



GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH
AT CASTLEWOODS

ORDER OF WORSHIP
March 27th, 2022

MORNING WORSHIP

Thomas Winn — Elder/Pastor

- The Prelude Prepare your heart for worship
- The Call to Worship Chris Kimbrell
- Hymn "O Worhsip the King"
- The Prayer of Confession and Praise Hal Pritchard
- Hymn "Come Thou Almighty King"
- Hymn "A Child of the King"
- The Reading of the Word — *Exodus 34:1-9* Hal Pritchard
- Hymn "Lead On O King Eternal"
- The Pastoral Prayer Pastor Winn
- The Sermon — *"Blessed are the Merciful, Pt. II" (Matthew 5:7)* Pastor Winn
- A Time of Reflection Upon the Word Preached
- Hymn "Rejoice, the Lord is King"
- The Benediction Hal Pritchard
- The Postlude

EVENING WORSHIP

- The Prelude Prepare your heart for worship
- Hymn "All the Way My Savior Leads Me"
- Hymn "He is Able to Deliver Thee"
- The Pastoral Prayer Pastor Winn
- The Sermon — *"The Holy District" (Ezekiel 45:1-8a)* Hal Pritchard
- A Time of Reflection Upon the Word Preached
- Hymn "Take the Name of Jesus With You"
- The Benediction
- The Postlude



COMMENTARY

Dr. Miles Van Pelt

Perhaps you are one of those people, like me, who grew up thinking about the Old Testament as a book filled with wrath and judgment, doom and gloom, atrocity and injustice. To make matters worse, the New Testament appeared to be the product of the hippie movement of the 1970s, promoting peace, mercy, and brotherly love. Such a dichotomy, however, could not be further from the truth. The Old and New Testaments are united in their affirmation that the God of the Bible is a merciful and compassionate God. In fact, it would not be inappropriate to characterize the entire Bible as a book that journals God's mercy and compassion. In the Old Testament, mercy, or its English synonym, compassion, constitutes a fundamental attribute of the divine character. Buried deep in the book of Exodus are these two verses in 34:6-7: "The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, 'The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin. . . .'" They contain one of the central paradigmatic expositions on the attributes of God in the Bible. Adding to the profundity of this exposition on the divine name is its source, God Himself in glory before Moses. The exposition has two basic parts: The first part in verse 6 contains five attributes: merciful, gracious, slow to anger, full of steadfast love, and faithfulness. The second part of the exposition in verse 7 describes how these attributes are manifest in God's dealings with His people, specifically, "forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Consider now the incomprehensibility of God — His limitless excellence, His immeasurable strength, and His complete perfection. Now consider that God, from all eternity, had determined to reveal part of His incomprehensible and immeasurable being. It is truly amazing to discover, therefore, that the first thing God had determined to reveal to us about His name (or character) was that He is merciful. Of all things, He is compassionate. The Creator of heaven and earth is merciful. The One who called Abraham and delivered Israel from Egypt is compassionate. The original context of this divine declaration helps us to understand the nature of God's mercy. Israel had sinned against God and broken His covenant with them. They deserved death, but God relented. The mercy of God in this context is exemplified by

His "forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (Ex. 34:7). But this is not just a one-time event in order to portray one of God's "weaker" attributes. Rather, this particular attribute is central to the movement of covenantal history as portrayed in the Old Testament. It provides motivation for true and genuine repentance. But God's mercy is not limited to Israel in the Old Testament. Rather, it extends to all creation. Consider how Psalm 145:8 rehearses the divine attributes first recorded in Exodus 34:7 and then adds, "The Lord is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he had made" (Ps. 145:9). The biblical testimony resists a conception of God's mercy that is narrowly focused. Rather, it is a ubiquitous force that shapes all of reality, a pervasive impetus for hope. The merciful and compassionate character of God must not remain on the dry and dusty pages of a textbook. God's merciful character is translated into hope for sinners, and this is, without a doubt, the most important application of God's compassionate character. But the Bible also teaches that God's mercy and compassion reaches into everyday life, especially for those who are needy and without help. There is not a section of the Old Testament that does not account, in some way, for God's care of the poor, needy, hungry, or oppressed. In addition to God's general concern for the poor, specific attention is given to widows, orphans, and sojourners. But the God of mercy and compassion also calls His people to exemplify these attributes in their own lives. As God has been merciful to us, we bear forth the image of this mercy to the world. We are called to "give justice to the weak and the fatherless; [to] maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; [and to] deliver them from the hand of the wicked" (Ps. 82:3-4). Mercy and compassion are rooted in the very character of God. His law commands it. Wisdom teaches it. The prophets enjoin it and the Psalms applaud it. Of course, the fullest expression of the mercy of God is found in the person and work of Jesus Christ, the compassion of God incarnate. But the New Testament does not represent a departure from the Old Testament at this point, but rather the arrival of its fullest expectation.



RESPONSIBILITIES

Today's Nursery Volunteers

March 27th
<i>Morning</i> Allyson Leach & Jessica Mullins
<i>Evening/Afternoon</i> Cortney McDonald & Bethany Wallace
<i>Wednesday - March 30th</i> Kathrine Ranck (<i>Claire Shores</i>)

Today's Sound Operator - Seth Lirette



ANNOUNCEMENTS

BIBLE DRILL

Children's Bible Drill will meeting at 5:00 pm this afternoon before choir.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR

The Preschool and Children's Choir will meet at 5:30 pm this afternoon. Please make note of the time change. The normal schedule will resume after church bible drill.

CHURCH BIBLE DRILL

Our church bible drill will be this Wednesday, March 30th at 6:30 pm. Continue to pray for our children, as they commit God's word to their memory, that He would commit it to their hearts.

