

**“FATHER KNOWS BEST”**  
**JUNE 21, 2020 SUNDAY SERVICE & SERMON**  
**(abbreviated COVID 19 service/50% seating capacity)**  
**Pastor Tom Olson; Minnesota Valley Free Lutheran Church**

**PRELUDE:** Rebekah Olson

**HYMN #571** “He Hideth My Soul” (congregation remains seated for all singing)

A wonderful Savior is Jesus my Lord,  
A wonderful Savior to me;  
He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock,  
Where rivers of pleasure I see.

**CHORUS**

He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock  
That shadows a dry, thirsty land;  
He hideth my life in the depths of His love,  
And covers me there with His hand,  
And covers me there with His hand.

With numberless blessings each moment He crowns,  
And filled with His fullness divine,  
I sing in my rapture, oh, glory to God!  
For such a Redeemer as mine.

**CHORUS**

He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock  
That shadows a dry, thirsty land;  
He hideth my life in the depths of His love,  
And covers me there with His hand,  
And covers me there with His hand.

When clothed in His brightness, transported I rise  
To meet Him in clouds of the sky,  
His perfect salvation, His wonderful love,  
I'll shout with the millions on high.

**CHORUS**

He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock  
That shadows a dry, thirsty land;  
He hideth my life in the depths of His love,  
And covers me there with His hand,  
And covers me there with His hand.

**PRAYER**

**CHILDREN'S SERMON:** *Luke 15:20 So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.* Sharon bought me a large wrench for Father's Day for working on my giant steam engine. This is a man's wrench because it is so big. It reminds us that our dads work hard to give us what we need and to protect us from harm and danger. I have other wrenches here and they represent all the important things that moms and children do too. We can do a lot to help our dad's have a good Father's day by helping him do what we can do around the house when he asks us for help...

**EPISTLE LESSON:** *Romans 6:12-23 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. 13 Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. 14 For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace. 15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! 16 Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey-whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. 18 You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. 19 I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. 20 When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. 21 What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! 22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**CONFESSION OF FAITH:** 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 Spirit; 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 is seated on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From where He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; The holy Christian Church; the Communion of Saints; the Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body, And the Life everlasting. Amen

### **SPECIAL MUSIC: Luke Johnson**

#### **Find Me In These Fields**

Find me in these fields alone  
Crusted with the salt of my ways  
Rinse me with the motion of sweet water  
The silky rush of Your cleansing stream

Turn my face towards the sun  
To feel the heat and cool wind blow  
Reminding me as You touched my shoulder  
Awaking me from some selfish dream

I face the fog in the autumn  
The midnight moon weaving her chain  
You trace me deep in this valley  
Repeating a familiar refrain - forgive me

When my heart turns cold and I chase the old standard lie - forgive me  
When my conscience calls me to leave it behind -well did I - forgive me

Take me and I'll sit at Your feet  
And live to tell all You have done  
Could I find a rose in mid-December  
A sign of peace for those passing by

I turn my eyes towards the Son  
In a vision of a world yet to be  
As hope will be awarded living substance  
Heaven kisses earth in reply

I face the fog in the autumn  
The midnight moon weaving her chain  
You trace me deep in this valley  
Repeating a familiar refrain - forgive me

When my heart turns cold and I chase the old standard lie - forgive me  
When my conscience calls me to leave it behind -well did I - forgive me

When my heart turns cold and I chase the old standard lie - forgive me  
When my conscience called me to heed the cry -well did I - forgive me

Find me in these fields alone

### **SERMON TITLE: "FATHER KNOWS BEST"**

TRAGEDY: This week we had the sad news that the recently married, young daughter of friends of ours, Sarah, was instantly killed in a car accident. Her husband is barely hanging on to life. At such a time everyone asks the question, "Why did God allow this? Why didn't God stop this?" Could God have prevented it? Of course! Was this lovely young lady such a sinner that God was punishing her? That is doubtful. Her death and God's lack of intervention will cause some to be angry with God. Her parents are heartbroken but are also people of deep faith and somehow, they will survive. Up until this point, that family has been blessed with good health, a happy life, lots of money (the grandparents are quite rich) and every advantage. Now the tables are turned on them, so it seems. The ways of God are very mysterious.

