

Home Service for July 5, 2020

Welcome and Announcements

Although we cannot meet together in the church building we can share worship together in our individual homes. We will continue to work to stay connected and be there for each other during the difficult time. We are going through something never experienced before. I hope this will help you worship God today with those who are in your home. Add hymns if possible, too.

Gathering Prayer:

We gather together this morning, O Lord, eager to feel your healing touch for our wounded spirits and weary souls. Flood our lives with your peace. Shine your light of joy in our souls this day, for we pray in Christ's Name. AMEN.

"Come to me and I will give you rest," Jesus promises. Where do we go, and to whom do we turn, to discover the truth of these words?

Opening Prayer:

Lord of peace and hope, we open our hearts to you this day. Be with us as we hear your words of inspiration and healing. Guide our hearts and spirits as we seek to be witnesses to your redeeming and reconciling love. In Jesus' Name, we offer this prayer. AMEN.

Prayer of Confession:

Merciful and loving God, we are so grateful for your redeeming love for each one of us. We confess that there have been times of doubt in our spirits. We confess that when the times of difficulties are upon us, we don't always believe that you will take our burdens. We feel we have to always be in control, trying to demand the desired outcome. Help us to place our trust in you. Remind us that you surround us continually with your care, you never just let us go to drift aimlessly about. Open our hearts and spirits again to your healing powers. For we pray these things in the name of Jesus, the one who will take our burdens and give us peace. AMEN.

Words of Assurance

Hear the good news, dear friends! Jesus releases us from our burdens. Place your whole trust in his love. AMEN.

Read Psalm 72

- Endow the king with your justice, O God,
the royal son with your righteousness.
- ² May he judge your people in righteousness,
your afflicted ones with justice.
- ³ May the mountains bring prosperity to the people,
the hills the fruit of righteousness.
- ⁴ May he defend the afflicted among the people
and save the children of the needy;
may he crush the oppressor.
- ⁵ May he endure^[a] as long as the sun,
as long as the moon, through all generations.
- ⁶ May he be like rain falling on a mown field,
like showers watering the earth.
- ⁷ In his days may the righteous flourish
and prosperity abound till the moon is no more.
- ⁸ May he rule from sea to sea
and from the River^[b] to the ends of the earth.
- ⁹ May the desert tribes bow before him
and his enemies lick the dust.
- ¹⁰ May the kings of Tarshish and of distant shores
bring tribute to him.
- May the kings of Sheba and Seba
present him gifts.
- ¹¹ May all kings bow down to him
and all nations serve him.
- ¹² For he will deliver the needy who cry out,
the afflicted who have no one to help.
- ¹³ He will take pity on the weak and the needy
and save the needy from death.

¹⁴ He will rescue them from oppression and violence,
for precious is their blood in his sight.

¹⁵ Long may he live!

May gold from Sheba be given him.

May people ever pray for him
and bless him all day long.

¹⁶ May grain abound throughout the land;
on the tops of the hills may it sway.

May the crops flourish like Lebanon
and thrive^[c] like the grass of the field.

¹⁷ May his name endure forever;
may it continue as long as the sun.

Then all nations will be blessed through him,^[d]
and they will call him blessed.

¹⁸ Praise be to the LORD God, the God of Israel,
who alone does marvelous deeds.

¹⁹ Praise be to his glorious name forever;
may the whole earth be filled with his glory.

Amen and Amen.

²⁰ This concludes the prayers of David son of Jesse.

Prayers of the People:

Welcoming Lord, we come before your throne of grace today. It's been quite a week for some, filled with busyness and exciting activities; for others it has been a long and lonely week. Still others have experienced ongoing troubles and frustrations, sorrows and sadness. Throughout all these conditions and at all times, you are with each one of us, giving us strength, calming our spirits; healing our wounds, celebrating the delights and triumphs. This morning we name in our hearts and by our voices loved ones who struggle with issues of health, loneliness, sorrow; we name in our hearts and by our voices those who have found great joy. Be with each person, giving strength and courage for all the times ahead. Help each one of us to remember that we can always come to you with our burdens and you will take them from us. Amen.

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is The kingdom, and the power and the glory forever and ever. AMEN

Read the Lesson: Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67

So he said, "I am Abraham's servant. ³⁵ The LORD has blessed my master abundantly, and he has become wealthy. He has given him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys. ³⁶ My master's wife Sarah has borne him a son in her old age, and he has given him everything he owns. ³⁷ And my master made me swear an oath, and said, 'You must not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I live, ³⁸ but go to my father's family and to my own clan, and get a wife for my son.'

