

**Convocation, Installation and Dedication
Africa Reformation Theological Seminary
February 25, 2017**

Readings

Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter Two

1. There is but one only, living, and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or [bodily] passions; immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute; working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, for his own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek him; and withal, most just, and terrible in his judgments, hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty.

Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter Eight

1. It pleased God, in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and man, the Prophet, Priest, and King, the Head and Savior of his church, the Heir of all things, and Judge of the world: unto whom he did from all eternity give a people, to be his seed, and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.

5. The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience, and sacrifice of himself, which he, through the eternal Spirit, once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father; and purchased, not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto him.

Westminster Larger Catechism

Q. 103. Which is the first commandment?

A. The first commandment is, You shall have no other gods before me.

Q. 104. What are the duties required in the first commandment?

A. The duties required in the first commandment are, the knowing and acknowledging of God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly, by thinking, meditating, remembering, highly esteeming, honoring, adoring, choosing, loving, desiring, fearing of him; believing him; trusting, hoping, delighting, rejoicing in him; being zealous for him; calling upon him, giving all praise and thanks, and yielding all obedience and submission to him with the whole man; being careful in all things to please him, and sorrowful when in anything he is offended; and walking humbly with him.

Ephesians 1: 3-7

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, to the praise of His glorious grace, with which He has blessed us in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace....

The Heidelberg Catechism

Q. What is your only comfort in life and death?

A. That I am not my own but belong, body and soul, in life and in death to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven: in fact, all things must work together for my salvation. Because I belong to Him, Christ by His Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me whole-heartedly willing and ready from now on to live for Him.

Q. What must you know to live and die in the joy of this comfort?

A. Three things: first, how great my sin and misery are; second, how I am set free from all my sins and misery; third, how I am to thank God for such deliverance.

Psalms 100

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!
Serve the Lord with gladness!
Come into His presence with singing!
Know that the Lord, He is God!
It is He who made us and we are His;
We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise!
Give thanks to Him, bless His name!
For the Lord is good; His steadfast love endures forever
And His faithfulness to all generations.

Psalms and Hymns

PSALM 146

Hallelujah, praise Jehovah,
O my soul, Jehovah praise;
I will sing the glorious praises
Of my God through all my days.
Put no confidence in princes,
Nor for help on man depend;
He shall die, to dust returning,
And his purposes shall end.

Happy is the man that chooses
Israel's God to be his aid;
He is blessed whose hope of blessing
On the Lord his God is stayed.
Heaven and earth the Lord created,
Seas and all that they contain;
He delivers from oppression,
Righteousness He will maintain.

Food He daily gives the hungry,
Sets the mourning prisoner free.
Raises those bowed down with anguish,
Makes the sightless eye to see.
Well Jehovah loves the righteous,
And the stranger he befriends,
Helps the fatherless and widows,
Judgment on the wicked sends.

Hallelujah, praise Jehovah,
O my soul, Jehovah praise;
I will sing the glorious praises
Of my God through all my days.
Over all God reigns forever,
Through all ages He is King.
Unto Him, your God, O Zion,
Joyful hallelujahs sing.

THE CHURCH'S ONE FOUNDATION

Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. Ephesians 2:20. Samuel J. Stone, 1866

The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord;

She is his new creation by water and the Word.

From heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride;

With his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.

**Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth;
Her charter of salvation, one Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses, with every grace endued.**

**Though with a scornful wonder we see her sore oppressed,
By schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed,
Yet saints their watch are keeping; their cry goes up, "How long?"
And soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.**

**The Church shall never perish! Her dear Lord to defend,
To guide, sustain and cherish, is with her to the end;
Though there be those that hate her, and false sons in her pale,
Against both foe and traitor She ever shall prevail.**

**Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation of peace forevermore;
Till, with the vision glorious, her longing eyes are blest,
And the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.**

**Yet she on earth hath union with God the Three in One,
And mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won.
O happy ones and holy! Lord, give us grace that we
Like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with thee.**

HOW DEEP THE FATHER'S LOVE FOR US

...That you might comprehend the depth of the love of Christ. Eph 3:18-19. Stuart Townsend, 1995

How deep the Father's love for us, how vast beyond all measure. That He should give His only Son to make a wretch His treasure. How great the pain of searing loss. The Father turns His face away. As wounds which mar the Chosen One, bring many sons to glory.

Behold the Man upon a cross, my sin upon His shoulders. Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice call out among the scoffers. It was my sin that held Him there, until it was accomplished; His dying breath has brought me life. I know that it is finished.

I will not boast in anything: no gifts, no pow'r, no wisdom. But I will boast in Jesus Christ: His death and resurrection. Why should I gain from His reward? I cannot give an answer. But this I know with all my heart: His wounds have paid my ransom.

WHEN I SURVEY THE WONDROUS CROSS

May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. Gal.6:14. Isaac Watts,1707

**When I survey the wondrous cross On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss, And pour contempt on all my pride.**

**Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ my God!
All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His blood.**

**See from His head, His hands, His feet, Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet, Or thorns compose so rich a crown?**

**Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all.**

GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. Lam 3:22,23. Thomas O. Chisholm, 1923

**"Great is Thy faithfulness," O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.**

***Refrain: "Great is Thy faithfulness!" "Great is Thy faithfulness!"
Morning by morning new mercies I see; All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—"Great
is Thy faithfulness," Lord, unto me!***

A MIGHTY FORTRESS

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Ps.46. Martin Luther, 1529

**A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
Our helper he, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great, and, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.**

**Did we in our strength confide, our striving would be losing;
Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choosing:
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabbaoth, His Name, from age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.**

And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,

We will not fear, for God hath willed his truth to triumph through us:

The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him;

His rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure,

One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly powers, no thanks to them, abideth;

The Spirit and the gifts are ours through Him Who with us sideth:

Let good and kindred go, this mortal life also; the body they may kill:

God's truth abideth still, his kingdom is forever

ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS

"Do not be discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's." 2 Chronicles 20:15. I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. Matt 16:18. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1865

**Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus going on before.
Christ, the royal Master, leads against the foe;
Forward into battle see His banners go!**

*Refrain: Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus going on before.*

**At the sign of triumph Satan's host doth flee;
On then, Christian soldiers, on to victory!
Hell's foundations quiver at the shout of praise;
Brothers lift your voices, loud your anthems raise.**

Refrain

**Like a mighty army moves the church of God;
Brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod.
We are not divided, all one body we,
One in hope and doctrine, one in charity.**

Refrain

**Crowns and thrones may perish, kingdoms rise and wane,
But the church of Jesus constant will remain.
Gates of hell can never 'gainst that church prevail;
We have Christ's own promise, and that cannot fail.**

Refrain

**Onward then, ye people, join our happy throng,
Blend with ours your voices in the triumph song.
Glory, laud and honor unto Christ the King,
This through countless ages men and angels sing.**

Refrain

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