilson

To be in Christ, then, is to possess what is often spoken of as full salvation: every thing necessary to our past, present, future and eternal welfare has been stored up in Christ for us to share and enjoy. But it is not only benefits and blessings that are in Christ; we are in him ourselves. Full salvation belongs to us as a matter of objective fact, but it is through union with our living Savior that we experience its warmth and personal reality.

Alec Motyer
from The Message of Philippians

Joy is an effect of being before the face of God.

Peter Leithart

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Call to Worship Adapted from Psalm 84

Leader: How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God.

People: **For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.**

Leader: For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor. No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly.

ALL: **O Lord of hosts, blessed is the one who trusts in you!**

Hymn of Praise: Praise to the Lord, the Almighty (v. 1, 4-6)

1. Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre - a - tion!
2. Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so won-drous-ly reign - eth,
3. Praise to the Lord, who doth pros - per thy work and de - fend thee;
4. Praise to the Lord, who, when tem - pests their war - fare are wag - ing,
5. Praise to the Lord, who, when dark - ness of sin is a - bound - ing,
6. Praise to the Lord, O let all that is in me a - dore Him!

O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy health and sal - va - tion!
Shel - ters thee un - der His wings, yea, so gent - ly sus - tain - eth!
Sure - ly His good - ness and mer - cy here dai - ly at - tend thee;
Who, when the el - e - ments mad - ly a - round thee are rag - ing,
Who, when the god - less do tri - umph, all vir - tue con - found - ing,
All that hath life and breath, come now with prais - es be - fore Him;

All ye who hear, now to His tem - ple draw near;
Hast thou not seen how thy de - sires e'er have been
Pon - der a - new what the Al - might - y can do,
Bid - deth them cease, turn - eth their fu - ry to peace,
Shed - deth His light, chas - eth the hor - rors of night,
Let the A - men sound from His peo - ple a - gain,

Praise Him in glad a - dor - a - tion.
Grant - ed in what He or - dain - eth?
If with His love He be - friend thee.
Whirl - winds and wa - ters as - suag - ing.
Saints with His mer - cy sur - round - ing.
Glad - ly for aye we a - dore Him.

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Prayer of Praise and the Lord's Prayer

Confession of Sin

Scripture Reading: Psalm 139:1-12

O LORD, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.

Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me. If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night," even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Corporate Confession of Sin

O Lord, we confess that nothing is hidden from you. In you, all things are known. We look at our hearts, our hearts of darkness, and we dread the light of your presence. You are too high, too wonderful, and too holy for us to contemplate. We confess our total inadequacy to stand before you in and of ourselves. We confess our inability to even desire repentance without being awakened by the power of your Holy Spirit.

But through your grace we come before you this day in repentance only through the power of your Spirit and only because of the glorious work of your Son. He alone has given us the assurance that we can stand before you. Create in us a heart that seeks repentance, that seeks you alone. Grant us your grace and your peace and make us strong to walk in your ways. Amen.

Silent Reflection and Confession

Assurance of Pardon and the Peace of God:

Psalm 139:23-24

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Leader: Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!
And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

People: Through Christ alone we have peace with God. May his peace be with you.
And also with you.

Hymn of Response: Rock of Ages. Cleft for Me

Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me

500

That rock was Christ. 1 Cor. 10:4

Unison

The musical score is written for a single voice part in treble clef, with a bass line in bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into four systems, each with a vocal line and a bass line. The lyrics are arranged in four columns, corresponding to the four verses. The first system includes the title 'Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me' and the reference 'That rock was Christ. 1 Cor. 10:4'. The second system includes the lyrics 'self in thee; let the wa - ter and the blood, from thy riv - en law's de - mands; could my zeal no res - pite know, could my tears for - cross I cling; na - ked, come to thee for dress; help - less, look to close in death, when I soar to worlds un - known, see thee on thy'. The third system includes the lyrics 'side which flowed, be of sin the dou - ble cure, cleanse me from its ev - er flow, all for sin could not a - tone; thou must save, and thee for grace; foul, I to the Foun - tain fly; wash me, Sav - ior, judg - ment throne, Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my -'. The fourth system includes the lyrics 'guilt and pow'r. thou a - lone. or I die. self in thee.' The score ends with a 'Fine' marking.

1. Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my -
2. Not the la - bors of my hands can ful - fil thy
3. Noth - ing in my hand I bring, sim - ply to thy
4. While I draw this fleet - ing breath, when mine eye - lids

self in thee; let the wa - ter and the blood, from thy riv - en
law's de - mands; could my zeal no res - pite know, could my tears for -
cross I cling; na - ked, come to thee for dress; help - less, look to
close in death, when I soar to worlds un - known, see thee on thy

side which flowed, be of sin the dou - ble cure, cleanse me from its
ev - er flow, all for sin could not a - tone; thou must save, and
thee for grace; foul, I to the Foun - tain fly; wash me, Sav - ior,
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guilt and pow'r.
thou a - lone.
or I die.
self in thee.

