

U. S. S. FRANKLIN (CV-13)

L. E. GEHRES
Captain
Commanding Officer

JOE TAYLOR
Commander
Executive Officer

G. WELDON GATLIN
Protestant Chaplain

ORDER OF MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR SUNDAY 25 MARCH 1945

PRELUDE: "America" Played by Ship's Band

CALL TO WORSHIP: Read by all.

The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon Him,
To all that call upon Him in truth.
He will fulfill the desires of them that love Him;
He will also hear their cry, and save them.

HYMN: "Holy, Holy, Holy"

PRAYER: Prayed by all.

Since it is of Thy mercy, O Gracious Father, that another week is added to our lives; we here dedicate again our souls and our bodies to Thee and to Thy service, in a sober, righteous and godly life. During this week we made new resolutions and in these, do Thou, O Merciful God, confirm and strengthen us. As we grow in age, may we grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray:

THE LORD'S PRAYER: Prayed by all.

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY:

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth Israel will neither sleep nor slumber. The Lord is thy keeper; The Lord is thy shade upon Thy right hand. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth and forever more."

"The lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. For in the time of trouble He will hide me in His pavilion; in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me upon a rock. Teach me Thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path. I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He will strengthen thy heart; wait, I say, on the Lord." (This last sentence is perhaps the most comforting in the Old Testament. Read it again and let it live in your life today and for all days.)

The following is the favorite passage of Scripture of Service Men. "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the shadow of the valley of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

When Jesus told His disciples that He was leaving, they were heartbroken as we are this morning. He has given to them and to us this great word of comfort: "~~Let not your heart be troubled: Ye believe in God;~~ believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, ye may be also. I am the way, the truth, and the life. If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will send another comforter, that he may abide with thee forever; even the spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him not; but you know Him; for He dwelleth in you, and shall be with you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Because I live, ye shall live also.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Is there anything more comforting than this statement of Jesus, "My peace I give unto you."

HYMN "What a Friend I Have in Jesus"
CHAPLAIN'S PRAYER

"Eternal God, who committest to us the swift and solemn trust of life; since we know not what a day may bring forth, but only that the hour of serving Thee is always present, may we wake to the instant claims of Thy holy will, not awaiting for tomorrow, but yielding today. Lift us above unrighteous anger and mistrust into faith and hope and love by a simple and steadfast reliance on Thy sure will. In all things draw us to the mind of Christ, that Thy lost image may be traced again, and that thou mayest own us at once with Him and Thee.

O Lord, we pray Thee, give us Thy strength, that we may live more bravely and faithfully for the sake of our shipmates who are no longer with us here upon earth; and grant us so to serve Thee day and night that we may find eternal fellowship with them; Through Him who died and rose again for us all, Jesus Christ our Lord.

We earnestly pray, Father, that Thou wilt look with compassion upon each bereaved family, and pour Thy heavenly comfort into their hearts. Help them by faith to see their son, over whom they grieve, safe in that home where sin and sorrow cannot enter. Enrich with Thy presence those loved ones who mourn; abide in their homes; lift up their hearts; bless them with Thy favor which is better than life; and so guide them through the temptations and trials of this world that their reunited families may know the fulness of joy in Thy presence forever. Grant these petitions, O Lord, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

SERMON: Chaplain G. Weldon Gatlin, Preaching.

Those whom we lost this week in battle make us doubly sad. They were our shipmates so young and fine. They could have done so much, not only for us as individuals, but for our ship, for their loved ones, their communities and their churches. Our shipmates had ideals, hopes and dreams, and were willing to pay the price to make them come true.

We turned in memory to the ones we liked a great deal. So many things come surging into our minds, now that they have paid the supreme sacrifice. As we think about this shipmate and that one, we have a sense of regret for the things that we should have done for them and did not do. Our sincere appreciation for them comes to us with renewed strength. The loneliness that we feel is so keen that we cannot express all our thoughts.

Shipmates, whatever you do, do not let yourselves be poisoned by doubt and mistrust. These are utterly destructive. Ask instead, what shall I do now? There is always a way that is good. God is watching for a chance to help you find that way and place. At this moment start looking around and you will find a place to start.

The greatest thing you can do at this time is to turn sincerely to God. He made us, this world, death, life and immortality. His divine made it possible for us to be born, and in His divine wisdom he gave us death to translate us into a better world.

God will teach you that your shipmates is not dead, but alive. You should be very, very grateful to God for providing it even so.

God will give you real comfort that you need, if you turn to Him in prayer - real prayer. He knows your needs even better than you or your shipmates do. His strength and wisdom are beyond comprehension.

God will not relieve you of loneliness, but He will teach you that you must now so live that when you and your shipmates meet again, you will have a life and service record that you can point to with pride. A sailor was talking to me about having lost his shipmate, and said, "Padre, I do not want your sympathy, but instead your prayers, that when we meet again, he will be proud of me as his friend and shipmate." God will cooperate with us, if this is our sincere desire.

You can do many things now because you have faced and known sorrow. There is a deeper understanding and attitude toward life which comes only to the people that know sorrow and trouble. You will be able to help shipmates in whom you have not been interested before. This is the work of God in which He needs help from each of us.

So, there is work for you to do. Start it as quickly as you can, because the longer you postpone the opportunities that are peculiarly yours now, the harder it will be to begin. One must think just so long; then he must act or lose his strength.

One of the greatest things that Christ did for us was to banish fear of death. He told His disciples, just as He was going to the cross:

"In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

His spirit was that of the 23rd Psalm:

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me."

Shipmates! God, your shipmates and your loved ones expect us to make something good and fine from our sorrow. It is a sacred experience which leads you to the open door of the best things that life has.

HYMN: "The Old Rugged Cross"

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

HYMN: "How Firm a Foundation"

BENEDICTION

NAVY HYMN: "Eternal Father"

POSTLUDE: "National Anthem"

At this point salutes were fired by the firing squad.

"TAPS"