

Worship Order

July 24th, 2016

Prelude	<i>Christ Is Risen</i>	Matt Maher arr.
Worship in Song	<i>Our God</i> <i>God Is Able</i>	Chris Tomlin arr. Hillsong arr.
Ministry Updates		
Worship in Song	<i>Hope of the Nations</i> <i>Be Thou My Vision</i>	Brien Doerksen Ascend the Hill arr.
Offertory	<i>Facing a Task Unfinished</i>	Keith & Kristyn Getty
SERMON	Zechariah 8:1-23	
Closing Songs	<i>Let Your Kingdom Come</i>	Bob Kauflin

Theme of Zechariah: “You have returned to your land but you must return to God.”
Last Sunday: “Missing the Point (of Repentance),” Zechariah 7:1-14
This Sunday: “God’s Glorious Purpose,” Zechariah 8:1-23
Primary Application: “God has greater purposes for us than religious duty, the restoration of our national identity or material prosperity.”

Sermon Outline:

I. Restore Residence

- A. Jerusalem and the Temple
- B. Judah and All the Redeemed

II. Recover the Remnant

- A. Recover Old and Young
- B. Recover Prosperity and Inheritance
- C. Recover the Fearful and Cheerful

III. Reach the World

- A. From Every Origin
- B. From Every Nation
- C. From Every City

IV. Revitalize Our Vision

- A. God’s Global Initiative for the Gospel
- B. God’s Kingdom Purpose for the Church
- C. God’s Ambition for Our Righteousness
- D. God’s Desire for Devotion and Delight

“God’s Glorious Purpose”
Zechariah 8:1-23
Nathan H. Platt, Associate Pastor
Cornerstone Baptist Church

“We go to all the world with Kingdom hope unfurled.
No other name has power to save but Jesus Christ, the Lord!”

Ed Cash | Fionan De Barra | Frank Houghton | Keith Getty | Kristyn Getty | Samuel Wesley
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The lyrics that were just sung of Keith and Kristyn Getty are appended to a largely unknown missional hymn entitled “Facing a Task Unfinished.” They capture a portion of the thrust of our text for this morning. Specifically, they speak of God’s glorious purpose in establishing an eternal and global kingdom into which we have been invited and received.

Our text today will focus our thoughts on our God’s glorious purpose of making His kingdom known throughout the world and calling people of every origin, nation and city to redemption through and relationship with His Son, our Lord Jesus. With that in mind, let’s stand together for the reading of God’s Word.

Scripture Text: ¹ And the word of **the LORD of hosts** came, saying, ² “Thus says **the LORD of hosts**: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath. ³ Thus says the LORD: I have returned to Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city, and the mountain of **the LORD of hosts**, the holy mountain. ⁴ Thus says **the LORD of hosts**: Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of great age. ⁵ And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets. ⁶ Thus says **the LORD of hosts**: If it is marvelous in the sight of the remnant of this people in those days, should it also be marvelous in my sight, declares **the LORD of hosts**? ⁷ Thus says **the LORD of hosts**: Behold, I will save my people from the east country and from the west country, ⁸ and I will bring them to dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in faithfulness and in righteousness.”

⁹ Thus says **the LORD of hosts**: “Let your hands be strong, you who in these days have been hearing these words from the mouth of the prophets who were present on the day that the foundation of the house of **the LORD of hosts** was laid, that the temple might be built.

¹⁰ For before those days there was no wage for man or any wage for beast, neither was there any safety from the foe for him who went out or came in, for I set every man against his neighbor.

¹¹ But now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as in the former days, declares the **LORD of hosts**. ¹² For there shall be a sowing of peace. The vine shall give its fruit, and the ground shall give its produce, and the heavens shall give their dew. And I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things. ¹³ And as you have been a byword of cursing among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and you shall be a blessing. Fear not, but let your hands be strong.”

¹⁴ For thus says **the LORD of hosts**: “As I purposed to bring disaster to you when your fathers provoked me to wrath, and I did not relent, says **the LORD of hosts**,¹⁵ so again have I purposed in these days to bring good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; fear not.¹⁶ These are the things that you shall do: Speak the truth to one another; render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace;¹⁷ do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath, for all these things I hate, declares the LORD.”