⁴² "When I came to the spring today, I said, 'LORD, God of my master Abraham, if you will, please grant success to the journey on which I have come. ⁴³ See, I am standing beside this spring. If a young woman comes out to draw water and I say to her, 'Please let me drink a little water from your jar,' ⁴⁴ and if she says to me, 'Drink, and I'll draw water for your camels too,' let her be the one the LORD has chosen for my master's son.'

⁴⁵ "Before I finished praying in my heart, Rebekah came out, with her jar on her shoulder. She went down to the spring and drew water, and I said to her, 'Please give me a drink.'

⁴⁶ "She quickly lowered her jar from her shoulder and said, 'Drink, and I'll water your camels too.' So I drank, and she watered the camels also.

⁴⁷ "I asked her, 'Whose daughter are you?'

"She said, 'The daughter of Bethuel son of Nahor, whom Milkah bore to him.'

"Then I put the ring in her nose and the bracelets on her arms, ⁴⁸ and I bowed down and worshiped the LORD. I praised the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me on the right road to get the granddaughter of my master's brother for his son. ⁴⁹ Now if you will show kindness and faithfulness to my master, tell me; and if not, tell me, so I may know which way to turn."

⁵⁸ So they called Rebekah and asked her, "Will you go with this man?"

"I will go," she said.

⁵⁹ So they sent their sister Rebekah on her way, along with her nurse and Abraham's servant and his men. ⁶⁰ And they blessed Rebekah and said to her,

"Our sister, may you increase
to thousands upon thousands;

may your offspring possess
the cities of their enemies.”

⁶¹ Then Rebekah and her attendants got ready and mounted the camels and went back with the man. So the servant took Rebekah and left.

⁶² Now Isaac had come from Beer Lahai Roi, for he was living in the Negev. ⁶³ He went out to the field one evening to meditate,^[a] and as he looked up, he saw camels approaching. ⁶⁴ Rebekah also looked up and saw Isaac. She got down from her camel ⁶⁵ and asked the servant, “Who is that man in the field coming to meet us?” “He is my master,” the servant answered. So she took her veil and covered herself. ⁶⁶ Then the servant told Isaac all he had done. ⁶⁷ Isaac brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah, and he married Rebekah. So she became his wife, and he loved her; and Isaac was comforted after his mother’s death.

Read the Epistle Lesson: Romans 7:15-25

I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸ For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature.^[a] For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

²¹ So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; ²³ but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. ²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in my sinful nature^[b] a slave to the law of sin.

Read the Gospel Lesson: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

“To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others:

¹⁷“We played the pipe for you,
and you did not dance;

we sang a dirge,

and you did not mourn.’

¹⁸ For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon.’ ¹⁹ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’ But wisdom is proved right by her deeds.”

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. ²⁶ Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

²⁷ “All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Message

This morning I would like to take a look at frustration and its cure through the eyes of the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans. Frustration is defined as the feeling of being upset or annoyed, especially because of inability to change or achieve something. Sometimes we become so frustrated that we are actually angry or mad. Everyone experiences frustration sometime in their lives, some more often than others.

How many of you have been frustrated in the past week? Have any of you suffered some form of frustration even this morning?

Do you get frustrated with other people? Like when you are driving and the car ahead of you is going too slow by your standards? Or when a car cuts you off? What is your level of frustration as you are waiting in line at a store when either the clerk is slow or doesn't seem to know what they are doing or the customer is totally not organized, digging for something and slowing down the whole line?

Frustration can come in all levels. It can be a collective frustration as one thing after another cause you frustration. If you think you are alone, just turn around when you are standing in any line and look at the others in line behind you. If you

look around here I doubt you could find one person who hasn't personally experienced frustration.

There is also individual frustration, which is the form I have the most problems with as I age. Personally I get very frustrated with my own body that used to be able to do so many things before and not able to do them anymore. All I need to do is drop something on the floor and have it roll under a piece of heavy furniture. I can get it if I get on my hands and knees, but that isn't the frustrating part. My frustration comes when I try to get back up onto my feet. The frustration we experience with our bodies as we age.

If we are lucky we sometimes can look at our frustrations and see how trivial they are and hopefully find the humor in the situation. For laughter is a gift from God and who better to laugh at than ourselves. But frustration can also tear at our hearts. Frustration can mount within us to the point where we feel that no one could love us; no one could forgive us. That kind of frustration can be compared to the type of frustration we see in the Apostle Paul in our Epistle lesson for this morning. Paul is angry. He's mad. He's outraged! And it's not at anyone else, he's mad at himself. He starts out in verse 15 by saying something that I think everyone of us can identify with. "I do not understand what I do." He's talking about his life, and in particular, his spiritual life. He goes on to say, "For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate, I do."

