

June 28, 2020

Metamorphoses

Free Grace Presbyterian Church

SOME THOUGHTS FOR REFLECTION:

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

Romans 8:28–30

The plan involved a transformation that was to make us lovely as Christ. Therein would be the greatest glory to God: we would be the foulest and would become the loveliest. We would be the most unlike Christ and would become like Christ.

Donald Grey Barnhouse
20th century American pastor

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

Colossians 3:9–10

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:1–2

Spiritual growth...is the product of long-term commitment to a process that involves worship, sermons, prayer, Scripture, hymns, fellowship, service, trials, temptations, and, importantly, life experience. One will seldom be aware of the growth as it is taking place. As with intellectual growth, so it is with spiritual transformation, it is achieved indiscernible increment by indiscernible increment. There is seldom short-term, measurable change or improvement that one can point to.

Robert Wennberg
20th century American ethicist and professor

Christ does not ask His followers to "make a few minor adjustments" or "try a bit harder to be religious." His words call for radical transformation— first in thinking, next in living. He leaves no alternative, no middle ground, when He exhorts us to decide either for or against kingdom living. He expects (and deserves) our allegiance, our obedience, our very lives. When this finally becomes a reality in anyone's life, it is absolutely remarkable how many things are simplified.

Chuck Swindoll
pastor and author

GOD SUMMONS US BY HIS GRACE

Leader: Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!

People: **Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.**

Revelation 1, 4, 11

Leader: "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

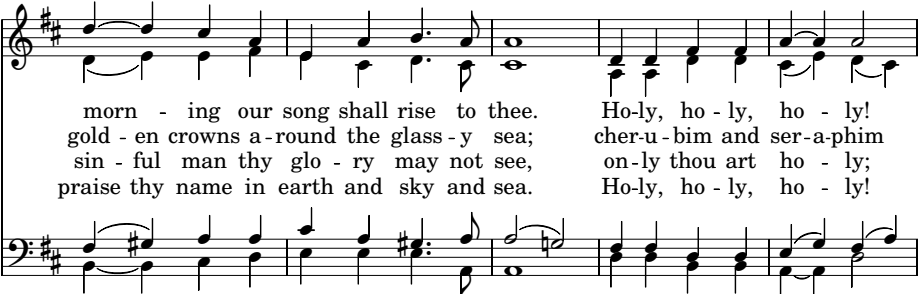
People: **We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign.**

We join the heavenly hosts in praising the Lord God Almighty who is our Lord and our God

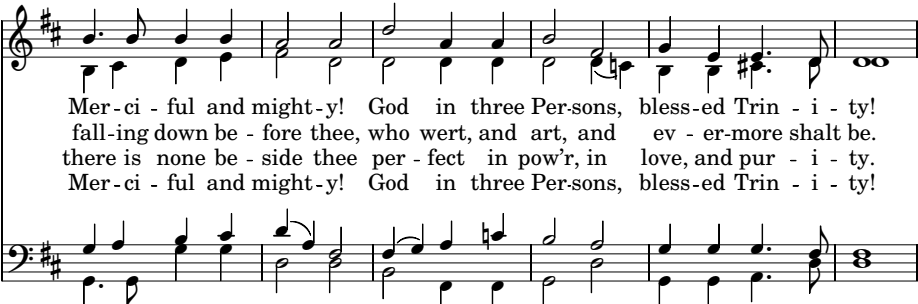
"Holy, Holy, Holy"



1. Holy, holy, ho - ly! Lord God Al-might-y! Ear - ly in the
2. Holy, ho-ly, ho - ly! All the saints a - dore thee, cast - ing down their
3. Holy, holy, ho - ly! Though the dark-ness hide thee, though the eye of
4. Holy, ho-ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al-might-y! All thy works shall



morn - ing our song shall rise to thee. Ho-ly, ho - ly, ho - ly!
gold - en crowns a-round the glass-y sea; cher-u-bim and ser-a-phem
sin - ful man thy glo - ry may not see, on-ly thou art ho - ly;
praise thy name in earth and sky and sea. Ho-ly, ho - ly, ho - ly!



