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THE STORY: PAUL'S FINAL DAYS

The Second Sunday after Pentecost, June 14, 2020

As Paul remained under house arrest in Rome, he knew that his life was near its end. He writes to the church in Corinth and shares the trials and struggles that he has endured for the sake of the Gospel. Jesus, in his words to the disciples before the crucifixion, tells of the hatred of the world for the Gospel. Through our baptism, we are called to spread the same Gospel, knowing that trials, struggles, and hatred will be part of our journey. But Psalm 46 reminds us that God is our refuge and strength. God will be with us and will enable us to share the Good News of salvation through Christ.

(P: pastor; C: congregation)

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **C: Amen**

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **C: Amen**

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination

P: Most merciful God,

C: we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen

P: Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **C: Amen**

P: Bless the Lord, O my soul: **C: And all that is within me, bless His holy name.**

HYMN: "We Praise You, O God" (See second sheet)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray. Lord God, through the preaching of your apostle Paul, you established one Church from among the nations. As we celebrate his life's work of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we pray that we may follow his example and be witnesses to the truth in your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C: Amen**

FIRST LESSON: Psalm 46, *The Lord of hosts is with us*

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. ²Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, ³though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. ⁴There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts. ⁷The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. ⁸Come, behold the works of the LORD, how he has brought desolations on the earth. ⁹He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the chariots with fire. ¹⁰"Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!" ¹¹The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

P: The word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God!**

SECOND LESSON: 2 Corinthians 11:16-33, *Paul's story*

I repeat, let no one think me foolish. But even if you do, accept me as a fool, so that I too may boast a little. ¹⁷What I am saying with this boastful confidence, I say not as the Lord would but as a fool. ¹⁸Since many boast according to the flesh, I too will boast. ¹⁹For you gladly bear with fools, being wise yourselves! ²⁰For you bear it if someone makes slaves of you, or devours you, or takes advantage of you, or puts on airs, or strikes you in the face. ²¹To my shame, I must say, we were too weak for that! But whatever anyone else dares to boast of—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast of that. ²²Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they offspring of Abraham? So am I. ²³Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. ²⁴Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; ²⁶on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers ²⁷in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. ²⁸And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. ²⁹Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant? ³⁰If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. ³¹The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. ³²At Damascus, the governor under King Aretas was guarding the city of Damascus in order to seize me, ³³but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall and escaped his hands.

P: The word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God!**

GOSPEL: John 15:18-27, *Hatred of the world*

P: The Holy Gospel according to John, the fifteenth chapter. **C: Glory to you, O Lord!**

“If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. ¹⁹If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. ²¹But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me. ²²If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³whoever hates me hates my Father also. ²⁴If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. ²⁵But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: ‘They hated me without a cause.’ ²⁶“But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. ²⁷And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.

P: The Gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ!**

SERMON

HYMN: “Hope of the World” (*See second sheet*)

PRAYERS

Prayers and intercessions are said by the pastor. In concluding the prayers the pastor says:

P: Let us pray with confidence in the words our Savior gave us:

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

BENEDICTION

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. **C: Amen**

DISMISSAL HYMN: “O God, Our Help in Ages Past” LBW 320 (*See second sheet*)

HYMNS FOR JUNE 14, 2020

HYMN: “We Praise You, O God” LBW 241

(Text and tune: Public Domain)

We praise you, O God, our redeemer, creator;
In grateful devotion our tribute we bring.
We lay it before you; we kneel and adore you;
We bless your holy name; glad praises we sing.
We worship you, God of our fathers, we bless you;
Through trial and tempest our guide you have been.
When perils o’er take us; you will not forsake us,
And with your help, O Lord, our struggles we win.
With voices united our praises we offer
And gladly our songs of thanksgiving we raise.
With you, Lord, beside us, your strong arm will guide us.
To you, our great redeemer, forever be praise!

HYMN: “Hope of the World” LBW 493

Hope of the world, thou Christ of great compassion; Speak to our fearful hearts by conflict rent.
Save us, thy people, from consuming passion, Who by our own false hopes and aims are spent.
Hope of the world, God’s gift from highest heaven, Bringing to hungry souls the bread of life.
Still let thy Spirit unto us be given To heal earth’s wounds and end our bitter strife.
Hope of the world, who by thy cross didst save us
From death and dark despair, from sin and guilt.
We render back the love thy mercy gave us; Take thou our lives and use them as thou wilt.

DISMISSAL HYMN: “O God, Our Help in Ages Past” LBW 320

(Text and tune: Public Domain)

O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come.
Our shelter from the stormy blast, And our eternal home.
Under the shadow of your throne Your saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is your arm alone, And our defense is sure.
O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,
Still be our guard while troubles last And our eternal home!

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Faith Memorial Lutheran Church, Pastor Eric Schoech
753 N. Calumet Ave., Valparaiso, Indiana 46383 (219) 462-7684 www.faitervalpo.org

