

**Welcome to
Crestholme Presbyterian Church
14th Sunday after Pentecost
August 29, 2021**

At the *, please stand, if you are able

Large Print Hymnals and Bibles, and Hearing Assist Devices, are available

Gather for Worship

PRELUDE: "Finale: Andante (Sonata no. 6)" **Mendelssohn**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AvSHwjI87M>

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

God willing, next Sunday, Sept. 5, 2021, we will be celebrating Communion

THE BELLS

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP "Surely The Presence" **Choir**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hD9-1ZQctV4>

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

LEADER: Our hearts are stirred by a noble theme as we recite our verses for the king; our tongues are the pen of a skillful writer.

All: Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.

LEADER: You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.

All: All your robes are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia; from palaces adorned with ivory the music of the strings makes you glad. (Based on Ps. 45, NIV)

OPENING PRAYER

Eternal Love Divine, we are gathered in this place today to honor you, to recognize you and to give you your rightful place in our hearts and lives. Accept these praises as a fragrant scent as they rise to meet you in your glory. Amen.

*** OPENING HYMN "O Come and Sing Unto The Lord" **Blue Bk #214****
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PoogNC5T0cY>

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Eternal God, our judge and redeemer, we confess that we have tried to hide from you, for we have done wrong. We have lived for ourselves, and apart from you. We have turned from our neighbors, and refused to bear the burdens of others. We have ignored the pain of the world, and passed by the hungry, the poor, and the oppressed. In your great mercy forgive our sins and free us from selfishness, that we may choose your will and obey your commandments; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Book of Common Worship (Louisville: Westminster/ John Knox Press, 1993), p. 54.

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

Beloved, hear the Good News, in Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Hallelujah! Amen!

*** GLORIA PATRI**

Blue Hymnal #579

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUBxpypSblw>

*** SHARE THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

One: Peace be with you!

All: And also with you!

One: As God's forgiven people, share the peace of Christ with each other (from your seat please).

CHILDREN'S TIME

Jesus Loves Everyone | God's Story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8ypf0wR6A0>

Hear the Word of God

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Holy and Eternal Love, let the light of your love shine upon our hearts, and our souls, and our minds, and our bodies that your will may be our will. Grant us the transformation that comes by Christ being fully formed in us as we hear and trust your word. In your loving name we pray, amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Song of Solomon 2:8-13

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Song%20of%20Songs%20%3A8-13&version=NIV>

PSALTER READING

Psalm 15

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+15&version=NIV>

CHORAL ANTHEM

"Sing and Dance, Children of God"

Choir

<https://vimeo.com/65274939>

NEW TESTAMENT READING

James 1:17-27

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+1%3A17-27&version=NIV>

GOSPEL READING

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+7%3A1-8%2C+14-15%2C+21-23&version=NIV>

SERMON

**"Rubrics and Algorithms"
Mark 7:1-8**

Dr. Carlos Baladez

Rubrics and algorithms do not a relationship make.

Can you imagine using a rubric or following an algorithm on your honeymoon? This is what you have to do to earn an A, B, C, D, or F. Your grade will be based on your performance. Can you hear the song in the background, "What's love got to do with it?"

Or using an algorithm, first you carry her over the threshold. Next you kiss her. If she responds to this in a positive manner you do this. If she does not respond to your kiss then you proceed to this other option. Laughable. Ridiculous. Absurd! Yuck!!!

How about using a rubric or an algorithm to choose your lifelong mate? Or how about using one of these to raise your children, love God, yourself, or others?

We laugh at these examples and yet this is exactly what the Pharisees and the Saducees were doing in the presence of Jesus. Unfortunately, many of us still use these today in forging or grading our relationship with God. We think in binary or dualistic terms. We divide life into good or bad, good or evil, black or white, up or down, this or that.

Here in this passage, Mark tells us the Pharisees did not eat unless they gave their hands a ceremonial washing. A rubric to keep score and an algorithm to lead them to their next decision. No love, joy, or peace here. Merely a code to follow, to grade and to gage behavior. Their thinking was, "I follow them and you do not, therefore I am better than you. I please God by following these rules. Since you do not follow them, God does not like you nor is he pleased with you."