Mer-ci - ful and might-y! God in three Persons, bless-ed Trin - i - ty!
fall-ing down be - fore thee, who wert, and art, and ev - er-more shalt be.
there is none be - side thee per - fect in pow'r, in love, and pur - i - ty.
Mer-ci - ful and might-y! God in three Persons, bless-ed Trin - i - ty!

As the church gathers in worship of our God, we get a foretaste, a glimpse, of the eternal reality of our worship. Our worship now blends with the songs and hallelujahs of those surrounding the throne of God in heaven.

"Heavenly Hosts in Ceaseless Worship"

1. Heaven-ly hosts in cease-less wor-ship, "Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly!" cry;
2. All cre-a-tion, all re-demp-tion join to sing the Sa-vior's worth;

5 "He who is, who was, and will be, God Al-migh-ty, Lord Most High.
Lamb of God whose blood has bought us, kings and priests to reign on Earth.

9 Praise and ho-nor, power and glo-ry be to him who reigns a-lone."
Wealth and wis-dom, power and glo-ry, ho-nor, might, do-min-ion, praise

13 We, with all his hands have fa-shioned fall be-fore the Fa-ther's throne.
now be his from all his crea-tures and to e-ver-last-ing days!

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and common time. The melody is simple and repetitive, with lyrics written below the notes. The first staff has two verses of lyrics. The second staff starts at measure 5. The third staff starts at measure 9. The fourth staff starts at measure 13 and ends with a double bar line.

And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."

Revelation 5

GOD SANCTIFIES US BY HIS GRACE

The Holy God declares what he requires of us

And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD...? Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it.

Deuteronomy 10

For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite."

Isaiah 57

We turn to God admitting and sorrowing over our sin

We use this time in God's presence to confess our sins and our need for God's grace, silently, personally before him alone. We invite you to join us in sorrow over your sin and joy in his grace and mercy in Jesus Christ.

contrite

[kən'trīt, 'käntrīt]

feeling remorse—
guilt, regret, and
sorrow—for our sin

God sings out of his great mercy to us

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time...Set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ... knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

1 Peter 1

We rejoice that his mercy is more than our sin

"His Mercy is More"

You cannot sin so much as God can forgive. If it comes to a pitched battle between sin and grace, you shall not be so bad as God shall be good. I will prove it to you. You can only sin as a man, but God can forgive as a God. You sin as a finite creature, but the Lord forgives as the infinite Creator.
Charles Spurgeon

1. What love could re - mem - ber no wrongs we have done?
 2. What pa - tience would wait as we con - stant - ly roam?
 3. What rich - es of kind - ness He lav - ished on us.

Om - nis - cient, all - know - ing, He counts not their sum.
 What Fa - ther so ten - der is call - ing us home?
 His blood was the pay - ment, His life was the cost.

Thrown in - to a sea with - out bot - tom or shore.
 He wel - comes the weak - est, the vil - est, the poor.
 We stood 'neath a debt we could nev - er af - ford.

Our sins, they are man-y—His mer-cy is more. Praise the Lord,

His mer-cy is more. Strong-er than dark - ness,

new eve-ry morn; our sins, they are man - y—His mer-cy is more.

GOD SPEAKS WITH US BY HIS GRACE

Acts 14

¹Now at Iconium they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed. ²But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. ³So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. ⁴But the people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews and some with the apostles. ⁵When an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to mistreat them and to stone them, ⁶they learned of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country, ⁷and there they continued to preach the gospel.

⁸Now at Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked. ⁹He listened to Paul speaking. And Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well, ¹⁰said in a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he sprang up and began walking. ¹¹And when the crowds saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in Lycaonian, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!" ¹²Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. ¹³And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was at the entrance to the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds. ¹⁴But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their garments and rushed out into the crowd, crying out, ¹⁵"Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. ¹⁶In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. ¹⁷Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness." ¹⁸Even with these words they scarcely restrained the people from offering sacrifice to them.