¹⁸ And the word of **the LORD of hosts** came to me, saying,¹⁹ “Thus says **the LORD of hosts**: The fast of the fourth month and the fast of the fifth and the fast of the seventh and the fast of the tenth shall be to the house of Judah seasons of joy and gladness and cheerful feasts. Therefore love truth and peace.²⁰ “Thus says **the LORD of hosts**: Peoples shall yet come, even the inhabitants of many cities.

²¹ The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, ‘Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the LORD and to seek **the LORD of hosts**; I myself am going.’²² Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek **the LORD of hosts** in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD.²³ Thus says **the LORD of hosts**: In those days ten men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of the robe of a Jew, saying, ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.’” **Zechariah 8:1-23 (ESV)**

PRAYER

I would suggest that we see in this eighth chapter of Zechariah three sections of promise that build upon one another. Verses 1-8, 9-13, and 14-23 are all similar in content; each emphasizing similar aspects of God’s glorious purpose: 1) God’s gracious desire to restore His residence among sinful people, 2) His determination to maintain a remnant of the faithful for Himself and 3) His good pleasure to rescue people from every part of the world.

I. Restore Residence

A. Jerusalem and the Temple

First, we see God’s desire to restore residence among his people in verses 3, 9 & 15 where He promised through Zechariah that His presence would reoccupy Jerusalem and the temple. God has graciously desired from the dawn of creation to reside with men and women created in His image, sharing the abounding joy and blessed fellowship experienced in the Trinity with humanity. But Adam and Eve foolishly doubted the goodness and sincerity of their Creator, believing the lie of the evil one that God was denying them the authority, knowledge and life they deserved. Such arrogance and presumption has plagued humanity in every era including the chosen people of God – the Jews. Though they were the heirs of God’s promises through Abraham, the recipients of His laws through Moses and the beneficiaries of His sovereign care through the Davidic monarchy, the history of the Jewish nation reveals time and time again the people’s resistance to God’s gracious authority.

Illustration: Now, some of you know that I recently became the proud owner of a poodle. The Platt's first family pet! Mind you, this is not any floppy headed, fru-fru, miniature, yippy little lap dog. No, this is a standard poodle – the original hunting dogs! I have been working with Joey a lot – obedience training and preparing him for the field. I must say that I'm quite proud of my dog! In fact, when I let my hair down we actually look a lot alike! But I'm most proud of the fact that Joey will “come” and “lay down” and “load up” and “sit” and “stay” – all the customary things you would expect an obedient pet to do. Moreover, he will fetch – “on command” – a ball or bird or bumper or even a stick and nearly retrieve it “to hand” more than half the times he's dispatched. Needless to say, I'm very pleased with that level of obedience from a seven month old puppy!

However, despite the fact that Joey does a number of things exceedingly well, there is a concept I just can't seem to get through to him: “Heel” and walk at my side without constantly pulling on the leash. No matter how hard I try – how patient or stern I am with Joey – he constantly reverts to dragging his owner through the neighborhood on every walk we take. I'm sure it's quite a comical sight at 6:00 AM to see this long-haired, middle-aged man in a white under shirt, gym shorts and flip-flops being drug through the sub-division by a standard poodle a quarter of his size with the owner desperately repeating the words: “Heel ... *heel* ... *HEEL!* ... *Walk ... WAAAAALLLK! For the love of every dog owner in the world, JOEY! Will you simply slow down and walk by my side!*”

But being the “birdy” young gun-dog he is, he simply puts his nose to the neighborhood aromas lingering everywhere in the air and on the ground and is driven to chase every single scent to its feathered or furry source as fast as he possible can. He constantly chafes against the collar and disregards the will of his master who just wants him to walk leisurely and obediently by his side. I want Joey to obey so that I can free him for a life of adventurous pursuits off the leash but I can't until I can guarantee his safety and trust His loyalty to me.