MYSTERY: When I was reading our Scripture lessons for this Sunday the mysterious ways of God became so evident. The Psalm talks about God's supernatural protection of believers from harm and evil, the Old Testament lesson talks about God's harsh ways with the prophet Jeremiah and the Gospel lesson the great persecution believers will face in the last days. The epistle lesson pulls it all together with the purpose of God in all of it. Let's talk about it.

#### **I. DIVINE PROTECTION**

*Psalm 91:1-10 "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty...3 Surely He will save you from the deadly pestilence...9 If you make the Most High your dwelling...then no harm will befall you...no disaster will come near your tent."*

MIRACLES: These are the verses that Pastor John and Ruby Abel gave to me when I had cancer in 2007. I have it written right in my Bible. They wanted me to have faith that God could heal me and give me more years to live. Do these verses mean we always get healed? No. But they do mean that God is able to heal and we can trust him to take care of us when sickness and diseases come into our lives. Pastor Abel recently died...he had the Coronavirus but he also was 95 years old and it was his time to leave and go to heaven. But God did deliver him from many dangers and much sickness in his long life as a missionary in Brazil. DIVINE PROTECTION

## II. DIFFICULT TIMES

***Jeremiah 20:7-8 O LORD, you deceived me, and I was deceived; you overpowered me and prevailed. I am ridiculed all day long; everyone mocks me. 8 Whenever I speak, I cry out proclaiming violence and destruction. So the word of the LORD has brought me insult and reproach all day long.***

REJECTION: God called Jeremiah to be his prophet and proclaim his message to the very rebellious nation of Israel. Jeremiah was faithful to the Word of God. The people did not like his message so they mocked him, hurt him and punished him for teaching the Word of God. They even threw him in a cistern, a tank in the ground, and there he was without food or water for a long time. Jeremiah's whole life was difficult because these wicked people did not repent and turn back to God. They hated God, they hated morality and they hated Jeremiah. Serving God is not always easy. Many of God's faithful prophets were killed. Today faithful Christians in China and in Nigeria are still being punished for their faith. People who hold God's standards for marriage and morality are losing jobs in the United States and Europe as secularization increases and with-it hatred of the Word of God, salvation through Jesus and righteousness.

FUTURE: I communicate with many pastors and we are beginning to wonder when we will be punished for our Biblical beliefs. Some recent Supreme Court decisions in the United States could be used to bully churches and colleges into forsaking the biblical teaching or be shut down. DIFFICULT TIMES are here for those who want to stay true to the Word of God. We are sad that our young newlywed friend, Sarah, had to tragically die at such a young age but she is now free from the troubles coming upon the earth and safe at home in heaven.

## III. LAST DAYS

***Matthew 10:21-23 "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. 22 All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. 23 When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.***

LAST DAYS: There is going to come a time when world history as we know it will come to a conclusion, right before the return of Jesus. The Bible is extremely clear what those days will be like. Satan will know his time is short and will unleash worldwide persecution of God's children. Jesus tells us here that this persecution will be especially intense in Israel. There will be a single government that rules much of the world. Family love will fade away. A brother will turn his physical brother in to authorities for punishment because he is a Christian. A father will betray his very own child. Children will turn in their parents. It will be like the Nazis and Communist on a world-wide scale. Technology will be able to carry this out. Soon they will use computer chips to record who has the COVID 19 vaccine and who has the virus. They will be able to track our every move. This same technology will likely be used to track every move of people who are Christians and prevent us from buying or selling products unless we submit to their demands. The recent Supreme Court ruling is going to turn people who believe in Biblical morality into criminals in the United States. That is why the dissenting justices are so livid about it. There is no question that we are moving quickly into the end time scenario.

