

Presbyterian Church of Henderson

Worship Service 10:00 AM

July 12, 2020

Vision Series

Ringing of the Bell

Welcome and Announcements Pastor Eric Hoey

Organ Prelude Kristin Jones, Director of Music

*Call to Worship Billie Richert

Your word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

Accept our offerings of praise, O LORD, and teach us your ordinances.

Your word is our heritage forever, the joy of our hearts.

We incline our hearts to perform your statutes forever, to the end. Amen.

*Hymn PH 263 "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"

1 Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

2 Unresting, unchanging, and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;
Thy justice, like mountains, high soaring above
Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.

3 To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small;
In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish; but naught changeth Thee.

4 Thou reignest in glory, Thou rulest in light,
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
All praise we would render; O help us to see
'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee!

*Call to Confession

The Scriptures are filled with stories of people just like us: men who grieved, women who questioned, siblings who did not get along, parents who chose favorites. God's word of grace is meant for people just like us. There is no need for pretense in this place. Let us go to God in prayer.

*Prayer of Confession (unison)

Patient and persistent God, we come, polished and presentable, to this comfortable room as if we knew what to expect, as if this were a safe and predictable place, as if we could simply observe. Holy One, forgive our tepid expectations. In the mystery of your love, overshadow us. Plant the seeds of

your gospel in each of our hearts until we bloom and spill with your passion to serve in a world that is wasting. Amen.

***Assurance of Pardon**

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. The Spirit of God dwells in you. If you hear nothing else today, hear these words: there is no condemnation. In the name of Jesus, you are forgiven.

***Passing the Peace**

Please turn and bow to someone out of respect and love— “The peace of Christ be with you”

***Gloria Patri (PH 579)**

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.

Prayer for Illumination

God of life, by the power of your Spirit come to us now. Plow our hearts with your living Word until we who are broken become fertile with your love, for we long to bear fruit in a world that is wasting. We pray in the name of Jesus, whose charge we bear. Amen.

First Reading Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!”

“Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

Special Music **Wayne Jones**

Second Reading 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Children's Sermon Pastor Eric

SERMON "SOW the Love of Christ"

1 Corinthians 13:7

- We have been going through our vision series for our church focusing upon the four major components of our ministry.
- We are a church that strives to:
 1. KNOW Christ - having a relationship with God through Christ. We do not only know about Christ, but know Christ personally. Our vision as a church is to help people know Christ personally.
 2. GROW in Faith - This is basic Christian discipleship where we strive to have a more fruitful life by growing in our faith.
 3. SOW the Love of Christ - Loving others by being the hands, feet, and words of Christ.
 4. GO where God calls - Being available to be used by God for the transformation of the world.
- This morning we will talk about SOW the love fo Christ
- What does it mean to SOW the Love of Christ?
- It is creating a mindset that the church exists for others more than ourselves.
- Marion Soards, New Int. Biblical Commentary writes, "The call to Christians is to live by the grace and power of God in such a way that God's own love forms and directs life so that God's love becomes the Christians' love."
- *John 13:35* *By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*
- In our text today, I am sure you have heard it read at many weddings.
- *1 Corinthians 13:7* *It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*
- Love in this context is always meant to be active, never passive, showing the world how to love as Christ loved the world.
- Paul's description of love is not only a list of ways that we should love, but a description of the way that Jesus actually loves.

A Person Who SOWs the Love of Christ

1. Bears all Things

- In the last phrase of this poetic monologue, it drives the heart and action of God's love fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ.
- The first phrase is that love "bears all things"
- It is the Greek word "stego" which means to roof over, to cover, to conceal.
- EX: The image is similar to Tupperware. Do they still make Tupperware? When plastics first came out, Tupperware hit the home food storage scene with it's snap seal of freshness.