Isn't that just like us in our relationship with *our* gracious and patient Master? What He wants above all is for us to walk comfortably by His side so that He can bless and protect and guide. All we constantly do is chafe against His authority and chase after every want and whimsy that promises disappointment or potential disaster. Like Adam and Eve, we constantly believe there is something better, somewhere more appealing, something we deserve that God is keeping from us. This illustration of the resistance to God's good authority magnifies the glory of His intention to restore residence with his people. In spite of the Jews perpetual rebellion and even before the destruction of their nation by Nebuchadnezzar, the promise of God's restored residence among them was proclaimed through the prophet Isaiah among others:

²¹ Remember these things, O Jacob, and Israel, for you are my servant; I formed you; you are my servant; O Israel, you will not be forgotten by me. ²² I have blotted out your transgressions like a cloud and your sins like mist; return to me, for I have redeemed you.

²³ Sing, O heavens, for the LORD has done it; shout, O depths of the earth; break forth into singing, O mountains, O forest, and every tree in it! For the LORD has redeemed Jacob, and will be glorified in Israel. ²⁴ Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer of Jerusalem, ‘She shall be inhabited,’ and of the cities of Judah, ‘They shall be built, and I will raise up their ruins’; ²⁷ who says to the deep, ‘Be dry; I will dry up your rivers’; ²⁸ who says of Cyrus, ‘He is my shepherd, and he shall fulfill all my purpose’; saying of Jerusalem, ‘She shall be built,’ and of the temple, ‘Your foundation shall be laid.’”

Isaiah 44:26-28

B. Judah and Her Descendants

We see, however, that God promised more than renewed residence in Jerusalem and the temple. He stated clearly in verse 15 that He would once again manifest the blessing of His presence *among* His people. Verses 14-15 of our text read, “For thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘As I purposed to bring disaster to you when your fathers provoked me to wrath, and I did not relent,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘so again have I purposed in these days to bring good to Jerusalem *and to the house of Judah*; fear not.’”

Why the house of Judah? Prior to the exile, Judah represented the Southern kingdom of God’s people; separate from and often in contention with the Northern kingdom identified simply as “Israel.” Joseph Benson, the 18th Methodist churchman and evangelistic associate of John Wesley wrote of the divided people of God in his commentary on Jeremiah 3:18. Quote: “. . . the happy coalescence [or association] between Israel and Judah in Canaan [after the exile] was a type [a symbol or foreshadowing] of . . . Jews and Gentiles in the gospel church, when, all enmities being slain, they should become *one flock* under one *shepherd*.” *Benson Commentary*, Jeremiah 3:18

John Gill, the immediate predecessor to the great Baptist preacher of 19th century London, Charles Spurgeon, concurred in his commentary on the same passage saying, “[the house of Judah] *may also denote the agreement of all Christian confessors, as Judah signifies, and of all Israelites indeed, in worship, whether Jews or Gentiles; becoming through Christ members of one body, fellow heirs and partakers of the same grace, promises, and privileges . . .*” *John Gill’s Commentary*, Jeremiah 3:18

Thus, the reference to God’s restored residence *within* the house of Judah may very well be *indicative of his presence among all those whom He would redeem through the Messiah*; the Messiah Who was born a Jew but became the Savior of men from every nation through faith in him. Let us not take for granted the great power and privilege that is ours as a result of God’s residence with us! May our prayer truly be as we have already sung this day:

“Be Thou my wisdom and Thou my true Word.
I every with Thee and Thou with me Lord.
Thou my great Father, I Thy true son;
Thou in my dwelling and I with Thee, one!”

The power of this privilege is readily evident in our text. In case it escaped your notice, look again at our passage this morning – just scan through the chapter – and note what phrase jumps off the page again and again: “The Lord of Hosts!” In fact this awesome designation of God’s authority appears 18 times in this chapter alone and its usage is significant. The God of the armies of heaven is speaking to the anxious remnant of His people and the reiteration of his name suggests, “I, the sovereign One, am with you and I will make the power of my presence and the fullness of my provision known again and again and again!”

People of God, remember again what we sang just moments ago:

“Into the darkness You shine; out of the ashes we rise.
There’s no one like You; none like You!
Our God is greater, Our God is stronger, Our God is higher than any other.
Our God is healer; awesome in power – our God!
And if our God is for us then what could ever stop us?
And if our God is with us then what could stand again us?”

