

“A BURDEN FOR SOULS”
AUGUST 2, 2020 SUNDAY SERVICE & SERMON
(abbreviated COVID 19 service/50% seating capacity)
Pastor Tom Olson; Minnesota Valley Free Lutheran Church

PRELUDE: Ray Holmberg

HYMN #515 (AH) #159 (OVH) “Room at the Cross for You” (congregation remains seated for all singing)

The cross upon which Jesus died
Is a shelter in which we can hide
And its grace so free is sufficient for me
And deep is its fountain as wide as the sea.

CHORUS

There's room at the cross for you
There's room at the cross for you
Though millions have come, there's still room for one
Yes, there's room at the cross for you.

Though millions have found him a friend
And have turned from the sins they have sinned
The Savior still waits to open the gates
And welcome a sinner before it's too late.

The hand of my Savior is strong
And the love of my Savior is long
Through sunshine or rain, through loss or in gain,
The blood flows from Calvary to cleanse every stain.

PRAYER

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE:

SCRIPTURE LESSON: *Romans 9:1-5 I speak the truth in Christ-I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit- 2 I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, 4 the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. 5 Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.*

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

SERMON TITLE: “A BURDEN FOR SOULS”
Romans 9:1-5; Pastor Tom Olson; August 2, 2020

If I could have my way and get a few things going in this church what would it be?

- Youth group is high on the list.
- Choir, piano and organ for opening hymn.
- Home Bible studies and prayer meetings.
- #1 A Church with...A Burden for Lost Souls! —youth and music, teaching and fellowship will follow that naturally if we are passionate.

I. BROKEN HEART FOR THE LOST

Romans 9:1&2 I speak the truth in Christ-I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit- 2 I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart

SOULS: Is there anything that breaks the heart of God and the Apostle Paul more than lost souls? Notice that his conscience is tied to the fate of his lost nationality. His emotions are not merely sad but he has “great sorrow and unceasing anguish in his heart” over souls that don’t know Christ.

PRAYER: Samaritan’s Purse was started by Bob Pierce in 1970. He was moved with compassion over the state of needy people in Korea and Viet Nam. His famous prayer that motivated His life was this: “Lord, let my heart be broken by the things that break the heart of God.” Suffering in this broken world breaks the heart of God. But the greatest hurt to the Lord is when people reject His free gift of salvation. The primary command of the church is ***Mark 16:15— “preach the gospel to every creature.”***

ACE: I was at the hardware store recently. On my ride home it dawned on me that it is possible that every worker and customer in that store may be lost...without Christ and without hope of heaven. What also dawned on me is that I not only didn’t witness to anyone, I did not even pray for the souls I encountered. Rev. Don Richman would never have done that!

DON: Don is the retired pastor of Emmaus Lutheran in Bloomington. I have had lunch with him several times and every time he engages the waitress in conversation leading to a witness for Jesus. Don has a heart for the lost like few people do.

VISION: My sincere prayer, above all other great virtues such as spiritual gifts and love and ministries that our church would have a heart that is broken for lost souls who are dying without salvation. That the focus of our prayers would not be so much on the health of our bodies but on the conversion of the unsaved. This is the heart of the Apostle Paul who expended every ounce of his energy to tell the world about Jesus...crucified, risen and coming again.

II. EXTREME DESIRE FOR THE SALVATION OF SOULS

Romans 9:3&4 For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, 4 the people of Israel.

QUESTION: How many of us can say that...I would give up my salvation if my friends would get saved? That is the Spirit of Christ who gave up His heavenly position and experienced the wrath of God for our sins on the cross...willingly. Paul is saying that he would pay any price for the people of his nation to receive Jesus Christ as their Messiah, their Savior from sin, death and the power of the devil.

VERSES: Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus, perhaps sadness over the grief of Mary and Martha and perhaps sadness over their unbelief. *John 11:25&26 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; 26 and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"*

Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem on Palm Sunday: *Luke 19:10 "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." Luke 19:41 "As Jesus approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it."*

Jesus said in *Matthew 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.*

CROSS: Then Jesus did something extreme...he went to the cross and gave his life as an atoning sacrifice for your sins and mine and the sins of the whole world. Now that is an extreme desire for the salvation of the lost!

GROWTH: I am not into church growth...I would rather rescue the perishing! When REAL SALVATION comes the rest comes together often very quickly. When Jesus comes into a life in a real, true, new birth conversion, that person changes. A work ethic comes, and people support themselves. The tongue changes. Sinful habits begin to drop away rapidly.

WALES: During the great Welsh revival of 1904, judges put on white gloves because there were no criminal trials and policemen formed gospel quartets to sing because there was no crime anywhere. Over 100,000 people were converted in less than a year and it transformed the nation.

MVC: This is my desire for our church...not church growth through advertising and gimmicks but a true revival of God coming from people who are so extreme in their desire to see the lost saved that prayer times for lost souls are the highlight of the week. We all know lost souls to pray for specifically and our community and nation and world generally. Our weekly prayer meeting could be dedicated to just prayer for the salvation of the lost! But we need to have that extreme desire to see the lost saved and that is what God needs to give us.

CONCLUSION

BOOTH: General William Booth's vision that started the Salvation Army. I have an artist's rendition of that vision. He saw the stormy sea filled with lost souls drowning, crying for salvation. He saw the church on the dock singing, eating, socializing and doing all sorts of nice things, but they were deaf to the cries of lost souls. There is a man on the right who is throwing out a lifeline and there is one boat on the left, braving the waves to rescue the perishing. But the church was mostly busy doing anything but helping the lost get saved. It was this vision that birthed the Salvation Army and I pray it is a vision that will break our hearts.

COMMUNION: As we take communion today, we need to remember that Jesus gave His innocent life on the cross for the salvation of the lost. We must never forget that. Saving the lost is the purpose of the church. If it was not for that, Christ might as well take us to heaven the minute we are converted. May the prayer of Bob Pierce be our prayer today, "Lord break my heart with what breaks the heart of God." Amen

HYMN #412 (AH) #85 (OVH) “There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood” (vss 1&4)

**1. There is a fountain filled with blood
drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
and sinners plunged beneath that flood
lose all their guilty stains.
Lose all their guilty stains,
lose all their guilty stains;
and sinners plunged beneath that flood
lose all their guilty stains.**

**4. E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream
thy flowing wounds supply,
redeeming love has been my theme,
and shall be till I die.
And shall be till I die,
and shall be till I die;
redeeming love has been my theme,
and shall be till I die.**

HOLY COMMUNION & 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: Ray Holmberg