

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Biblical, Traditional, Congregational

Lord's Day Worship for
December 1, 2024

*"For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup,
you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." – 1Corinthians 11:26*



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“*” = Please stand if you are able.

Welcome, Greeting & Announcements

Call to Worship – Romans 5:15-19

*Leader: But the free gift (grace from Christ's death) is not like the transgression (death from Adam).
For if by the transgression of the one (Adam) the many died,*

People: Much more did the grace of God

Leader: And the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ,

People: Abound to the many.

*Leader: The gift (grace in Christ) is not like that which came through the one (Adam) who
sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one (Adam's) transgression*

People: Resulting in condemnation,

Leader: But on the other hand the free gift (of Christ's) arose from many transgressions

People: Resulting in justification.

Leader: For if by the transgression of the one (Adam),

People: Death reigned through the one,

*Leader: Much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of
righteousness will reign in life through the One,*

People: Jesus Christ.

*Leader: So then as through one (Adam's) transgression there resulted condemnation
to all men, even so through one (Jesus') act of righteousness*

People: There resulted justification of life to all men.

*Leader: For as through the one man's disobedience (Adam's) the many were made sinners,
even so through the obedience of the One (Jesus Christ)*

People: The many will be made righteous.

Prayer of Invocation and Confession

Gospel Absolution Text – Revelation 1:17-18

"When I (John the Apostle, the author of Revelation) saw Him (Christ in heaven), I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, 'Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.'"

***Hymn #208** (red hymnal) – "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

Scripture Reading – 1Corinthians 15:20-58

Ancient Creedal Reading – Nicene Creed (pg#846 in the red hymnal)

Offerings Presented

[Please put your tithe/offering in the plates before or after the service – Thank you!]
[Gifts labeled “Deacon’s Fund go to aid those in need in the congregation.]

*Doxology #731 (red hymnal)

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

*Prayer of Dedication

*Hymn #193 (red hymnal) – “Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”

Prayers of the Church & Lord’s Prayer (sins)

Our Father, who 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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Reformation Creedal Reading – Savoy Declaration, Chapter 31 – Of the State of Man after Death, and of the Resurrection of the Dead.

1. The bodies of men after death return to dust, and see corruption; (Gen 3:19; Acts 13:36) but their souls (which neither die nor sleep) having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them. (Luke 23:43; Eccl 12:7) The souls of the righteous being then made perfect in holiness are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies. (Heb 12:23; 2Cor 5:1,6,8; Phil 1:23; Acts 3:21; Eph 4:10) And the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torment and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day: (Luke 16:23-24; Acts 1:25; Jude 6-7; 1Pet 3:19) Besides these two places for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledges none.

2. At the last day such as are found alive shall not die, but be changed; (1Thes 4:17; 1Cor 15:51-52) and all the dead shall be raised up with the self-same bodies, and none other, although with different qualities, which shall be united again to their souls forever. (Job 19:26-27; 1Cor 15:42-44)

3. The bodies of the unjust shall by the power of Christ be raised to dishonor; the bodies of the just, by His Spirit unto honor, and to be made conformable to His own glorious body. (Acts 24:15; John 5:28-29; 1Cor 15:43; Phil 3:21)

Ministry of the Word

Prayer of Illumination

*Sermon Text – Revelation 6:7-8

*Gloria Patri #735 (red hymnal)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Sermon – “The Forth Horseman – Death”

(A Sermon Series on Revelation 4-7)

Ministry of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper

Invitation & Warning

Prayer

Scripture – 1Corinthians 11:23-26

Partaking of the Bread and then the Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving

***Hymn #211** (red hymnal) – “God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen”

***Benediction** – Numbers 6:24-26

All are welcome for Fellowship & Food downstairs after Worship

Upcoming Special Events

- The **Deacon's Fund** (used for those in need in the church) **needs to be replenished**. To give, you can put a specially marked donation in the collection plate or on the 1st Sunday of the month a special collection plate is put out for the fund. Thank you for your support.

Upcoming Events

- The 2nd Annual Calvinist **Christmas Party** will be at the Grange on Friday, Dec 6th starting at 6:30 PM. It is a pot-luck, so if you could bring a dish to share it would be helpful.

Regular Weekly Events

<i>Sunday</i>	9:00 – c.10:00 AM	Sunday School Children's curriculum: KVB Publications Women's Study: Baucham's <u>Expository Apologetics</u> Adult Study: Westminster Larger Catechism
	10:30 – c.11:40 AM c.11:40 AM	<u>Worship</u> (Lord's Supper on the 1 st Sunday of the month) Coffee Hour Fellowship
<i>Tuesday</i>	10:30 AM – Noon	Tuesday Study (Evangelism in Acts) at Pastor Doug's house
<i>Wednesday</i>	6:30 – 8:00 PM	Wednesday Study (on Exodus) at Pastor Doug's house
<i>Friday</i>	6:30 - ??? PM	Young Adult Discussion Group at Pastor Doug's house (1 st & 3 rd Fridays)
<i>Saturday</i>	morning	Prayer Group at the Gabelmann's. (Please call Sheryl to confirm if the group is meeting that day, 860-309-7250.)