Chris Tomlin | Jesse Reeves | Jonas Myrin | Matt Redman
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“God is with us, God is on our side; He will make a way
Far above all we know, far above all we hope, He has done great things!
Lifted up, He defeated the grave; raised to life, our God is able!
In His Name we overcome for the Lord our God is able!”

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There is a second phrase that is prevalent throughout the text and it is equally assuring. The expression "Thus saith the LORD" occurs ten times. J. Vernon McGee was a quaint, country preacher whose weekly radio program, *Thru the Bible*, encouraged hundreds of thousands of believers throughout the last century and continues to do this day. I love the simplicity of what he says concerning the repetition of this phrase throughout Zechariah’s prophecy, “When God keeps repeating [the phrase, “Thus saith the Lord,” do you know what it means? (Pause) It means ‘thus saith the LORD’ -- not Vernon McGee, not any man, but it is God who is saying this!” Brothers and sisters, may we never lose the wonder that the Creator of the Universe, the living Lord of heaven, the designer of the master plan to save our souls and the sovereign God who raised His Son from the dead, said to His people “I will forgive, I will redeem, I will restore and I will speak words of hope to you once more!” He spoke to them. He speaks to me and He speaks still today! The Jews enjoyed a glimpse of God’s restored residence in Jerusalem. How much greater should our joy be in the knowledge that Christ is risen and resides in us personally through His Spirit. What a privilege that our bodies are now temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19) and we, as living stones are being built into a spiritual house for God’s own possession! (1 Peter 2:5)

II. Recover the Remnant

Secondly we see in this eighth chapter of Zechariah that God's glorious purpose is to recover the remnant of His people that He has preserved through national destruction, subjugation and enslavement, and the treacherous return to their homeland. His promise to reestablish them as the people of God and grant to them prosperity and peace overshadows all the hardships they experienced during His judgment upon their rebellious forefathers.

A. He promised to restore the *Old and Young*

We see in verse 4 that the renewed city of Jerusalem would be filled with snow-crowned women and men who experience the longevity of life their ancestors never saw because they were consumed by the calamities of civil war and the fury of foreign conquerors. Verse 5 speaks of the happy sounds of children's laughter and songs instead of the desperate cries of orphans who suffered through the daily search for sustenance and the struggle to survive the horrors leading up to and present during the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem.

B. He Promised to restore *Prosperity and Inheritance*

Verses 10 and following promise the blessings of material prosperity – namely, gainful employment and fruitful harvests – when upon their return to the desolated land, there had been no work nor wage worth earning and “all men were set one against the other.” There is also the guarantee of renewed rights to the land of their inheritance. Though, in their exile, other Jews had entered the land to snatch up empty properties and squatters for the other nations of the region were claiming the surrounding areas of Jerusalem for themselves, God promised the preservation of their inheritances.

C. He Promised to Restore the *Fearful and Cheerful*

In anticipation of the fulfillment of these promises, the Lord exhorted his people *not* to fear in (Vss. 13, 15). You may recall from last week's sermon on chapter 7 that the people were engaging in fasts four times a year on anniversaries of significant events in the capture and destruction of Jerusalem. They perceived that their solemn piety was in some way a guarantor of their renewed inheritance but in chapter 8 their gracious God clarifies that their seasonal fasts should become, instead, feasts of celebration for His grace and faithfulness. Solemnity and self-depravation do not merit men anything in the eyes of a God who is not impressed and doesn't need anything from them. Moreover, such *solemnity misrepresents the benevolence of our gracious God Who is worthy of exaltation and grateful praise!* While these words of promise were surely a balm to the beleaguered remnant of the Jews who struggled to reestablish their nation and capitol in the face of tremendous circumstantial challenges and local opposition, how much more encouraging should these promises be to us whom God has preserved as His own through all the ages past?

Let us agree that the prospects for our earthly longevity and the prosperity of our children are astonishingly greater than anything afforded the remnant of Israel. In spite of the occupational challenges the “Great Depression” of recent years brought, especially to the people of this region and many in our own congregation, the reality is now that

work of significant profitability can be found. Our American lives are blessed with a level of wealth, indeed a degree of opulence, that the rest of the world cannot even begin to imagine. Though recent events of civil unrest and homeland terrorism cause us to fear the stability of our national security and may even prompt a renewal in piety and prayer among the general public, the reality is that we live in a land of general safety, incredible freedom and truly remarkable liberty for all.

