



GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH
AT CASTLEWOODS

ORDER OF WORSHIP
April 17th, 2022

MORNING WORSHIP

Thomas Winn — Elder/Pastor

- The Prelude Prepare your heart for worship
- The Call to Worship Chris Kimbrell
- Hymn "Immortal, Invisible"
- The Prayer of Confession and Praise Cody Wallace
- Hymn "There is a Redeemer"
- Hymn "The Day of Resurrection"
- The Reading of the Word — *Acts 2:22-39* Hal Pritchard
- Hymn "Jesus, What a Friend for Sinners"
- The Pastoral Prayer Pastor Winn
- The Sermon — *"Blessed are Those Who are Persecuted" (Matthew 5:10-12)* Pastor Winn
- A Time of Reflection Upon the Word Preached
- Hymn "Christ the Lord is Risen Today"
- The Benediction Hal Pritchard
- The Postlude

EVENING WORSHIP

- The Prelude Prepare your heart for worship
- Hymn "Low in the Grave He Lay"
- Hymn "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"
- The Pastoral Prayer Pastor Winn
- The Sermon — *"Died to Sin, Alive to God" (Romans 6:1-14)* Pastor Winn
- A Time of Reflection Upon the Word Preached
- The Baptismal Ordinance
- Hymn "I Serve a Risen Savior"
- The Benediction
- The Postlude



COMMENTARY

Resurrection and Persecution

Dr. Peter Barnes

At first glance, resurrection and persecution may not seem to be related, unless linked by martyrdom. After all, Richard Dawkins has claimed that religion was invented as a 'comfort-blanket' to help people cope with a nasty world. Presumably, the doctrine of resurrection would be among the strongest candidates used to bolster such a claim. Yet that is not how it works out in the book of Acts. As Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, they saw a man who was lame from birth who begged them for money. Peter had no money, but he healed him in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. The result was that the man entered the temple, 'walking and leaping and praising God' (Acts 3:1-8). Not all were thrilled at this spectacle. Accordingly, the Sanhedrin, consisting of Pharisees and Sadducees, had Peter and John arrested. How was it that an act of healing – a beneficial act in anybody's book – aroused such opposition? It was because, as the apostles told the authorities, the crippled man was healed 'by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead – by him this man is standing before you well' (Acts 4:10). Peter did not heal the crippled man, Christ did! And He did so after His crucifixion, which could only mean He had risen from the dead. Two conclusions were immediately drawn from this. The first is that the authorities who governed God's nation on earth missed the meaning of Christ's death. They saw it as the end of a blasphemer who was a threat to their social standing. No, it was the fulfilment of Psalm 118:22 which prophesies that the stone which was rejected by the builders would become the cornerstone (Acts 4:11). This would be the beginning of a new temple, consisting of living stones (1 Pet.2:5), founded on Christ. Secondly, it meant that Jesus Christ is the only name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12). How can we believe this when our universities, the media, and all other pretended

gurus are telling us that this is bigoted, narrow, and even unchristian? We must believe it because it is true – we cannot save ourselves, only Christ can save us. Jesus' rising from the dead is the most outstanding proof of that claim. The authorities could not deny the healing of the lame man: 'that a notable sign has been performed through them {the apostles} is evident to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it' (Acts 4:16). Their corrupt little world was crashing down around them. If the lame man was healed by Jesus, this had to mean that Jesus was alive, risen from the dead. Jesus is thus in a different category to everybody else. As in Adam all die (1 Cor.15:22), and all are in Adam. 'It is the same for all, since the same event happens to the righteous and the wicked, to the good and the evil, to the clean and the unclean, to him who sacrifices and him who does not sacrifice. As the good one is, so is the sinner, and he who swears is as he who shuns an oath' (Eccles.9:2). This is no 'comfort-blanket' weaved by a scheming committee; this is the culmination of God's rescue plan announced in Psalm 118, and elsewhere, and now in evidence. Either that comforts us or it threatens us. It threatened the authorities in the first century, and it still threatens the likes of Richard Dawkins today. The first century authorities could not deny it so they resorted to force. Dawkins takes a short cut by simply mocking it. Well did C. S. Lewis remark: 'I didn't go to religion to make me happy. I always knew a bottle of Port would do that. If you want a religion to make you feel really comfortable, I certainly don't recommend Christianity.' The resurrection of Christ means that Christianity is true and non-negotiable. It also means that unbelievers will persecute Christians in one way or another in order to protect their own worldviews. However, in the end it means that Christ wins, because He has already defeated the last enemy, and all who are in Christ will live forever, without sin, suffering or death (Rev.21:4).



RESPONSIBILITIES

Today's Nursery Volunteers

April 17th
<i>Morning</i> Bridgette Kimbrell & Claire Shores
<i>Evening/Afternoon</i> Kathrine Ranck & Mary Price
<i>Wednesday - April 20th</i> Mary Margaret Pritchard (<i>Jessica Mullins</i>)

Today's Sound Operator - Richard Jackson



ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHILDREN'S CHOIR

The Children's Choir along with Kathy Irving and Claire Shores will sing today before the morning service. Neither choir will meet this afternoon.

LADIES BIBLE STUDY

The Ladies Bible Study will meet this Thursday, April 21st at 11 am. Please bring a sack lunch and enjoy a time of fellowship afterwards.

LADIES SPRING TEA

All ladies are invited to a Spring Tea Bible Study on April 23rd at 10:30 am hosted by Bunny Finch and Lawanda Winn. A sign up list has been posted in the fellowship hall. If you plan to attend please be sure to sign up for at least 1 item. The older ladies will be sharing on How a Woman is to Serve in the Church. We encourage all women to attend and take advantage of this opportunity.

CRAWFISH BOIL

We will have our annual crawfish boil on the afternoon of April 30th. The time and more information will be given later. A sign up list will be posted.

PASTOR TIAGO VISIT

Pastor Tiago will be in the USA and at GBC from April 28th – May 2nd. It will be a short visit, but he will preach on May 1st and share in our afternoon service about their transition back to Portugal. He will also be joining us for fellowship at the crawfish boil.

