

**Presbyterian Church of Henderson**

Worship Service 10:00 AM

October 31, 2021

*Stewardship Series*

**Ringing of the Bell**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Organ Prelude**

Kristin Jones, Director of Music

**\*Call to Worship**

The Lord offered himself—

**once and for all—**

so that our conscience can be free from all things that lead to death.

**Let us freely go and worship the living God!**

**\*Hymn** PH 260 "A Mighty Fortress is Our God"

1 A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;  
Our helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing:  
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;  
His craft and power are great, and, armed with cruel hate,  
On earth is not his equal.

2 Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing;  
Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choosing:  
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He;  
Lord Sabaoth, His Name, from age to age the same,  
And He must win the battle.

3 And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,  
We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to triumph through us:  
The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him;  
His rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure,  
One little word shall fell him.

4 That word above all earthly powers, no thanks to them, abideth;  
The Spirit and the gifts are ours through Him Who with us sideth:  
Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;  
The body they may kill: God's truth abideth still,  
His kingdom is forever.

**\*Call to Confession**

Let us confess our sins to God, from whom our help comes.

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

**O God, you have been faithful, yet we have not loved you with our whole hearts.  
You showed us how to love our fellow human beings, yet we have not loved our  
neighbors as ourselves. Turn us back to you, O God, that we may follow your  
commandments; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**\*Assurance of Pardon**

Beloved, the Lord is loving, merciful, and just. Therefore, we are reconciled to God and to one another, that we might walk in peace and love.

**\*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.

### **\*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.

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

### **Prayer for Illumination**

O Lord, you are our God. By the power of your Holy Spirit, teach us through your Word to follow after you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

### **First Reading** Proverbs 3:1-10

My child, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments; for length of days and years of life and abundant welfare they will give you.

Do not let loyalty and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. So you will find favor and good repute in the sight of God and of people.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. It will be a healing for your flesh and a refreshment for your body.

Honor the LORD with your substance and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.

### **Special Music** Piano and Organ Duet, Susan Thomas piano

### **Second Reading** Matthew 6:25-34

"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? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

"So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.

### **Children's Sermon** Kristin Jones

### **SERMON** "Essential Fertilizers for Stewardship" Proverbs 3:1-10

- Today and to the end of the year, we will be taking a break for the Life of Apostle Paul, and begin a three part Stewardship series called "Nurturing Stewardship"
- This week and next week preaching on how to Nurture Stewardship: Essential Fertilizers, Creating Stewards, and our series will conclude on Stewardship Sunday, Nov. 14 with a guest speaker with the title of his message: "Gratified."

- Then we will have a Thanksgiving Service, and in the following week, we begin our first week of Advent with a series called "Making Christmas Meaningful."
- Every spring I enjoy growing herbs in pots.
- One thing I have noticed is that when you plant your herbs in pot of cheap soil (because I used to buy the cheapest soil that I can find) they do not grow as well as the soils that have the finest ingredients and fertilizers.
- This tells me that plants really thrive in the nutrient rich soils rather than the cheaper soils that contain sticks, wood chips and other filler materials.
- In the same way, when we come to the idea of nurturing stewardship in our lives, there are some basic foundational fertilizers that every soil needs.

## 1. Knowing God

*1 My child, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments; 2 for length of days and years of life and abundant welfare they will give you.*

- First thing to notice in this text is that the writer says, "My child"
- This particular proverb illuminates the relationship of God as the teacher to Israel as the son.
  - *Deuteronomy 6:1 Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the ordinances—that the LORD your God charged me to teach you to observe in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy*
- This verse describes the role of God as the teacher to the nation of Israel.
- What is touching here is that the teacher or God himself affectionately calls his followers "my child."
- I love that!
- In my household, we raised four children where I affectionately get to call each of them "my child or my son or my daughter."
- They came from me, no one else has that privilege!
- In the same way, those who belong to God are affectionately described from God the Father as "my child."
- You are God's child, fearfully and wonderfully made.
- In order to know God better is to have the basic understanding that YOU are God's precious child.
- SO, God the teacher is asking his beloved to do one thing—remember His teaching or commands.
- God's commands are to be upon the hearts of His children.
- Why the heart?
- Because the heart in biblical language is the core, the identity, the centrality of who you are.
- It is to live and breathe the principles of the Word of God in all that we do.
- You see, it is one thing to know about God and another thing to know God.
- Knowing **ABOUT** God stays in our head, but knowing God down into our hearts.
- It is almost like God is saying, "I want to be the core of you, my thoughts-your thoughts, my actions your actions, my hopes and dreams to be your hopes and dreams."
- The result, "for length of days and years of life and abundant welfare they [God's commands stored in our hearts] will give you."
- This is basically saying that when we treasure God's Word in our hearts, we know God, and live into the signs of God's blessing and shalom.
- The word shalom includes the idea of peace and prosperity, but it has a deeper meaning of wholeness, health and harmony.
- In this fertile soil environment, we begin to trust God through "Knowing Him."

