

# Presbyterian Church of Henderson

Worship Service 10:00 AM

May 24, 2020

**Ringing of the Bell** Gary Thomas

**Welcome and Announcements** Pastor Eric Hoey

**Organ Prelude** Kristin Jones, Director of Music

**\*Call to Worship** Walt Dickinson

Let the righteous be joyful! Let them rejoice before God.

**Let us all be jubilant with joy!**

Sing to God, all peoples of the world. Sing praises to God most high.

**From the sanctuary of heaven, God gives life and renews the face of the earth.**

Let the righteous be joyful! Let them rejoice before God.

**Let us all be jubilant with joy!**

**\*Hymn** PH 150 "Come Christians, Join to Sing"

1 Come, Christians, join to sing

Alleluia! Amen!

Loud praise to Christ our King;

Alleluia! Amen!

Let all, with heart and voice,

Before His throne rejoice;

Praise is His gracious choice;

Alleluia! Amen!

2 Come, lift your hearts on high;

Alleluia! Amen!

Let praises fill the sky;

Alleluia! Amen!

He is our guide and friend;

To us He'll condescend;

His love shall never end;

Alleluia! Amen!

3 Praise yet our Christ again;

Alleluia! Amen!

Life shall not end the strain;

Alleluia! Amen!

On heaven's blissful shore

His goodness we'll adore,

Singing forevermore,

"Alleluia! Amen!"

**\*Call to Confession**

Brother and sisters, God not only desires our repentance, but longs to offer us forgiveness. Therefore, cast all your anxiety on God, because God cares for you eternally.

**\*Prayer of Confession** (unison)

**Loving God, we confess that we do not always bring honor and glory to your name. We are rebellious and weak; we flee before your goodness. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us by the grace and mercy of Christ, that we may rise up again in peace to love and serve your world. Amen.**

**\*Assurance of Pardon**

Sisters and brothers, the Spirit of God is resting on you, to restore, support, and strengthen you. Therefore, be at peace in the One who forgives and loves you; rise up and give God thanks.

### **\*Passing the Peace**

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!

#### **And also with you!**

Let us share with one another a sign of Christ's Peace.

### **\*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**

Spirit of Glory, Spirit of God, bless us with a word of life this day to restore, support, and strengthen us as we seek to be one with you. Amen.

### **First Reading** Acts 1:6-14

6 So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." 9 When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. 10 While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. 11 They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. 13 When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14 All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

### **Special Music** "Behold God" by Jerry Williams, Wayne & Kristin Jones, vocalists

### **Second Reading** 1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11

12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. 14 If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.

6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. 7 Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. 8 Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. 10 And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who

has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. 11 To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.

## Children's Sermon Pastor Eric

### SERMON "Qualities of Unwavering Faith"

1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11

May 24, 2020

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- As we come to the conclusion of our series on Standing Firm on God's Grace, the end of the book of 1 Peter offers final exhortations to his readers to encourage them in their faith.
- How does a person live faithfully under oppressing and difficult circumstances?
- I believe Peter lays out for us 5 qualities of unwavering faith in the midst of trying and difficult circumstances.

#### 1. **Focus on Our Identity in Christ** (4:12-14)

*12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.*

- In verse 12, Peter is telling his readers to not be surprised at the "fiery" circumstances they are experiencing.
- It is interesting, during the persecution of Christians in Rome, believers would be dragged from their families, dipped in tar, and lit on fire to be used to illuminate Emperor Nero's evening garden parties and other public places.
- Peter may have believed that the regional officials were likely to follow their emperor's example throughout Asia Minor.
- The term fiery has reference to that, or it could be a metaphor for the difficult and unfavorable circumstance.
- This should not take Christians by surprise.

*13 But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings,*

- In the next verse 13, he tells his readers to rejoice in the fact that our suffering finds its significance, identification in Christ's suffering for us.
  - The idea of suffering because Christ suffered for us has been repeated throughout this letter, what IS new is the idea of rejoicing during suffering.
  - Suffering for Christ's sake should cause rejoicing because through suffering we further identify with Christ.
  - Rather than looking negatively at their suffering, Peter is calling Christians to look positively to Jesus and rejoice in their own sufferings.
  - Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:10 describes his hardships and rejoicing in the Lord — beginning from verse 4 "but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, 5 beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger;...8 We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; 9 as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; 10 as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything."
  - In James 1:2-3
- so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed.*

- At the end of verse 13, Peter points to the hope at the return of Jesus Christ all will see the glory and splendor of the coming of the age where Christ is the victor and all of his followers share and rejoice in his victory.