ONLINE RESOURCES

TRC's Webpage:	TrinityReformedCT.org
TRC's Facebook Page:	facebook.com/people/Trinity-Reformed-Church/61554974150922/
TRC's Youtube Channel:	youtube.com/@TrinityReformedCT
Pastor Doug's	youtube.com/simplyreformed
Youtube Channels:	youtube.com/@PilgrimsOfPlunder

INTERNET PRAYER CHAIN

If you have any prayer requests for our prayer chain, please email them to Donna Ensminger at: trcnwprayer@gmail.com. (If you would like to join the Prayer Chain, also see Donna.)

LEADERSHIP

Elders:	Rev. Douglas Aldrich, pastor	860-379-1147	douglas_aldrich@sbcglobal.net
	Bob Ensminger	860-485-8738	robert.ensminger@arthurgrussell.com
	Rich Gabelmann	860-605-7852	rgabelmann0415@gmail.com
	Rev. Jonathan Haulenbeek	203-709-0784	jhaulenbeek@icloud.com
Deacons:	David Mattson (chair), Carl Bierce, Caleb Goodell, Mason Goodell, Dean Winters		
Sunday School:	Verna Aldrich, Mason Goodell	Music Coordinator:	Cindy Rines
Clerk:	Sheryl Gabelmann	Treasurer:	Cindy Rines

Sermon Notes

“The Forth Horseman – Death”
Revelation 6:7-8
A Sermon Series on Revelation 4-7
December 1, 2024

Introduction

- 1) Last week, in the beginning of the sermon, I joked around that for the Sunday before Thanksgiving it is interesting that we would be preaching about war and famine.
 - a) I greatly enjoyed putting that sermon together and hoped it was encouraging, us to be thankful for all the mercies God has given us.
 - i) Well, today is the first Sunday of Advent, where we prepare to celebrate Christmas.
 - ii) This sermon, is even (at first) more grim, so I ask for your patience.
 - iii) I do promise that the Sunday before Christmas I will preach a standard Christmas sermon.
 - b) As I said last week, however, we believe in expository preaching, working through a section of Scripture, and going wherever the text takes us.
 - c) One of the great strengths of the Christian faith is that it answers the tough questions of life more directly and boldly than any man-made philosophy or religion.
 - d) It takes courage, by God’s grace, to deal with *the* problem directly.
 - e) To understand our Lord’s teaching that if we lose our life, for His stake, we will find it.
 - f) So today, let us “hug the bomb”, as it were, and fully ponder today’s sermon text.
- 2) In Revelation 6 we see heaven, with God the Father enthroned.
 - a) God has a scroll/book which is His plan for creation.
 - b) It is sealed with 7 seals.
 - c) Only God the Son, the Lamb, Jesus Christ, can open the seals thus revealing and executing God’s plan.
- 3) Pastor Doug has been arguing that most of Revelation, including the first 5 seals are about this age, the time we are living in, which will come to an end with Christ’s return in power and glory at the end of this age.
 - a) The 1st Seal brings forth the White Horseman, who is Jesus Christ.
 - i) He defeats death with His death and resurrection, and is now reigning in heaven, and is sending forth His Spirit, so He is (spiritually) going out “*conquering and to conquer.*” – Rev 6:2
 - ii) This is primarily seen by His Gospel going to all the nations (i.e. all ethnic groups), unlike in the Old Covenant where only one nation (Israel) received God’s Word.
 - iii) The Lord Jesus is currently putting all His enemies under His feet.
 - Transforming (spiritually) dead sinners into saints, and thus getting all of God’s elect.
 - This new life brings growth in holiness, preparing the saints for heaven and having them avoid the second death – eternal destruction in hell.