## 2. Reflecting God

*3 Do not let loyalty and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. 4 So you will find favor and good repute in the sight of God and of people.*

- With God's Word in our hearts, the writer here offers two qualities that should never leave us: loyalty and faithfulness

- The word for loyalty is “hesed” or a type of love that keeps the commitment that has been made.
- The word for “faithfulness” refers to dependability.
- These two attributes are the cardinal virtues found in the Old Testament and also are attributes of God Himself.
- When we live into these qualities, we demonstrate to the world that God is the source of all that we do.
- The attributes are so important that they are to be **permanent qualities of our lives**.
- They are written on our hearts, the place that motivates us from within, and figuratively tied to our necks so that all may see on the outside.
- Loyalty and faithfulness to God are to be the very part of our nature.
- It is like the fertilizer that is placed in the soil to make everything grow better.
- SO when God’s Word is written on our hearts it shapes our motives and actions
- Two essential qualities we need to continue to be a part of us is loyalty and faithfulness.
- The end result is what is seen on the outside of the person which is good favor in the eyes of God and others around you.
- This is how we reflect God in our lives with loyalty and dependability.

### 3. Trusting God

*5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight.*

- Next is an admonishment to God’s children to TRUST in the Lord.
- Well, what does that mean?
- The word “Trust” carries the force of relying on someone or something for security.
- We are to place our confidence in the Lord and not in human understanding.
- This is difficult for many of us.
- I grew up hearing my father telling me to never trust anyone, but yourself.
- But the text here is telling me to trust God and not depend upon myself.
- This is contrary to everything I have been taught.
- ILL: [14 years ago] The Department of Transportation once set aside \$200 million dollars for research and testing of an automated Highway System. This system would purportedly relieve traffic woes by placing all cars that entered the highway on “super cruise control,” allowing them to move in unison as they traveled in heavily congested cities.
  - Such travel would be made possible by using special magnets embedded in the asphalt every four feet, which would transfer signals between the vehicles and a main computer system. Steering, acceleration and braking would be controlled by sensors, computer navigation systems and cameras along the side of the road. Control would be returned to drivers as they exited the highway.
  - According to Mike Doble, Buick’s technology manager at the time, “The only thing we can’t do yet is get people to comfortably trust the system. It’s not a technology issue.” Mr. Doble asks, “Would ‘you’ drive, closely spaced, at high speeds, through San Diego?”
  - In a paper prepared for the University of California Transportation Center, Sanghyun Cheon writes, “...the extent to which motorists would accept reduced manual control of their vehicles and be willing to travel in automated vehicles at close following distance, on narrower lanes, and at higher speeds is not yet clear.”
  - The USDOT cancelled the NAHSC program in 1998, citing budget pressures, though many conjecture that the funding actually dried up, at least in large part, due to the public’s lack of enthusiasm (e.g., lack of trust and comfort level with the system).
- God has established a failsafe system for us as we travel through life—its called trust.
- Trust is the super cruise control where we do not rely upon ourselves, but trust in the Lord for guidance, protection, and provision.
- Rather than insisting on doing life our own way, we need to let Jesus take control of our lives through this thing called trust.
- How does a person do this?

*6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. 7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. 8 It will be a healing for your flesh and a refreshment for your body.*