*14 If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.*

- The last verse 14, Peter points to Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5:11 "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account."
- Anything we suffer for the sake of Christ is a privilege rather than a penalty.
- Peter says, we are blessed.
- In the midst of all suffering, we are to look to Christ as our identity, hope, and blessing

1. Focus on Our Identity in Christ (4:12-14)

## **2. Practice Humility** (5:6)

*6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time.*

- The Revised Common Lectionary skips several verses, to bring a conclusion to the 1 Peter.
- In the verse prior, verse 5, Peter is urging the believers to humble themselves in relation to one another, and now in verse 6, he encourages them to be humble before God.
- Edmund Clowney in his commentary on 1 Peter writes, "The humility that serves others is found at the throne of God's grace."
- So what does this mean?
- Peter wants the readers to subject themselves to God in such a manner that they put their confidence and dependence in God alone.
- I like what Norman Hillyer writes in the New International Bible Commentary says, "The foundation of Christian humility is a dependent attitude toward God and his ability to rescue. That involves turning one's attention away from self and away from circumstances, however pressing and however painful."
- So how does a person practice humility?
- ASK, SEEK, KNOCK:
  1. ASK for help when you need it. I notice that my own pride locks out humility because I think I can do it all by myself. Rugged individualism.
  2. SEEK feedback from others regularly. Feedback is the mirror to improvement.
  3. LISTEN: spend time listening to others. This is a great act of humility. Be active and present in the moment by listening to others. When we are focused upon ourselves and our own situations, we WILL have a difficult time listening to others.
  4. PRAY to model our lives after Christ's own humility

1. Focus on Our Identity in Christ (4:12-14)

2. Practice Humility (5:6)

## **3. Cast Anxiety upon God** (v. 7)

*7 Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.*

- Peter's affirmation is based upon the *Psalms 55:22 Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.*
- The psalmist fears arise from the attacks of false friends.
- Peter is calling for humility in situations of hostility, betrayal, and persecution.

- Rather than the temptation to react in pride as Peter did in the Garden of Gethsemane, (When he cut off the ear of the guard with his sword) he is calling his readers to literally “throw on,” like garments on a donkey, their feelings of distress or misfortune on the Lord.
- What is interesting here is that the grammar of the word “cast” denotes an act once and for all, implying that we are to throw our whole lives into the care of God.
- Of all the religions of the world, only the Judeo-Christian system teaches that God cares for His children.
- *Matt 6:25* “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? .....32 For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.”
- Our confidence rests upon the fact that Christ is genuinely concerned for our welfare.
- Illustration: Doug Miller reports: At a business park just outside the loop in northwest Houston, a laid off energy worker named Shawn Baker has launched a strange business encouraging people to take out their frustrations on household furniture. Tantrums LLC invites frustrated Houstonians to demolish rooms full of stuff with sledgehammers and other implements of destruction. “You can rent a room, either ten minutes or fifteen, and destroy the contents of the room,” Baker explained. “Whatever I put in there, you can destroy it, either with golf clubs, baseball bats, lead pipes, sledgehammers and whatever else I can think of that I’m going to bring up here.” Customers choose their instrument of destruction and walk into a room equipped with various pieces of furniture – from dishes to desks to television sets to household appliances – then they start smashing everything in sight to smithereens. Baker dreamed up the idea for her business after attending a concert where they were smashing old furniture.
- Although smashing furniture may serve to vent what’s built up inside you, there is a more constructive alternative that Peter suggests.
- *7 Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.*

1. Focus on Our Identity in Christ (4:12-14)
2. Practice Humility (5:6)
3. Cast Anxiety upon God (v. 7)
4. **Resist the Enemy** (v. 8-9)

*8 Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour.*

- Peter here uses a metaphor of a roaring lion to symbolize the devil who is prowling around always ready to attack.
- We hardly realize how vulnerable to attack when we are in unpleasant circumstances.
- When our natural instinct kicks-in, and you find yourself behaving according to our flesh, what Peter calls: malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander (1 Peter 2:1), the admonition for us is to KEEP ALERT.
- Like a prowling lion the enemy is looking for someone to consume so that they would engage the world according to the flesh rather than the Spirit of God.
- For us to not believe that we engage in spiritual warfare on a regular basis is, according to Peter, is a person who is not alert.
- This means we need to keep an eye on ourselves, and make the necessary course corrections when our flesh is out of control.

