

JANUARY 24, 2021; ST. TIMOTHY THE PASTOR; SUNDAY SERVICE & SERMON

(COVID 50% seating capacity)

Pastor Tom Olson; Minnesota Valley Free Lutheran Church

PRELUDE: Rebekah Olson (Other Singers)

CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 71:24

HYMN #542 "Victory in Jesus" 9 am: OVH #169

RESPONSIVE READING: PSALM 71:15-24

PASTOR: My mouth will tell of your righteousness, of your salvation all day long, though I know not its measure. I will come and proclaim your mighty acts, O Sovereign LORD; I will proclaim your righteousness, yours alone.

CONGREGATION: Since my youth, O God, you have taught me, and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds. Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, O God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your might to all who are to come.

PASTOR: Your righteousness reaches to the skies, O God, you who have done great things. Who, O God, is like you? Though you have made me see troubles, many and bitter, you will restore my life again; from the depths of the earth you will again bring me up.

CONGREGATION: You will increase my honor and comfort me once again.

I will praise you with the harp for your faithfulness, O my God; I will sing praise to you with the lyre, O Holy One of Israel.

PASTOR: My lips will shout for joy when I sing praise to you--I, whom you have redeemed.

CONGREGATION My tongue will tell of your righteous acts all day long, for those who wanted to harm me have been put to shame and confusion.

SANCTITY OF LIFE PRESENTATION: Anne Fredrickson, Alpha Women's Center

SANCITY OF LIFE PRAYER: Hannah Carrizales

CHILDREN'S SERMON: Psalm 71:18 HAIR COLOR!

EPISTLE LESSON: *Acts 16:1-5 He came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was a Jewess and a believer, but whose father was a Greek. 2 The brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. 3 Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. 4 As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey. 5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.*

GOSPEL LESSON: *Matt 24:42-47 "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. 43 But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. 44 So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.*

45 "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? 46 It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. 47 I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

PASTOR: Here ends the reading of God's Word.

CONGREGATION SINGS: God be praised, for His glad Tidings!

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

GLORIA PATRI: *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is not, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER FOR OFFERING

PRAISE AND WORSHIP SONGS: Hannah Carrizales

**SERMON TITLE: "A CALL TO FAITHFULNESS"
1 Timothy 6:11-16; Pastor Tom Olson, January 24, 2021**

Dear Friends, Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

ST. TIMOTHY: "St. Timothy, pastor and confessor" ...is the official name of this Sunday. Today we celebrate the life and ministry of Timothy, a young pastor. We all are pastors. Our family is our congregation, our neighborhood is our mission field and our homes, are places of worship and instruction. We can profit from Paul's words to Timothy in "A CALL TO FAITHFULNESS."

I. FLEE: WORLDLINESS

1 Timothy 6:11a But you, man of God, flee from all this...

The context of defining worldliness from the previous verses is talking about money...*verse 10 "...the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil."*

SALARY: It is that time of year when churches are setting the pastor's salary. Churches wrestle with how much that should be. Most small churches do the best they can, but can't ever pay a professional salary. There is something good about that...because it helps to sift out those who would be pastors if there was more money in it. One must go into the ministry because they are called by God. The Apostle Paul needed to work an extra job to make ends meet...he made tents. 1 Timothy 6:8 ***"But if we have food and clothing we will be content with that."*** That was written in a warm climate so I might add to that for Minnesota, ... "food, clothing and a warm place to live."

MIDDLE: There is nothing evil about being rich or poor. However, if we are RICH, James tells us “we may forget about God” and if we are POOR, he tells us “we may curse God.” The best is to be kind of in the middle, especially if you are in the full-time ministry.

There are some things that we can do to avoid worldliness watch your eyes, hands and heart:

- 1) EYES: “O be careful little eyes what you see.” Be alert to the power of advertising and coveting.
- 2) HANDS: Care for what you have...when I feel like I need a new car, the first thing I do is wash and wax that one we have and that helps me be happy with what I have.
- 3) HEART: Be thankful...count your blessings.

In order to be an effective minister of Christ FLEE: WORLDLINESS.

II. PURSUE: GODLINESS

1 Timothy 6:11b ...and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

POSITIVE: Paul reminds young Timothy that effectiveness in the Kingdom of God does not merely involve what we must avoid but it also, involves what we pursue.

TIME: I am at the point in my life where I am thinking about my funeral, my parents are gone and high school classmates are dying. I am realizing that I only have so much TIME left and I need to use it wisely. Here are the pursuits that Timothy is encouraged to prioritize:

1) Pursue RIGHTEOUSNESS: I don’t think this means stopping sinning. It means putting on the “Robe of Righteousness” that is given to us when we are born anew into the family of God. In Acts 16 the Philippian jailer cried out, *“What must we I do to be saved?” Peter replied “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved, you and your household.”* Forgiveness changes our lives.