God does not desire a renewal in generic piety from the American people. He is not interested in our return to a moral majority or our public allegiance to some generic set of ethical standards or Judeo-Christian values. He wants the hearts of a people that truly love Him and truly live for Him and truly desire that the glorious news of His kingdom of grace be declared to a world that is heaping judgment upon itself because of the misguided perception of its moral superiority and vain religious endeavors. Catholics, Hindus, Mormons, Muslims, misguided legalistic Baptists and doctrinally non-descript “Evangelicals” wake up! Realize that neither your religion affiliation nor behavior will save you and a new personal passion for Jesus and His kingdom is the cause you must rally to if you truly belong to Him! There is so much more to this life and these days than “making America great again!” The dawn of the eternal kingdom of Christ looms on the horizon and we must find our citizenship therein!

III. Reach the World

We must realize and/or remember that God’s glorious plan has always been about more than a singular nation. He has made clear from the beginning that His sovereign relationship with Israel was to display the glory and goodness and holiness of His intention to be both just and the justifier of those from every nation, tribe and tongue who would come to Him by faith in His Son. He is the hope of the nations! Your sermon outline in the bulletin says that God’s glorious purpose was to “Rescue His People” but *the scope of this rescue is really the aspect I want to stress*. God has global designs for His people. **He wants to reach the world** and what a privilege we have to share in His world-wide kingdom initiative!

A. God Determines to Reach the World *from Every Origin*

Notice that our text in verse 7 says, “Behold, I will save my people from the east country and from the west country ...” Which may be interpreted a number of different ways. I believe the phrase has more than geographic implications. There is a temporal and particularly present-day implication in the phrase. Consider the fact that countries to the West included nations that had yet to coalesce but would, when they ultimately came to power, exact dominion and destruction upon the Jewish nation; namely the Roman Empire. What is equally remarkable is the fact that peoples from the East would include the very nations that had most recently conquered and enslaved the Jews. These included the Assyrians, Babylonians, and the Medo-Persians. Imagine the amazement of the restored Israel when they learned that these were the nations God proposed to rescue!

May I remind you these are the regions containing the modern day countries with which our nation and our world continue to be at strife: Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey and the countries further to the East that pose genuine threats to the well-being of the world: China, Indonesia, North Korea. What is the point? In our concern for global security are we as the people of God equally concerned about the fact that God desires to redeem thousands from the very countries we deem to be our adversaries and enemies. All us conservatives need to stuff that in our foreign policy pipe and smoke on it!

B. God Determines to Reach the World *from Every Nation*

Verse 13 of our text says, “And as you have been a byword of cursing among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and you shall be a blessing.” Remember that God *gave* the land of Canaan to the Jews and that prior to their coming, it had been occupied for generation upon generation by other nations that considered their arrival a curse.

Having most recently been among the native people of Manitoulin island, I’m challenged to think about this verse in light of Canada but also America’s past. There is no historical dispute that white men and Western “civilization” committed unimaginable theft, unspeakable suffering, extensive tribal genocide and cultural degradation against the native peoples throughout North and South America. We can pass these atrocities off as the wickedness of other white men. The problem, however, is that many among those white men claimed to be Christians and their abusive acts they considered to be works of righteousness to rescue a savage people from their pagan ways. As many who represented Christianity have been a curse to native people in centuries past, God is calling us be a blessing as true representatives and, more so, messengers of the Gospel of our Lord.

C. God Determines to Rescue People *from Every City*

Finally, verses 20-23 speak of the glorious purpose God had for a particular city, namely that Jerusalem would become known as the city where Gentiles – those outside of Israel’s covenantal relationship with Yahweh – might expect to encounter the living God. The final verse of our text is so striking, “Let us go with you [that is, to Jerusalem], for we have heard that God is with you.”

Oh, brother and sisters, of all the things that could be said of Cornerstone in the little known city of Roseville, Michigan, would we not want those words to be said of us! “We have heard of a Savior’s rescue of your members from addiction and divorce and depression and fear and pride and the petty preoccupations of life and every kind of sin that enslaves and even the threat of hell and the curse of the grave! We have heard you speak of a Gospel of free grace offered to all from a sovereign Lord Who lived and died and rose to life again for your salvation. We have observed the hope and joy and peace His Gospel brings and we believe it is so because “God is *truly* with you!