- 4) With the Gospel going out into this fallen world there will be opposition.
 - a) So what follows the 1st Horseman (Christ) is violence (2nd Horseman – Red), and economic hardship (3rd Horseman – Black).
 - b) The fallen nature of the world will continue until the end.
 - i) Good and evil will go back and forth throughout this age.
 - ii) And there will always be a mixture of the two. Matt 13:28-30
 In very good times there will be evil.
 And in horrible times there will be good.
 - c) This earthly city based on sin will always be at (spiritual) war with the heavenly City of God based on Christ.
 - d) Our (the church's) battle is not against flesh and blood but against sin, Satan, the self, and all the ways of this world.
 - e) Our (the church's) weapons are not the things of this world (power, money, politics, violence, etc.) but the Gospel and its fruit (faith, hope, love, etc.)
- 5) The last enemy to be defeated, whom the Lord Jesus is currently warring on, is death. 1Cor 15:26; 2Tim 1:10
Rev 20:14; 21:4

The 4th Horseman: Death – Revelation 6:7-8

- 1) As with the other seals, only the Lamb can break the 4th Seal.
- 2) Like the other seals, one of the cherubim, the highest rank of angels, declares/commands: “Come” (or “Go”).
- 3) John the Apostle (the author of Revelation) now sees the last horseman on an “ashen horse.”
 - a) The color here is literally the word “green” as in green grass.¹
 - b) However, in context, it refers to pale, sickly, greenish gray color, the yellowish-green of grass that has been dried up in the heat.
 - c) In ancient times, and modern times too, green is associated with the faces of the sick, the dying, and the pallor of corpses.
 - d) This is the color of Death.
- 4) Unlike the other horsemen, this one is given a name in Revelation 6: “Death” (*Thanatos*). [We find out the name(s) of the 1st Horseman in Revelation 19:12-16.]
- 5) What follows Death (the 4th Horseman) is “Hades.”
 - a) For today let us define “Hades” in a general broad way.XXX
 - b) Here, at the minimal, “Hades” means “the grave”, the place where the dead go.
 - i) At first, don’t think of a meta-physical place of the afterlife.
 - ii) Just think of the grave.
 - iii) For example, Ecclesiastes 9:10 – *“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might; for there is no activity or planning or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol* where you are going.”*

[* = “*Sheol*”, the Hebrew word for the place of the dead, is usually translated as “Hades” in Greek.]

¹ Gen 1:30; 2:5; 30:37; Ex 10:15; Num 22:4; Deut 29:23; Prov 27:25; Job 39:8; Is 15:6; 19:7; 27:11; Ezek 17:24; 20:47; Mark 6:39; Rev 6:8; 8:7; 9:4

- c) Of course, the grave “follows” death, as Revelation 6:8 teaches: “*Hades was following with him* (Death).”
- 6) Authority is given to Death and the Grave (notice the “*them*” in Rev 6:8) “*over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth.*” – Rev 6:8b
- a) They are to kill by any means, described as with the sword, famine, pestilence (literally, “death”, *thanatos*, which can also mean “plague”) and by wild beasts. Rev 6:8
- b) Like the 2nd Horseman (Red – War), this 4th Horseman also has a sword.
- i) This is a larger sword than the one the 2nd Horseman has.
- ii) The Ashen Horseman’s sword is overtly for war, for killing.²
- 7) Death and the Grave’s authority is limited, however, “*over a fourth of the earth.*” – Rev 6:8
- a) Death will continue throughout this age, including for Christians.
- i) The promise is not that we Christians will avoid death.
- ii) The promise is that we avoid the “second death” – eternal destruction in hell.
- b) Revelation 6:7-8 is teaching that Christians will be martyred throughout this life for their faith.
- i) As we talked about last week, thousands of Christians die each year because of their faith especially in such places as North Korea, Somalia, Libya, etc.
- ii) Remember, Revelation, written to a persecuted tiny early church, is teaching that some of the saints will die as martyrs.
- d) However, this is according to the plan of God (the seals being opened by Christ).
- i) And it is limited.
- ii) As seen by the symbolic measurement of “a fourth.”
- I suggest you do not focus on the exactitude of the number but instead on it being limited.
 - It’s like hearing “*you will win a great battle, and the war against the wicked evil enemy city, however, you will take 1/4 casualties.*”
 - This brings sober reflection about the seriousness of the situation, however, it also brings hope because victory is assured.
- 8) You might ask: Why would God have His people be martyred? What happens to them? Well, that is what the 5th Seal is about and that is for next week.

About Death & Life

- 1) What is death?
- a) It is interesting that secular science greatly wrestles with this question. (The study of neurology is interesting, though limited.)
- b) If you don’t believe in the soul, it will be a hard question to answer.

² The 2nd Horseman (Rev 6:4) has a great *machaira* – a short sword, or dagger. Similar to our modern machete. (See: Matt 10:34; 26:47,51-52,55; Mark 14:43,47-48; Luke 21:24; 22:36,38,49,52; John 18:10-11; Acts 12:2; 16:27; Rom 8:35; 13:4; Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12; 11:34,37; Rev 6:4; 13:10,14)

The 4th Horseman (Rev 6:8) has a *rhomphaia* – a broad sword. This sword is overtly for war, for killing. (See: Luke 2:35; Rev 1:16; 2:12,16; 6:8; 19:15,21)

- c) Human death is when the soul/spirit leaves the body leading to a total and permanent cessation of all the vital functions in this age. Gen 25:8-9; 35:29;
Eccl 12:7; Luke 23:46;
Acts 5:5,10; James 2:26

2) Why death?