2) Pursue GODLINESS: This reminds us that holy living, or godliness, is a priority to be an effective minister of the gospel. *1 Timothy 4:8 “For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.”* Dave Fischer had a wonderful Bible study on Thursday from Psalm 16. He was talking about the “boundary lines” of God...how after he came to know Christ that God brought new boundary lines into his life and he no longer wanted to watch movies with a lot of immorality and violence in them. Dave went on the share how this has been very good for him to get that influence out of his life. Godliness gives us more TIME for wholesome activities.

3) Pursue FAITH: The Bible says that God is able to do great things. Ephesians 3:20 describes God in this way, *“...him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine...”* The only thing we need is FAITH. God wants our faith to increase so we can pray in some great and mighty works of God into our ministry.

4) Pursue LOVE: 1 Corinthians 13 reminds us that no matter how much faith we have, without love, we are nothing. *1 Corinthians 13:2 “...if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.”* There is one thing, above all, that people should say about our church, they should say: “When I am with them, I feel loved.” Without love, anything else we do is fruitless.

5) Pursue ENDURANCE: Life is often very difficult. Paul wants Timothy to know that he needs endurance. At our district pastors meeting the other day, the assistant to our President, Gary Jorgenson, told us

about the number of young pastors who are quitting the ministry. The COVID arguments, and other issues were more than they could endure. I can understand. This is a tragedy. We already have a shortage of pastors. You need a thick skin and a tender heart to make it. A friend of mine was under pressure by a few people to leave his position. He just kept very quiet and did his work as well as he could. His critics gave up and he went on to have many more years of productive service. Are you discouraged? Every calling in life gets discouraging at times and ENDURANCE helps us get through those times. It gets better eventually. Raising children can be tough, but they grow up and become our friends and, when we are old, our care givers. Endurance gets you to that point.

6) Pursue GENTLENESS: It takes a lot of STRENGTH TO BE GENTLE. It is very EASY to fly off the handle. One phrase that has helped me in this area, is this: **“Seek first to understand, then to be understood.”** Gentleness is listening to what someone is saying rather than thinking about what we are going to say next. I have noticed that gentle people are USUALLY treated with gentleness and harsh people are OFTEN treated with harshness.

To review the “CALL TO FAITHFULNESS”: FLEE WORLDLINESS, PURSUE GODLINESS and...

III. KEEP: FAITH

1 Timothy 6:12-16 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13 In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you 14 to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 which God will bring about in his own time-God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen

PRIORITY: The final point that Paul makes to young pastor Timothy comes with emphasis. It could perhaps be summarized with five words, “Jesus is Savior and Lord.” He wants Timothy to focus on letting the world know that Jesus Christ, crucified, risen and coming again, is Savior and Lord. *1 Corinthians 12:3 “...no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.”*

LIFE: Our prayers today go out for the SANCTITY OF LIFE. There are many reasons why a mother is tempted to have an abortion: pressure from others is a big one. Most women really don’t want to have one. But there is a root cause to ALL of these problems. People don’t know Jesus Christ personally...his love demonstrated on the cross of Calvary. They don’t know what it is to hear the words of forgiveness. The one thing that is critical, above all else, is that we have a priority to share the good news that Jesus is our Lord and Savior. Our marching orders are as clear as can be...VOTE DEMOCRAT...NO? VOTE REPUBLICAN, NO? *Mark 16:15 “...go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”* Political leaders can’t save us. But Jesus can save political leaders. That is the true need. I prayed for President Trump to come to know Jesus personally. Now I pray for President Biden to meet Jesus. Sharon spent 11 years in Liberia under corrupt dictators. But she did something very powerful...she taught the children the Word of God. Today those children are leaders.

Pray for good pastors, like Timothy. But remember that we are all pastors of our family and neighborhood right now. To be effective, embrace these transforming words of Paul to young Pastor Timothy:

- FLEE: WORLDLINESS
- PURSUE: GODLINESS

- KEEP: FAITH

Let's not worry about success. God is not calling us to success. God gives us A CALL TO FAITHFULNEES. Amen.

Now may the peace of God that surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds through faith in Christ Jesus. Amen

HYMN #501 "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" 9 AM: OVH 143 "I Have Decided..."

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 10:30 & 9 am "Doxology" OVH #32

POSTLUDE: Rebekah Olson