- There are three ways right here in the text:
  1. Acknowledge him
    - When acknowledge God is all that we do, the Lord will make our paths straight.
    - This mean more than guidance.
    - It means God removes the obstacles, making a smooth path
  2. Fear the Lord
    - Begins with knowing that God is holy, righteous and just
    - Means to be in reverent awe of His holiness—remember when God revealed himself at Mount Sinai, they all trembled in fear because of His great power
    - This type of reverential fear often produces faith—it is being moved to deeper belief and trust in God realizing that we are sinners before holy God
    - Finally fear of the Lord is recognizing that God is angry about sin and has the power to punish those who stand against Him and break His laws
  3. Turn away from evil
    - *Prov. 8:13 The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.*
    - Let's be honest, inside of every person is a desire to flirt with evil
    - Turning away means when we are confronted with evil, we cannot just think it away, because it continues to sit, right in front of us always luring us down its sinful path
    - We need to take responsibility and literally turn away from it.
- In verse 8 *"It will be a healing for your flesh and a refreshment for your body."*
- Everyone today is into this wellness program that brings healing and refreshment.
- In fact we have two nutrition/heal/wellness stores here in Henderson. They both sell juice.
- But the original wellness program comes from God who called us to: 1. Acknowledge Him, 2. Fear Him, and 3. Turn away from evil.

#### 4. Giving to God

*9 Honor the LORD with your substance and with the first fruits of all your produce; 10 then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.*

- Now at first glance, this sounds like a get rich formula.
- Honor God with your wealth and you will be rich!
- But we need to understand that this has deep roots for the people of Israel.
- The people of god were told to offer to God their first fruits of what the land produces.
- *Deut. 26:10 So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me." You shall set it down before the LORD your God and bow down before the LORD your God.*
- This particular action was a liturgical way of recognizing God's gift of the promised land and that the worshipper themselves were a part of that gift.
- To offer the firstfruits to God was a way of celebrating God's deliverance and God's provision—and a means by which each person could appreciate that he or she was part of that story.
- So here in Proverbs, the admonition stands true in two ways:
- First, when we give our first fruits, it is a response to God's generosity—thanking God for the land and all its wealth
- Second, when we give our first fruits, it is a statement of gratitude that we are included in God's gracious deliverance and provision
- On a different occasion, King David led his people to offer their first fruits.
- *1Chr. 29:12-14 Riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might; and it is in your hand to make great and to give strength to all. 13 And now, our God, we give thanks to you and praise your glorious name. 14 "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to make this freewill offering? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you.*

*10 then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.*

- Verse 10, describes that God promises that he will bless such a person who honors him with lavish harvests to the point that his barns will be filled to overflowing and his wine vats will be filled with ample supplies.

- IN GENERAL, it is true that godliness results in gain, that piety brings prosperity.
- But this kind of generalization does not prevent God from making exceptions.
- It is not formulaic but a general principle.

### Essential Fertilizers for Stewardship

1. Knowing God
2. Obeying Reflecting God
3. Trusting God
4. Giving to God

### \*Hymn PH 191 "God is Our refuge and Our Strength"

1 God is our refuge and our strength,  
Our ever-present aid,  
And therefore, though the earth remove,  
We will not be afraid;

2 Though hills amid the seas be cast,  
Though foaming waters roar,  
Yea, though the mighty billows shake  
The mountains on the shore.

3 Where God abides a river flows;  
That city will rejoice.  
But nations fear and kingdoms shake  
Before God's thundering voice.

4 Since God is in the midst of it,  
The city walls shall stand,  
Secure and safe with God's sure help,  
When trouble is at hand.

### Offering

Our God is ever faithful and provides everything that we need. Let us praise the Lord through our giving, that our offerings may be acceptable to God.

#### \*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

Dear God, we offer you these gifts that they might build up the work of your kingdom. Make us living witnesses to the way of your righteous reign. For the glory of your son, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. 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

O God, who is righteous and just, you watch over us all and lift up the lowly. You provide all our needs and are always faithful. To you, O faithful One, we lift prayers for ourselves and our neighbors.

We pray for the church, that we might execute justice, feed the hungry, and watch over those in need. . . . God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for the world and its leaders, that they might turn to the way of righteousness and free those who are oppressed. . . . God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for those who are bowed down, captive, or alone. Help us to be their keepers so that they might be lifted up. . . . God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, that they might find restoration in your healing. . . . God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We lift up to you the silent prayers we hold in our hearts. . . . God, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all praise and honor are due to you, almighty God, now and forever, 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 371 "Lift High the Cross"

Refrain:

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim  
Till all the world adore His sacred name.

1. Come, Christians, follow where our Savior trod,  
The Lamb victorious, Christ, the Son of God. (Refrain)

2. Each newborn servant of the Crucified  
Bears on the brow the seal of Christ who died. (Refrain)

3 O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,  
Your death has brought us life eternally. (Refrain)

4 So shall our song of triumph ever be:  
Praise to the Crucified for victory. (Refrain)

**\*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** (please be seated for the postlude)