- In the same way, love that bears all things is a love that covers, seals and protects others.
- In other translations you will see, NIV: It always protects, NKJ: Beareth all things, NLT: Never gives up, but most it is translated, "bears all things"
- What does this say about love?
- In one sense the word here is a simile or metaphor.
- To sow the love of Christ in this manner means to cover others just like a thatched roof covers the contents or inhabitants below.
- There are two applications to love bearing all things:
 1. You want to cover something to hide it.
 - The idea here is that love covers with silence - it keeps certain things secret, private or hidden.
 - Specifically love will conceal the imperfections, faults, and errors of others.
 - *1 Peter 4:8 Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins*
 - *Proverbs 10:12 Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses.*
 - In the life of Jesus, on the night of his arrest, he was brought before Caiaphas the high priest where they waited for someone to bring charges against Jesus. Someone said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'" The high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" But Jesus was silent. (Matthew 26:61-62)
 - Jesus did not complain, did not argue, did not reason for his innocence, but Jesus' love covered these actions of others with love and kept his mouth shut.
 - EX: In a marriage, it is so easy to dwell on all the imperfections, faults, and errors of the other. But love in this sense, does not dwell on complaining about those things but chooses to press forward in covering your spouse with love.
 - When love bears all things, it covers the negative parts, and endures to the greater goal of loving like Jesus.
 2. Covering something to keep away the forces that threaten.
 - In other words, love protects, preserves, and sustains by a protective covering.
 - Love keeps out harmful influences like a roof keeps out water.
 - In Jesus' ministry, he demonstrated his love to his disciples, as revealed in his prayer *John 17:12 While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled.*
 - The one who loves like this covers or protects those who you love and does not allow affliction, harm, insult, offense, or indignity to come upon the person being loved.
 - What would it look like if our church was known to love our community like that where people felt safe and protected from the negative influences of our society?

A Person Who SOWs the Love of Christ

2. **Believes all Things**

- This word belief comes from the Greek word "pistis" which is usually translated "faith."
- Some translations include NIV: love always trusts, NLT: never loses faith

- The word “believes” means to have faith with respect to a person or thing.
- It is to believe something to be true and worthy of being trusted.
- When love believes all things, there are two dimensions:
 1. Believes or has faith in God
 - We have our belief in God where our faith is the loving response to God’s love for us
 - Remember that this quality of love is one of action rather than a passive belief.
 - *James 2:14 What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works?*
 - Friends, our faith must be one of action that chooses to love our world the way Jesus loved it.
 - EX: In three weeks, we will be starting a six week series based upon a book by Les Parrott, Love Like That. This series will include sermons, and RightNow Media video series where we will discuss the concepts from the videos using Zoom.
 2. Love that believes all things has faith in others.
 - This characteristic of love is best expressed in the idiom: “Love gives the benefit of the doubt.”
 - This kind of love believes the best about others.
 - Because of our sin nature, we tend to think the best about ourselves, and the worst about others
 - When we do this, we open the door to slander, gossip, and other petty vices that we find in our society.
 - So to “believe in all things” means we are willing to trust one another.
 - But we cannot trust one another when we expect others to fail, or we don’t believe that others will respond to things like they should, or we doubt people are capable of doing what they promise.
 - Since this is about love, suspicion and doubt toward others do not indicate any affection or love.
 - Those who love is to trust the good intentions of others as much as possible.
 - Does this mean we become doormats for everyone to walk all over us?
 - No, God calls us to be wise, but at the same time to lean on the side of charity even if someone is taking us for a ride.
 - I like what this particular writer says about love that believes all things:
 - We must assume the worst about ourselves all the time and the best about others all the time. When we do this, something wonderful happens. We begin to celebrate God’s triumphs in others. We choose to see others as God sees them. We turn from envy to empathy. We choose to see others as God sees them: struggling fellow pilgrims.

A Person Who SOWs the Love of Christ

3. Hopes all Things

- The word for hope means “to look forward with confidence to that which is good and beneficial”
- Hope is an attitude that good will eventually come to those who may be going through hard times
- Loving others that “hopes all things” requires maintaining a measure of optimism on that person’s behalf.

- Leon Morris, 1 Corinthians, says, "Always hopes is the forward look. This is not an unreasoning optimism, which fails to take account of reality. It is rather a refusal to take failure as final. It is the confidence that looks to ultimate triumph by the grace of God."
- In other words, hope means a refusal to take failure as defeat and a trust in the ultimate success of God's plan.
- A key feature of hope is confidence, here confidence in God.
- It hopes that God will show mercy in a person's behalf.
- Hope is the conviction that there is God's purpose in life, and that his purposes will be realized no matter how distressing things look.
- What is wonderful for us is that we have our hope in God's promises, and that makes our lives bright.
- Because of what we have, in turn, we can share hope with those who are hopeless.
- ILL: Victor Frankl, the Austrian psychotherapist ... concluded that when there is a driving passion or a great purpose in life, the physical body is more likely to survive. When he was imprisoned at Auschwitz during the Second World War, he and a number of other doctors observed a strange phenomenon in that physically intolerable, life-suffocating camp. Survival did not appear to depend on the health of the inmates. Often the young, the healthy and the strong would die, while the old and frail and sick would survive. Those who did survive had a common sense of purpose and hope for the future.
- In the same way, the Christian who's love "hopes all things" points people toward God so that they can help others have more meaning and purpose in life.