They held on to the traditions of the elders. They held on to the measuring stick to grade and gage behaviors. Never giving a second thought to intent, attitude, or motive. It was merely a blind obedience to a boatload of rules and regulations. Apparently, in their eyes, having earth, dust, or dirt on their hands while eating was displeasing to God. Jesus calls them on the carpet by using Isaiah's words against them, "These people, (these rubric and algorithm following people) honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me." Meaning, their honoring of God was hollow and empty. There was no base nor substance to this kind of honor. Their heart, intention/motive/attitude was not in it. Futhermore, Jesus quotes, "They worship me in vain; (their recognition of me is hollow, empty, baseless), their teachings are merely

human rules." There is no Godly merit in their actions nor are they recognized, sanctioned, nor established by God. Merely Human. Of the earth. Temporal. Nothing but dust blown away by the wind!

Can you see that these terms of behaviors and beliefs are derived from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil? It is a bifurcated tree. It has one root system with two branches. One branch is good, the other is evil yet they share the same root, death. It is a binary or dualistic system, giving knowledge of good and evil leading to death, to a separation from God Almighty who is the True Source, the True "Root" System. Life!

Binary thinking leads to winners and losers, us against them, we are right and they are wrong, we are in and they are out, eventually leading to separation and death.

This Tree of Knowledge of good and evil has a yes and a no. We choose. It is a tree that feeds on relativity where absolutes do not exist. Like the people in Judges, "we all do what is good in our own eyes." Binary and dualistic thinking is diametrically opposed to the Tree of Life. Here, at this tree, God chooses for us. He chooses "yes!" for us who are in Christ. It is the "yes" of relationship. There is no rubric or algorithm here. It is fluid, organic, and alive. An active sharing between two individuals in community.

There is only one way to relate to God in order to have a living, vibrant, and eternal relationship with him and that is through Love personified in Jesus Christ, who is God's "YES" for us. His Spirit in us is the Spirit which allows us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves. This is the Tree of Life, Jesus Christ.

As, Galatians 5 reminds us, there is no law (no rubric or algorithm) against the fruit of the Holy Spirit which is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Remember, rubrics and algorithms do not a relationship make. But Love does!

To God be the glory now and forever, amen.

* **HYMN** **"O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee"** **Blue Hymnal #357**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CdmeFsNRtAE>

Respond in Love and Service

* **This we believe**

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. We will say of the Lord, "He is our refuge and our fortress, our God, in whom we trust." Surely he will save us from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover us with his feathers, and under his wings we will find refuge; his faithfulness will be our shield and rampart. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Holy God, you are love, therefore we ask that you hear our prayers. We pray for the sick, **Lord hear our prayers.** We lift up the oppressed and the down and trodden, **Lord hear our prayers.** We intercede for the lost, **Lord hear our prayers.** We beseech you to protect our military members and their families, **Lord hear our prayers.** Please guide our world leaders towards the peace that only you can give, **Lord hear our prayers.** Abba, Father, for hearing our prayers we thank you and trust your loving and perfect will. Therefore, as Jesus taught his disciples to pray we too pray in the same manner, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever." Amen.

***HYMN FOR OUR NATION "Heal Our Land" Red Hymnal #800**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTm_rA54EGw

PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Please, continue to support the life and work of Crestholme. You can mail your tithes, pledges, and offerings to...

CPC
PO Box 23919
SA TX 78223-0901

Or you can save them and gather them until we meet again. Thank you!
Remember this, "Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness."

*** DOXOLOGY Blue Hymnal # 592**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uyg6-htOtHU>

*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

God of abundance and grace, to you we present ourselves as a living and loving sacrifice while we offer to you these gifts that you first gave us. Take them. Bless them. Multiply them for your kingdom's work and for the sake of you faithful name. This we ask in the all powerful name of Jesus Christ, amen.

*** CLOSING HYMN "Kum ba Yah" Blue Hymnal #338**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFffX-3wGLc>

*** BENEDICTION**

Since our loving Father has blessed us with his all consuming love, let us go forth in the confidence of the Risen Christ and share his love with all we meet. Go forth in the grace of the Son, the love of the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, amen!

*** POSTLUDE**

The End of this Worship Meeting — The Beginning of Service

See Weekly Calendar below

