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# WORSHIP AT HOME

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## Welcome

The 17th and 18th century ushered in the Enlightenment, Age of Reason, and Science. Descartes famous quote, "I think, therefore I am" quickly validated our ego, making right thinking the highest value. Kant espoused "duty" derived from moral law, justice, as the ultimate good. He titled his book Critique of Pure Reason.

**Be Thankful for Things. Count the people who Bless You with Christ's Mercy, Grace, and Love.**

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Based on what I see and hear in our culture I wonder if we are giving birth to the Age of Blessing. Blessedness is nothing new. Jesus taught it. And of course politicians, religious leaders, and rulers judged him unreasonable.

I hear Jesus say the highest good is to bless people. "But I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who abuse you." Luke 6: 27-28

By the way, the word bless means to reflect God's image. I believe Jesus reflected God's image to show us God's will. What do you believe? Is Jesus unreasonable?



## Opening Hymn: Count Your Blessings

When upon life's billows  
You are tempest tossed

When you are discouraged  
Thinking all is lost  
Count your many blessings  
Name them one by one  
And it will surprise you  
What the lord has done  
Count your blessings

**Count your blessings, not your problems. People are created to Bless.**

*ROBERT*

Name them one by one  
Count your blessings  
See what God has done

Count your blessings  
Name them one by one  
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## Prayer

For the longest time I counted things as blessings. Things may satisfy my physical needs, wants, and desires but fall terribly short of meeting my emotional and spiritual needs. How about you? Take a moment to give thanks for the many things you have received. Then ponder how many people were involved in making each thing possible. It is humbling to discover we are interdependent. DIY is a reasonable lie!

Give thanks for things. Count people as Blessings! Bless those who curse you. Let them see Jesus in you. Love is, it has no need to find a reason.

These last few days who offered you comfort, mercy, grace, or love?  
To whom did God send you to bless with the comfort of mercy, grace or love?

God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven every time we receive a blessing or give a blessing!

## Psalter: Psalm 41

Blessed is he who considers the poor!<sup>[a]</sup>  
The Lord delivers him in the day of trouble;  
**2**  
the Lord protects him and keeps him alive;  
he is called blessed in the land;  
thou dost not give him up to the will of his enemies.  
**3**  
The Lord sustains him on his sickbed;  
in his illness thou healest all his infirmities.<sup>[b]</sup>

## Meditation:

Jesus teaches us to pray, “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” The “poor in spirit” are tempted by fear, the World, and Evil. Blessed is the one who asks and receives Christ Blessing. The Holy Spirit heals the soul with Eternal -Life giving mercy, grace, and unconditional love. Friends, many seek the gate that leads to the narrow way. Few find it. The Truth of that Narrow Way is heard in the words: “Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.” Are you One who comes in the name of the Lord? To whom is God calling you to Bless? Ask God to show you the places in your soul that need His Blessed Healing.

## Scripture Reading: Ephesians 1:3-5

**3** Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. **4** For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love **5** he [b] predestined us for adoption to sonship [c] through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will

## Homily

Which of the following Operating Systems runs your heart-soul-mind? I find that I change systems often. I also find the Holy Spirit opening my eyes and ears to their temptation. When I follow the Holy Spirit my heart and mind are delivered, and my soul is healed and restored to God’s Blessed Image.

### Operating Systems

#### Spirit of Fear:

**Condition of the Soul: Being Confused, Blind, Deaf, Lost**

**Power and Authority: Fight, Freeze, Flight**

**Image/ Reflection: Sin**

**Highest Value: Safety, Security, Sanctuary**

**Worship: Things**

#### Spirit of the Curse:

**Condition of the Soul: Being Judgmental**

**Power and Authority: Shame, Guilt, Blame**

**Image/Reflection: The World**

**Highest Value: Right and Good**

## **Worship: Self**

### Spirit of Evil:

**Condition of the Soul: Being Condemning**

**Power and Authority: Anger, wrath, dissensions, kill**

**Image/Reflection: Satan**

**Highest Value: Control**

**Worship: Power**

### Spirit of Blessing

**Condition of the Soul: Being Holy and righteous.**

**Power and Authority: Peace, Love, Joy**

**Image/Reflection: The Christ**

**Highest Value: Mercy, Grace, and Love.**

**Worship: God**

**Truth: God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. The same is true for each of the Operating Systems.**

**Wisdom teaches us to:**

**Let it be. We cannot change the way the operating systems work.**

**Let it go. We may change operating systems.**

**Let it in. The operating system we choose leads us to Worship its highest value.**

**Let me share an analogy. My computer is a MacBook Air. Its operating system thinks, speaks, feels, and reads Apple. When someone sends me a file from a PC the Mac Operating system translates PC language into Mac language. Sometimes I forget that a PC does not translate Mac language. Therefore, I must remember to save my files in Microsoft Word, PDF, or some semi-universal computer language. Otherwise a PC will translate the files I send as gibberish.**

**The Holy Spirit works in the human heart, soul, and mind, the same way. The Holy Spirit translates all of the above operating systems into God's universal language. God's universal language is Blessing!**