A Person Who SOWs the Love of Christ

4. Endures all Things

- The word for endure means to continue to bear up despite difficulty and suffering.
- In Luke 22:42 Jesus is in the Garden of Gethsemane, which is at the foot of the Mount of Olives, he prays "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me." Can you imagine the fear and agony he was holding as the sacrificial lamb of the world? Then he continues in his prayer, "yet, not my will but yours be done."
- Jesus endured that difficult moment and continued to his arrest and ultimately the cross, why, because of love that "endures all things."
- So when our love endures all things we model after Jesus...even to our own discomfort for the sake of others.
- It is loving when things become difficult and physically challenging
- EX: The act of giving blood is a loving act that endures all things especially when you are a Power Red donor at the Red Cross. This is where they take your blood, send it through an aphaeresis machine, and returns what is remaining back into your blood stream. When you think it is all over, they do it again one more time. This a simple way of demonstrating love that endures all things.
- Another meaning of the word is to remain or stay behind, when others have departed.
- EX: Presbyterian Disaster Assistance goes to disaster locations in competition with all the other recovery organizations, but what is unique about Presbyterian Church's disaster recover is that it stays long after everyone has gone home.

CLOSE:

- God's love, which transcends the boundaries of selfishness or self-centeredness in the righteous pursuit of reconciliation and redemption (Marion Soards, New Int. Biblical Commentary)
- And the vehicle that God uses to deliver that love is you and me.
- This is why one component of the vision of this church is to SOW the Love of Christ.

Offering

We offer our gifts because tendrils of God's love have worked their ways into the soil of our hearts. Sisters and brothers, let us yield our lives to God's abundant harvest.

***Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessing flow. Praise Him all creatures here below.

Praise him above the heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

***Prayer of Dedication**

Giver of life, we do not want the cares of the world and the lure of wealth to choke your word among us. As the sower casts seeds abundantly, hopefully, so we long to participate in your seeding of the world. Receive these gifts as tokens of our lives. Send your cultivating Spirit to work among us until we yield and grow in grace, for we pray in the name of Jesus, who came out of love for the world. Amen.

***Affirmation of Faith** (Apostle's Creed)

Minister:

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, what do you believe?

All:

I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Holy God, we were yours before we drew breath, and still we will be yours when the pulse of life ceases. In every fragile, reckless moment, we belong to you.

We thank you for the desire of our parents who gave us life. May the love we have received spill gratitude from our hearts. May the wounds we carry open our hearts to the needs of others. May we recognize in your mercy the faithfulness that judges and redeems every human bond.

We lift to you now all that seems irreconcilable in our families ... in our schools and workplaces ... in our nation ... in your church ... in your world ... We pray for those we identify as leaders in every sphere of life.... We pray for our president and for all whose decisions weigh heavily on others.... Even so, Lord, give us the courage to name ourselves as those whose responsibility is great. Teach us to act, to tend the world you love: to sow more than we reap, to heal more than we wound, to make room for others as you made room for us.

Redeeming God, stake your claim upon us now, until we hear your gospel echo in each stranger's story and see your image reflected on every wounded face, for we pray in the name of Jesus, who unsettles our lives for the sake of your love, and now, with confidence as children of God, let us pray:

Lord's Prayer

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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory forever.
Amen.

***Hymn** PH 417 "Christ is Made the Sure Foundation"

1 Christ is made the sure foundation,
Christ the head and cornerstone,
Chosen of the Lord and precious,
Binding all the church in one;
Holy Zion's help forever,
And our confidence alone.

2 To this temple, where we call You,
Come, O Lord of Hosts, today;
With Your wonted lovingkindness
Hear Your people as they pray.
And Your fullest benediction
Shed within its walls always.

3 Here bestow to all Your servants
What they ask of You to gain,
What they gain from You forever
With the blessed to retain,
And hereafter in Your glory
Evermore with You to reign.

4 Laud and honor to the Father,
Laud and honor to the Son,
Laud and honor to the Spirit,
Ever Three and ever one;
One in might and one in glory
While unending ages run.

***Benediction**

***Organ Postlude**