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Collection of Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Prayer

Tom Arnold

Hymn:

Doxology

Affirmation of Faith

Of the Gospel

from 1 Corinthians 15:3-7; Romans 1:16-17

Leader: What is the Gospel we preach, that which we have received, in which we stand, and by which we are saved?

People: Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

Leader: Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.

All: **We are not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."
Amen.**

Hymn:

Gloria Patri

Prayer of Intercession

Hymn:

Be Thou My Vision

(Music on next page)

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Be Thou My Vision

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Whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. Phil. 3:7

Unison

1. Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart; naught be all
 2. Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word; I ev - er
 3. Be thou my bat - tle shield, sword for my fight; be thou my
 4. Rich - es I heed not, nor man's emp - ty praise, thou mine in -
 5. High King of heav - en, my vic - to - ry won, may I reach

else to me, save that thou art— thou my best thought by
 with thee and thou with me, Lord; thou my great Fa - ther,
 • dig - ni - ty, thou my de - light, thou my soul's shel - ter,
 her - i - tance, now and al - ways: thou and thou on - ly,
 heav - en's joys, O bright heav'n's Sun! Heart of my own heart, what -

day or by night, wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
 I thy true son; thou in me dwell - ing, and I with thee one.
 • thou my high tow'r: raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
 first in my heart, High King of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.
 ev - er be - fall, still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

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Scripture: *Acts 13*

Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them. When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they came upon a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet named Bar-Jesus. He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, "You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time." Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand. Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

Now Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. And John left them and returned to Jerusalem, but they went on from Perga and came to Antioch in Pisidia. And on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent a message to them, saying, "Brothers, if you have any word of encouragement for the people, say it." So Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said:

"Men of Israel and you who fear God, listen. The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it. And for about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness. And after destroying seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land as an inheritance. All this took about 450 years. And after that he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, 'I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.' Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised. Before his coming, John had proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John was finishing his course, he said, 'What do you suppose that I am? I am not he. No, but behold, after me one is coming, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.'

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“Brothers, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to us has been sent the message of this salvation. For those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers, because they did not recognize him nor understand the utterances of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled them by condemning him. And though they found in him no guilt worthy of death, they asked Pilate to have him executed. And when they had carried out all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. But God raised him from the dead, and for many days he appeared to those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people. And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm,

“‘You are my Son,
today I have begotten you.’

And as for the fact that he raised him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken in this way,

“‘I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David.’

Therefore he says also in another psalm,

“‘You will not let your Holy One see corruption.’

For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption, but he whom God raised up did not see corruption. Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses. Beware, therefore, lest what is said in the Prophets should come about:

“‘Look, you scoffers,
be astounded and perish;
for I am doing a work in your days,
a work that you will not believe, even if one tells it to you.’”

As they went out, the people begged that these things might be told them the next Sabbath. And after the meeting of the synagogue broke up, many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who, as they spoke with them, urged them to continue in the grace of God.

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The next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him. And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, “It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, saying,

“I have made you a light for the Gentiles,
that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.”

And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region. But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district. But they shook off the dust from their feet against them and went to Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Sermon:

A Manifestation of Christ

Rev. Peter Leithart

Prayer

Closing Hymn:

Christ Our Hope in Life and Death

(Music on next page.)

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www.gettymusic.com

Christ Our Hope in Life and Death

Words and Music by
Keith Getty, Matt Boswell, Jordan Kauflin,
Matt Merker and Matt Papa

Steadily ♩ = 76

F F FSUS F FSUS F C CSUS

1. What is our hope in life and death? Christ a-lone, Christ a-lone. What is our
2. What truth can calm the trou-bled soul? God is good, God is good. Where is his
3. Un-to the grave, what shall we sing? "Christ, he lives; Christ, he lives!" And what re-

on-ly con-fi-dence? That our souls to him be-long. Who holds our
grace and good-ness known? In our great Re-deem-er's blood. Who holds our
ward will hea-ven bring? Ev-er-last-ing life with him. There we will

Am Dm Gm7 F/A Bb

days with-in his hand? What comes, a-part from his com-mand? And what will
faith when fears a-rise? Who stands a-bove the storm-y trial? Who sends the
rise to meet the Lord, Then sin and death will be de-stroyed, And we will

F/C C7 Dm Bb F/C C7 F

keep us to the end? The love of Christ, in which we stand. _____
waves that bring us nigh Un-to the shore, the rock of Christ? _____
feast in end-less joy, When Christ is ours for-ev-er-more. _____

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Benediction: Numbers 6:24-26

Leader: The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

And God's people said:

All: Amen!