Would you introduce us to Him?" Amen! May those things be said of us and may they be said of me!

IV. Revitalize Our Vision

In closing, let us give consideration some **specific applications**:

- 1) God has a global initiative for the Gospel. He desires to restore people from every origin in the world into relationship with Himself and take up residence in them. You have been called to become God's own temple, to trust His Son for forgiveness of sin and be made right with God through Him. (vss. 7-8)

Are you in relationship with this sovereign God, trusting His Son by faith for forgiveness and righteousness as a gift? If not, you *need* to trust Christ today!

- 2) God has determined that the remnant of His chosen people – the Church – should be the vehicle through which the Gospel of peace and reconciliation is proclaimed in all the world. He assures us of a harvest for His kingdom and He commands us to be strong in the work of sowing and serving in His name.

There are two mirrors in the midst of the missions kiosk with the captions "Where are you serving?" They appear among an assembly of our brothers and sisters who are fulfilling the call we ALL have received to be witnesses of our Lord. I ask you:

Are you engaged in the work of the kingdom harvest and are you striving to bear testimony to the Gospel of Jesus? If not, why not?

There are short-term trips in which you could participate. There are bible studies you could facilitate at your work place. There are family members and neighbors that you enjoy and love who are destined for a Christ-less eternity and yet, you are reluctant to share the hope that you claim to have in Christ. There are children in your own home about whom you have greater concern for their academic grades, athletic endeavors or popularity than their salvation. Life is short, time is of the essence and the stakes are eternal. Christ has commissioned each of us to share His Gospel *as we go* through our daily lives. We are not responsible for the results but testimony is of paramount importance for the faithful follower of Christ.

Are you seeking to bring eternal blessing to those whom God would save thru you?

- 3) God is faithful to fulfill His righteous decrees and He has righteous ambitions for us. He commands His people in this passage, “These are the things that you shall do: Speak the truth to one another; render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace; do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath, for all these things I hate, declares the LORD.” (vss. 14-17)

Are we faithful as His representatives to speak the truth to one another?

Do we speak challenging truths to not another such as those I just presented to you?
Do we challenge one another to deeper discipleship, holiness, mission and service?

Are we faithful to do what is right and true and promote peace?

The challenges I’ve just given to us are right and true and result in eternal peace. Amen?

Do we secretly pursue evil and conceal deceit in our hearts?

“Oh, *I* would never pursue evil and conceal deceit!” you say?

In response to the personal ambitions and pursuits of our lives that ignore God’s sovereign Lordship over us, the apostle James writes, “... To the one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.” James 4:17

- 4) God intends our religious duty to be delight resulting in renewed relationship with us. “The fast ... shall be to the house of Judah seasons of joy and gladness and cheerful feasts.” (vs. 19)

Are you present in worship each week to rejoice in the Lord, recommit to truth and be renewed with His peace? If not, why have you and your family come?

Remember our text last week from Zechariah 7 in which the Lord told his people that their religious practice of fasting was nothing more than an offense to Him if HE was not the subject of their devotion. Actual encounter with the living God is the objective of our worship. Our singing and stillness and mental ascent to His Word are all in vain if we do not intentionally seek His face and His favor with fervor and readiness to respond.

What might you and your family do to prepare for this day of communion and consecration each week?

- 5) God anticipates a day when people from every tribe tongue and nation will come together to bask in the glory of His favor and revel in His eternal relationship with them.

“Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD. ²³ Thus says the LORD of hosts: In those days ten men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of the robe of a Jew, saying, ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.’” (vss. 20-23)

Cornerstone, are we truly emulating that heavenly gathering each week when we gather for worship such that the city around us would want to return to our weekly rehearsal of an eternal reality in which Christ is King, His love and grace are felt and the eminence of His return is evident in the actions and attitudes of our fellowship?

Let us pray, “Lord would grant us grace to respond to these challenges of relationship, mission, righteousness, devotion and delight and, in so doing, fulfill God’s glorious purpose for our lives.”