All of us here know right from wrong. Most of us have gone through Confirmation classes or has been in Sunday School or participated in a Bible Study at some point in their life. We've been taught the Ten Commandments. We've heard the Law given to us by God. We know that God doesn't want us to do certain things. We know that He doesn't want us to offend our parents or elders. We know that He doesn't want us to lie, or cheat, or be envious, or steal, or covet, or commit adultery. We know that He doesn't want us to have other gods before Him. Not just the other false gods that permeate the other religions of the world, but the false gods of money, greed, lust, and power - anything that comes before Him. We know that we shouldn't take His name in vain. We shouldn't curse, lie, use witchcraft or deceive by His name, but keep it holy and call upon it at all times. We should praise His name and give thanks. We should worship Him, remembering the Sabbath Day and keeping it holy.

We know all of these things and so did Paul. And yet, Paul, the great Apostle of Jesus Christ, the man who was confronted and converted by none other than Jesus on the road to Damascus while he was in route to persecute followers of Christ.

Paul, this man, who with Barnabas and Timothy and Silas went to the far reaches of the known world to profess Christ and His salvation.

Yes, Paul, this rock of faith, who suffered ship wrecks, persecution, and imprisonment because of his call to preach the Word, was frustrated because even he could not do what he knew he should do. We find ourselves many times feeling the same frustration. So why can't we do what God would have us do? Why can't we follow God's will?

Paul continues his letter by saying: "For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do; this I keep on doing." Paul gives us some insight as to what is going on in the next passages. He knows what's happening. There are two opposing factions waging an internal war. Like those two little guys that sit on your shoulders. One urging to do the things you know you shouldn't and the other holding you back. God has control of Paul's inner self.

Because he believes in salvation through Jesus Christ, He knows that God is holding him in the palm of His hand. He knows that God will never leave him nor forsake him. We need to remember this, too. But, he also knows that he lives in a sinful world. A world in which Satan will try continually to try entice, entrap, ensnare, ensnarl, corrupt and literally beat him up.

That's the goal of Satan. Through His death on the cross and victorious resurrection from the grave, Jesus Christ has completely defeated Satan. So, Satan now turns his sights on us.

You see, Satan realizes something that far too many people don't. When Jesus died on the cross, He carried the sins of the entire world with him. Your sins, my sins, the sins of our parents and grandparents, the sins of our children and grandchildren born and unborn. Friends and enemies alike. All sins were accounted for when Jesus cried from the cross, "It is finished." Therefore, the only thing left for Satan is to attack us.

We, sinful creatures who should know better, but are far from perfect. If we were, we wouldn't need Jesus. Satan will tempt us. He wants us to forget what Christ has done for us. He wants us to forget about our Baptism. He wants us to forget about forgiveness.

Often times, just before I go to sleep at night, I go to my Father in prayer. I pray for all of you. I pray for my family. I pray for our world. And then I start to pray for

myself. And I usually start with confession. This is the hard part. This is when I start to sound a lot like Paul.

You see, I know that I should pray more. I know that I should do more for others. I know that I should spend more time telling others about Jesus. As your Pastor, I should be the one setting the example. I know that there are a lot of things that I should do. Like be kind and humble and generous. So often, I'm just me. I'm selfish, I'm judgmental. I'm my old sinful self.

And then I start to the list of things that I have done that I know that I shouldn't have done. In my prayers I admit I am not even close to being perfect and I ask help from my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Our Gospel text this morning ends with an invitation. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." Jesus is saying, Come to Him, you who are weary from your failed attempts at commandment keeping and perfectionism. Come to Him, those who are despairing and depressed, those addicted and abandoned. Come to Jesus, and He will give you rest.

This morning we are invited by God, our Father to come into His Presence and to claim His Grace and Love. For with God's grace comes the forgiveness of our sins, and we are promised eternal life in heaven.

Echoing the words of Apostle Paul, we can all say: "Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!" Amen.

Closing Prayer:

Lord, we have listened to your word for us this day. We are grateful for the love of Jesus who takes our burdens and lightens our spirits. Be with us today as we leave this place. May we continue to place our trust in you, for it is in the name of Jesus that we pray. AMEN.

Benediction:

Weary travelers, go now in peace with the love of Christ in your hearts. You are released from your burdens! Go with joy to serve God. AMEN.