¹⁹But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. ²⁰But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe. ²¹When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, ²²strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. ²³And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

In the
Scriptures...God
daily comes to his
people, not from
afar but nearby. In
it he reveals
himself, from day
to day, to believers
in the fullness of
his truth and
grace. Through it
he works his
miracles of
compassion and
faithfulness.
Herman Bavinck

²⁴Then they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia. ²⁵And when they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia, ²⁶and from there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work that they had fulfilled. ²⁷And when they arrived and gathered the church together, they declared all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. ²⁸And they remained no little time with the disciples.

Sermon

Rev. Per Almquist

Metamorphoses

The Church that God Built

The main purpose
of a sermon is to
bring men nearer
to God and to
each other—is to
influence
character and
conduct so as to
bring them more
and more to
conform to the
character and life
of Jesus Christ as
set forth in the
Scriptures.
Francis Grimké

We rest in the joy of Jesus Christ that we would be transformed into his likeness

"Jesus, I am Resting, Resting"



1. Je - sus, I am rest - ing, rest - ting, in the joy of what thou art;
 2. O, how great thy lov - ing kind - ness: vast - er, broad - er than the sea!
 3. Sim - ply trust - ing thee, Lord Je - sus, I be - hold thee as thou art,
 4. Ev - er lift thy face up - on me, as I work and wait for thee;



I am find - ing out the great - ness of thy lov - ing heart.
 O, how mar - ve - lous thy good - ness, lav - ished all on me!
 and thy love, so pure, so change - less, sat - is - fies my heart.
 rest - ing 'neath thy smile, Lord Je - sus, earth's dark sha - dows flee.



Thou hast bid me gaze up - on thee as thy beau - ty fills my soul;
 Yes, I rest in thee, be - lov - ed, know what wealth of grace is thine;
 Sat - is - fies its deep - est long - ings, meets, sup - plies its ev - 'ry need;
 Bright - ness of my Fa - ther's glo - ry, sun - shine of my Fa - ther's face,



for by thy trans - form - ing po - wer, thou hast made me whole.
 know thy cer - tain - ty of prom - ise, and have made it mine.
 com - pass - eth me round with bless - ings; thine is love in - deed!
 keep me ev - er trust - ing, rest - ing; fill me with thy grace.



Je - sus, I am rest - ing, rest - ing in the joy of what thou art; I am



find - ing out the great - ness of thy lov - ing heart.

Come to me, all
 who labor and are
 heavy laden, and I
 will give you rest.
 Take my yoke
 upon you, and
 learn from me, for
 I am gentle and
 lowly in heart, and
 you will find rest
 for your souls.

Matthew 11

GOD STRENGTHENS US BY HIS GRACE

The living God works his transforming power in us as we proclaim Christ's death by celebrating the Lord's Supper

We invite to the Lord's Table all those who are baptized followers of Jesus Christ, under the authority of Christ and his body, the Church. By eating the bread and drinking the cup, you proclaim that you are in covenant relationship with God, that you are a sinner, without hope except in the sovereign mercy of God, and that you are trusting in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation. If you have any doubts about your participation, please speak to one of the elders after the service. Wine and bread are the elements of the supper as instituted by Jesus Christ and so we follow his example.

"To See the King of Heaven Fall"

To see the King of Heaven fall
in anguish to his knees,
the light and hope of all the world
now overwhelmed with grief.
What nameless horrors must he see,
to cry out in the garden:
"Oh, take this cup away from me,
yet not my will but yours,
yet not my will but yours."

To know each friend will fall away
and heaven's voice be still,
for hell to have its vengeful day
Upon Golgotha's hill.
No words describe the Savior's plight,
to be by God forsaken
till wrath and love are satisfied
and every sin is paid,
and every sin is paid.

What took him to this wretched place;
what kept him on this road?
His love for Adam's cursed race,
for every broken soul.
No sin too slight to overlook,
no crime too great to carry,
all mingled in this poisoned cup,
and yet he drank it all.
The Savior drank it all.