QUESTION: The question before us today is this: "Am I prepared to suffer and die for Jesus?" "Are we prepared to have our church taken away if we stay true to Biblical teaching?" "Am I prepared to lose my job if I can't sign their diversity papers." Just a few years ago you could not be a boy scout without supporting Biblical morality. Now you can't become an Eagle Scout without going through diversity brainwashing and reject Biblical morality. The ruin of the scouts came swiftly. It has been a prize that the liberal left has wanted

for a long time, and with it comes thousands of acres of scout camps that can be used for their sinister purposes now. It breaks my heart to see it but it doesn't surprise me. Jesus told us not to be surprised at the fiery ordeal when it comes.

SIFTING: Our heavenly Father knows what is best. He is allowing this to happen to prepare the world for His return. God is sorting out those who are really his children and those who are fake. Jesus wants a pure and spotless bride. He wants true Christians in His church and not cultural ones.

OVERCOME: It won't be easy to be a believer in the future but our suffering will be temporary and our joy will be eternal. The ungodly will have their wealth and land and power and pleasures for a short season but will be cast into the lake of fire for eternity. The short-term persecution is nothing in light of eternity with Christ in heaven. Romans 3:14 gives us some insight into what else God is doing: ***“For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.”*** God is not only forgiving our sin but He is doing whatever it takes to set us free from sin so we can run the race of life with endurance and joy. Even if it takes hard times, it is worth it to get set free from the sin that is dragging us down.

SALVATION: Do you know for certain you are saved? Perhaps you are scared to receive Christ because you fear suffering. He will never leave you or forsake you. If you need to be delivered from poison or pestilence, He can do it. If you need to be kept through it, He can do that. If you need to be transferred to heaven by it, He can do that too.

JOHN ABEL: Last Thursday we attended the memorial service for missionary John Abel who zealously spent his life winning lost souls to Christ in Brazil. He was not ashamed of the good news of Jesus dying on the cross for the sins of the world. He believed and taught the Bible with boldness. Pasto Abel is the same man who gave me the Bible verses about God's power to deliver me from cancer. Yet he died from Coronavirus! I got delivered from sickness and Pastor Abel got promoted to heaven by sickness. Our Father knows best. We can trust Him.

PRAYER: If you have never been saved, won't you come to Christ today? Just repent of your sins, name them to God. Believe that Jesus died on the cross to forgive those sins. And receive Jesus Christ into your heart as Lord and Savior. It may not be an easy life but you will have a home in heaven forever. You can pray with me right now: ***Dear Father, Be merciful to me a sinner. I believe Jesus Christ died on the cross for my sins and I now invite Him into my heart to forgive me and save my lost soul. Thank you for making me your child. Amen***

## **PRAISE SONG with Hannah Carrizales**

**I love You, Lord  
Oh Your mercy never fails me  
All my days, I've been held in Your hands  
From the moment that I wake up  
Until I lay my head  
Oh, I will sing of the goodness of God**

**[Chorus]  
'Cause all my life You have been faithful  
And all my life You have been so, so good  
With every breath that I am able  
Oh, I will sing of the goodness of God**

**[Verse 2]  
I love Your voice**

You have led me through the fire  
And in darkest night You are close like no other  
I've known You as a Father  
I've known You as a Friend  
And I have lived in the goodness of God

[Chorus]

And all my life You have been faithful  
And all my life You have been so, so good  
With every breath that I am able  
Oh, I will sing of the goodness of God

[Chorus]

'Cause all my life You have been faithful  
And all my life You have been so, so good  
With every breath that I am able  
Oh, I will sing of the goodness of God  
Oh, I will sing of the goodness of God

When peace like a river attendeth my way,  
When sorrows like sea billows roll.  
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,  
"It is well, it is well with my soul."

It is well, with my soul,  
It is well, it is well with my soul.

It is well, with my soul,  
It is well, it is well with my soul.

**PRAYER & 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 that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen*

**BENEDICTION:** The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you, the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and grant you peace. Amen

**DOXOLOGY:** Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen

**POSTLUDE:** Rebekah Olson