**I encourage you to read the Beatitudes and discover this truth. (Matthew 5) Herein Jesus speaks God's universal language. Notice how the Blessing translates suffering, needs, and desires into Kingdom of Heaven living.**

**For example: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.” Look again at the Operating Systems listed above. All but ONE describe being “poor in spirit.” In the same way, Jesus teaches that prayer connects our heart-soul-mind to God and invites the Holy Spirit to translate all words, thoughts, feelings, and actions into the Blessing of Believing and Receiving Christ Jesus. “Thy Kingdom (of Heaven) come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Now is the time, today is the day, to Be God’s Blessing on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Look at the crowd gathered in Ephesians 1:3. God, the Father. The Lord Jesus Christ. Us. The Holy Spirit is the giver of every spiritual blessing. Friends this is God’s will. This is God’s way. The blessing reveals God’s truth. The Blessing is Life revealed in Christ. This is the Way to Truth that makes our “gathering” Life receiving and giving. This is WORSHIP!**

**Look at verse 4. Do you see the blessing of being chosen. Do not mistake God’s Creation to be the same as the Creation of the World. The Spirit of the World leads people to curse one another. This is why Scripture says again and again, “Bless those who curse you. Bless and do not curse.” The Blessing is clear: God chose “us” to be Holy and Blameless in His Sight.**

**Let us listen to one another. But never allow a neighbor to define you! The neighbor who sees my sin and Blesses me is the Child of God. The one who sees my sin and curses me or commits evil against me is the one who seeks to steal the Peace of Christ from my soul!**

**God is Holy. This means that God’s Ways are not like the ways of humanity, the world, or evil. Christ Jesus blessed us with every spiritual blessing. The mercy, grace, and love revealed through Jesus’ suffering, death, and resurrection makes us blameless. Blameless in God’s Sight! Many a neighbor blames me!!! We are saved by Grace, not any work of the Law, Doctrine, or Institution.**

**Verse 5 reinforces God’s Blessing. We are adopted. God chooses us. God loves us. God blesses us. We are the children of God. Children are taught to reflect their Father’s image.**

**“Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.” Jesus was the first and He is the last, and those who abide Him receive Blessing upon Blessing. Are you the one? Are you learning to come in the name of the Lord. Are you practicing Christ’s Way of Blessing is the Truth of God’s Mercy, Grace, and Love. The Life Christ gives us is to Be Blessed!**

**Friends you know what and how and who to Believe. Believing in the power and authority of Christ Jesus delivers us from sin, and death. It is time to Receive his power and authority. He delivers us from Sin to Heal our souls. How do we know our souls are healed. We bless those who curse us and commit all kinds of evil. Those who receive His Blessing and Give His Blessing are the children of God. (see John 1: 11-13, below)**

**John shares this same Good News in the opening of his Gospel.**

**11** He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. **12** Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God — **13** children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. (John 1)

## Tithes and Offerings

August Tithes: \$3,364.50  
August Expenses: \$8,598.25  
Year to date: (\$2,477.66)

Bank Balance: \$10,780

You may mail your tithes to Trinity UMC, 203 E 1st St, South, Big Stone Gap, Virginia 24219. Attention: Joyce

A Secure Dropbox is located in the alley between the Church building and the Toney's house.

## Covid 19 Update

Three weeks ago Wise county had 5.1 active cases per 100,000 people. As of Tuesday Wise County had 33.6 active case per 100,000 people. We moved from Yellow risk level to Red.

It looks like the number of cases has decreased slightly since Saturday. I anticipate we may return to Sanctuary Worship when the cases drop to 10 or fewer per 100,000.

## Benediction and Call to Gather Together

I also say, let us not cease gathering together. This pandemic has humbled me. For years I have taken the passage from Hebrews 10 out of context. I spun it into a False Narrative, a half truth. A half truth is just enough to believe a lie! The writer clearly says the "sanctuary" in which we are to gather is in Christ. You may ask, "How do I enter, or where is this sanctuary?" The writer clearly says that by Faith we enter the sanctuary through the blood of Jesus. This Sanctuary is not made by human hands. No mortal has made a

human heart! And, yes, I know about the artificial heart that pumps blood. The Holy Sanctuary is in us. It is our spiritual heart-soul-mind that Christ sprinkles clean of evil and a conscience imprisoned by shame, guilt, and blame. A sprinkled heart is filled with every Spiritual Blessing!

**19** Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, **20** by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), **21** and since we have a great priest over the house of God, **22** let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. **23** Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. **24** And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, **25** not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

To Practice Holy Gathering look back at the Prayer and Meditation offered above. Gather by phone, Zoom, or under your shade tree. Gather to bless one another, not gossip, debate politics or to battle with the Spirit of the World or the Spirit of Evil.

Read a passage of scripture. Use one of the devotions I send or any issue of Worship at Home, Listen for a word, phrase, or idea that captures your thinking and feelings. Share. Listen. Respect on another. Then pray. Ask the Father what He thinks and feels about the passage. Listen to God the way you want God to listen to you! Then put what you hear into action through your life. And for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven mind your own business. Trust God to transform your neighbor. Bless those who curse you. Abide in Peace! When a neighbor seeks to steal the Peace you have in Christ, leave room for the Holy Spirit. Take your Peace and go home!