In the sacraments
the reality is given
to us along with
the sign; for when
the Lord holds out
a sacrament, he
does not feed our
eyes with an empty
and unmeaning
figure, but joins
the truth with it, so
as to testify that by
means of them he
acts upon us
efficaciously.

John Calvin

We give our tithes and offerings to him to declare our faith in the living God

The Apostles' Creed

Leader: Do you believe in God?

**People: I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,**

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

**People: I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**People: I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Although not written by the apostles, the Apostles' Creed is a concise summary of their teachings. It originated as a baptismal confession around the second century and developed into its present form around the seventh century.

We come to the living God in prayer that he would transform us ever more into the likeness of Jesus Christ

*During this time we live in faith, trusting in the power of his grace,
placing our lives and our church in his hands.*

We ask that he would work in us and through us for his glory.

GOD SENDS US WITH HIS GRACE

We offer ourselves wholly to God for his transforming work in our lives and through our lives

"Take My Life and Let It Be"

1. Take my life, and let it be con - se - cra - ted,
 2. Take my hands, and let them move at the im - pulse
 3. Take my voice, and let me sing, al - ways, on - ly,
 4. Take my sil - ver and my gold; not a mite would
 5. Take my will, and make it thine; it shall be no
 6. Take my love; my Lord, I pour at thy feet its

7 Lord to thee. Take my mo - ments and my days;
 of thy love. Take my feet, and let them be
 for my king. Take my lips, and let them use
 I with - hold. Take my in - tel - lect, and use
 lon - ger mine. Take my heart, it is thine own;
 trea - sure store. Take my self, and I will be

14 let them flow in cease - less praise,
 swift and beau - ti - ful for thee,
 filled with mes - sag - es from thee.
 ev - 'ry pow'r as thou shalt choose,
 it shall be thy roy - al throne,
 e - ver, on - ly, all for thee!

2, 4, 6.
 G Am G F Em F/D G sus G
 23 Take my life, all I am; take my life and make it thine.

For just as you
 once presented
 your members as
 slaves to impurity
 and to lawlessness
 leading to more
 lawlessness, so
 now present your
 members as slaves
 to righteousness
 leading to
 sanctification.

Romans 6

God declares his presence with us, working far more abundantly in us in Christ than we ask or think

Leader: Now may Christ dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

People: Amen

Please stay and join us for a time of refreshment and enjoying each other's company.

*This is a time to share in life together as the gospel calls us
as we reconnect with those we know and as we meet someone new.*

Ephesians 3

The benediction
sends us on our
way with a parting
word of God's
grace and
blessing,
reminding us that
we go in the
power of his
promise to be our
God.



Welcome to Free Grace

We are a broken church full of broken people. We know we need God's free grace. Some of us have accepted this grace, some are exploring what it's all about. All of us are still trying to understand it. We are a church that seeks to proclaim this free grace of God with both our words and our lives. Not satisfied with simply talking about it, we want to live it out. We invite you to come, explore, and live God's free grace with us.



Our Connections

Free Grace is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), a family of churches that seeks to be faithful to the Scriptures, true to the Reformed faith, and obedient to the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.

Our Leadership

Free Grace is lead by her elders, men called by God and set apart by the church to care and lead her as individual members, families, and as a whole. Our elders are:

Rev. Per Almquist (pastor)
Brian Cosgrove
Paul Martin
Ken Morris
Ben Van Dyke



Credits

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Meredith Stevens, *voice*; Shane Stevens, *percussion*; Beth Almquist, *voice, violin*; Kyle Almquist, *piano*

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"Take My Life and Let It Be" © 2006 The Well. Words: Frances Havergal, 1874. Music: Aaron Angstrom, 2006, arr. Beth Almquist, 2012.

See, if we really worked at it, we could make our faith be transformed to fit our lives. That'd be so much easier than letting our lives be radically transformed. After all, my place is pretty comfortable and I'm thinking about taking a holiday overseas this year. What about you?

Hammered Thumbs
anonymous blog

broken people
bound together in Christ
for God's glory