- a) Again, with a foundation in Scripture, the answer is easy.
- b) Answer: Because of sin. 1Cor 15:56
- i) It is the punishment for Adam's rebellion. Gen 3:19; Acts 13:36; Rom 5:12
- ii) All of creation is fallen and tainted with sin. Gen 3; Eph 2:1-3
- iii) Including all the children of Adam, i.e. all of mankind.

3) Always remember: Death is not natural. It is the enemy.

- a) Our foolish secular world teaches it is very natural, the norm.
- b) What is the old quip: The only permanent things are death and taxes. This is not true.
- c) Death is fundamentally unnatural.
- i) Who enjoys going to, let alone thinking about, a nursing home?
- ii) We know this when we see a child die.
- iii) It is the thing we fear the most.
- Even though that should be God, showing the problem.
 - Even the bravest of soldiers fears the slow creeping death of old age.
- iv) This is the grimmest sermon Pastor Doug has ever written!
- d) The Bible clearly teaches death is not natural.
- i) Mankind, and all of creation, was originally made without death.
- ii) All of mankind is destined to exist forever, either with perfect life in the new heavens and new earth, or a tormented existence in hell.
- iii) This is why the Bible consistently calls death the enemy. 1Cor 15:26

4) The Christian faith's willingness to deal with death has the world sometimes thinking Christianity is a death cult.

- a) The ancient Romans were shocked that the early Christian martyrs would so willingly, and passively, go to their deaths.
- b) Some ancient Romans thought Christianity was cannibalistic. (Not understanding the Lord's Supper.)
- c) Many modern online secularists/atheists enjoy mocking Christ, describing Him as a zombie and Easter as "Zombie Jesus Day."

5) In one sense, Christianity does focus on death.

- a) Or at the very least, is willing to deal with death directly.
- i) Or do a search of the cadaver monument of John Fitzalan at Arundel Castle in West Sussex, England.
- ii) Ever notice that Puritan portraits frequently have a skull in them? A reminder that death awaits for all men.

- b) Can one ever focus on death and be morbid?
Of course, and that would be sinful and foolish.
- c) However, not to deal with the issue, and instead focus on sentimental amusement (literally to stop thinking), as much of pop-Evangelicalism does, is also sinful.
- 6) Much of the Christian faith deals with death.
- a) What is the purpose of Christmas?
- i) Answer: For the incarnation, that the Eternal Word of God, the 2nd Person of the Trinity, take on human flesh.
- ii) And what is the purpose of the incarnation?
Answer: So that Christ can die on the Cross. Phil 2:8
- b) Are we not baptized into Christ's death? Rom 6:3
- c) Is not the Lord's Supper a public proclamation of "*the Lord's death until He comes*"? 1Cor 11:26
- d) Is not preaching about proclaiming Christ's cross? 1Cor 1:17-18; Gal 5:11
- i) Think about this, the most famous symbol of Christianity is the implement of a slow torturous death.
- ii) The modern equivalent would be having an electric chair be the symbol of the faith.
- iii) Christ's command to "*take up your cross*" is a call to join in the death march. Matt 10:38; 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23; 14:27
- 7) So Christianity is a death cult?!
- a) No, of course not.
- b) We just understand the enemy better than anyone else.
- c) And we understand that if we face death, with faith in Christ, there is true life in this world and perfect life in the next.
- i) We are not embracing suicide, or trying to get ourselves martyred, that would be a sin.
- ii) We are embracing the truth and reality, however, in order to live.
- iii) Again, I like the modern phrases: "*Run to the fire*" or "*hug the bomb*."
- d) How did the Lord Jesus put it? Matt 10:39; 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; 17:33; John 12:25
- "He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life (note how hating one's life is qualified:)*
in this world will keep it to life eternal. If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him." – John 12:25-26
- 8) We do not serve a god of the dead, but *the* God of the living. Matt 22:29
- a) We have been made truly alive in this life because of Christ's Spirit in us,
Who gives us new life and has us each day die to sin and live for Him.
- b) This is preparing us for heaven – more about that next week with the 5th Seal.
- 9) Because at the end, the last enemy to be abolished is death. 1Cor 15:26; 2Tim 1:10; Rev 20:14; 21:4
- 10) O, death where is your sting? – 1Corinthians 15:55