*9 Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering.*

- Peter admonishes his readers and us to be aware of the enemy's presence and to take steps to resist the devil.
- Christians may stand firm against the devil only if they depend entirely on Christ.
- Notice when Peter states to stand firm on "YOUR" faith.
- A faith that is not nurtured to resist the enemy is not a strength that will sustain a believer in the long run.
- We need to understand the important of nurturing our faith to withstand the attacks of the enemy and the potential of being devoured with sin.
- Peter offers a final hope that the person who is sustaining these temptations is not alone, but people in all the world are experiencing the same difficulties and suffering.
- Be steadfast and resist the enemy.

Qualities of Unwavering Faith:

1. Focus on Our Identity in Christ (4:12-14)
2. Practice Humility (5:6)
3. Cast Anxiety upon God (v. 7)
4. Resist the Enemy (v. 8-9)
5. **Experience God's Grace** (vv. 10-11)

*10 And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you.*

- In these final words in 1 Peter, Peter closes his letter as he began it, rejoicing in the incredible grace of God in Christ.
- The hope that sustains the Christians that are experiencing persecution (and even us in our difficulties) is hope in the sovereign grace of God
- In a closing word of benediction to his readers, he assures them that suffering does not last, and God's grace is eternal.
- Peter offers 4 ways the power of grace will make us complete in God's work in us:
  - Restoration: the word means put to order, to make right. Remember when Peter, was restored on the shore of Galilee? Peter is telling his readers that if they endure the suffering of their present circumstances, God will make them right by completing us and perfecting us.
  - Support: this word means to cause someone to become more firm and unchanging in attitude and belief. God wants to support us through various trials to give us a greater support of who God is in our lives
  - Strength: this word strength means to cause someone to become more able or capable. God wants you to become more able and capable to do more things in God's global plan
  - Stability: this word literally means to construct a foundation. Peter wants his readers too become a strong foundation for belief and practice.

*11 To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.*

- Overwhelmed by the promise of God's triumphant grace, the apostle can only worship God acknowledging that God holds the power for people to overcome their difficulties forever.
- Peter is not wishing it, or even praying it, but simply rejoicing in it.
- The power to accomplish the wonder of God's redemptive plan will be forever in the actions of God, himself.

## Offering

Jesus said to the Father, "All mine are yours, and all yours are mine." Therefore, let us offer to God this day our lives and labors in service of Christ's love.

### \*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

Glorious God, everything that is given to us rains forth out of the abundance of your love, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Bless these gifts and our lives together that all we are and all we offer give glory to you; in the name of Christ, who is the way, truth, and life. 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

Redeeming God, you call us to devote ourselves constantly to prayer for the sake of Jesus Christ. Therefore, let us offer our prayers this day on behalf of your church and the world, saying, fill us with your Spirit's power, **that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with you.**

Rescuing God, parent of orphans and protector of widows, you give the desolate a home to live in and lead out the prisoners into prosperity. Help us to order the patterns of our common life to support the health of your human family and the welfare of your world. Fill us with your Spirit's power, **that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with you.**

Steadfast God, you have given to your church the inheritance of faith in Christ alone, and bestowed your Spirit's love upon us to make us one in you. Help us to grow in strength and courage to witness to this hope: that all may find your saving love eternally in Christ. Fill us with your Spirit's power, **that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with you.**

Life-giving God, you send rain in abundance to relieve the parched crops and thirsty land, and make clean the winds of heaven. Help us to find sustainable solutions as we seek to honor and care for the well-being of your creation. Fill us with your Spirit's power, **that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with you.**

Loving God, you heard the sufferings of your people, listened to our cries, and sent a Son into our world that was no stranger to our pain. Help us to offer your healing and compassion as we minister to others in the mercy of your Christ. Fill us with your Spirit's power, **that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with you.**

Resurrecting God, you draw near to those who are sick and dying, and you call them home to you. May we all know the joy of life eternal shared with you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, 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 564 "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies"

1 O beautiful for spacious skies,  
For amber waves of grain,  
For purple mountain majesties  
Above the fruited plain!  
America! America!  
God shed His grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with \*brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea!

3 O beautiful for heroes proved  
In liberating strife,  
Who more than self their country loved,  
And mercy more than life!  
America! America!  
May God thy gold refine  
Till all success be nobleness  
And every gain divine.

2 O beautiful for pilgrim feet,  
Whose stern, impassioned stress  
A thoroughfare for freedom beat  
Across the wilderness!  
America! America!  
God mend thine every flaw,  
Confirm thy soul in self-control,  
Thy liberty in law!

4 O beautiful for patriot dream  
That sees beyond the years  
Thine alabaster cities gleam,  
Undimmed by human tears!  
America! America!  
God shed His grace on thee  
And crown thy good with \*brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea!

**\*Benediction**

The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace both now and evermore.

**\*Organ Postlude**