

AUGUST 29, 2021; FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

“The Martyrdom of John the Baptist Sunday”

Pastor Tom Olson; Minnesota Valley Free Lutheran Church

PRELUDE: Ruth Antal (Osthus Singers)

CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 119:129&130

**Your statutes are wonderful;
therefore I obey them.
130 The unfolding of your words gives light;
it gives understanding to the simple.**

HYMN #177 “Beautiful Savior”

CONFESSION OF SIN: Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean, and that we have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed. Therefore, we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy and ask You for Christ’s sake, grant us forgiveness of all our sins, and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of You and of Your will and true obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE MARTYRS

CHILDREN’S SERMON: The “Tootsie Roll” Commandment

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Revelation 6:9-11

GOSPEL LESSON: Mark 6:14-29

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:

**SERMON TITLE: “A PEACEFUL HOME”
Ephesians 5:22-6:4; Pastor Tom Olson, August 29, 2021**

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

NEWSPAPER: I delivered the newspaper to half of my hometown. Two things confused me as a teen when I delivered those papers. One was how people would go to church on Sunday but at the feed mill or hardware store use foul language on Monday. The second thing that confused me was when I dropped the paper off at the door and heard couples or parents and children ARGUING. It confused me because I grew up in a home where there was never an argument, and no one ever raised their voice and complaining was never done...it was not allowed! I never remember my parents saying a bad word about a neighbor, pastor, or a politician. If my dad wanted to trade cars, he bought one and brought it home. It didn't matter to my mom because she felt that was his responsibility. My parents were not perfect, but I have to say I enjoyed growing up in a peaceful home.

CHILDREN: If we intended on disobeying our father, let's say as teens, we might as well find a new place to live. That was understood by all and we didn't disobey. My mom was a sincere Christian and knew that the Bible said that dad was the head of the house and that was final. Was my mother happy in that situation? My mom was one of the consistently happiest women I have ever known. When my mom died, my dad said, "I could not have found a better wife for myself and mother for our children." We had a peaceful home. And my mom gets the credit for that.

The Apostle Paul gives us the recipe for A PEACEFUL HOME here:

I. A WIFE RESPECTS HER HUSBAND

Ephesians 5:22-24 "Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything." Note four things:

1. CHOICE: Notice something very important here. It is the wife's choice. IT DOESN'T TELL THE MAN TO MAKE HIS WIFE SUBMIT TO HIM. No man can do that. If he tried it would be a very unhappy situation. The only way for it to work is for the wife to SEE THE VALUE OF IT AND DO IT ON HER OWN FROM HER HEART. My parents didn't argue because my mom made the choice BEFORE she was married for my dad to be head of the home. All arguments ended BEFORE they were married, and it was HER CHOICE.
2. MAGNITUDE: Also see that this submission is to the degree she is submitted to the Lord. A woman can say I will submit to the Lord but not to my husband, but that cannot happen because respecting one's husband as head of the home is part of submitting to the Lord.
3. FOUNDATION: God states a fact in a powerful way "the husband is head of the wife as Christ is head of the church." This is the Word of God, not my opinion!
4. SCOPE: There is a powerful word here that tells the scope of this submission. It is the same submission as the church to Christ... "wives should submit to their husbands in EVERYTHING." A woman might say that the husband is head of certain areas but here he is given COMPLETE authority. If a woman does this, in most cases the husband will give her MORE liberty than if she demands her way.

UNBELIEVER: Is this only if the husband is a believer? The answer to that is NO...there is nothing here that says a Christian woman has a right to rebel against an unbelieving husband. In fact, she would want to even be extra good to an unbelieving husband to help him come to salvation as Peter says in *1 Peter 3:1* "Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives" I heard of a rebellious mouthy wife who became a Christian. She learned what the Bible taught about respecting her husband. She was sick in bed and he came home and demanded she

get out of bed and go to the store and buy him a carton of cigarettes. He expected an argument. She got up and bought the cigarettes and came home and went back to bed. He was so amazed by this he asked her about the change, and she led him to the Lord for salvation.

BICKERING: In contrast, we had a leading couple in one church I served who were constantly bickering and disagreeing. I heard it got pretty loud at home and sometimes with foul language. When we had Bible study we got to this passage and she vehemently disagreed with it and said that Paul was anti-women, and she would not accept it. I asked her who the head of their home was. She said it was an EQUAL MARRIAGE. I then asked her who got their way when there was a disagreement. She would not answer that...I knew the answer...everyone knew the answer! The most stubborn one at that moment.

SINGLE: If a wife doesn't want to submit to your husband, her home will not be peaceful unless her husband submits to her and he will be bitter inside because it is not God's design. A strong-willed woman should probably not get married! She will be much happier alone. The second aspect of A PEACEFUL HOME is this...

II. A HUSBAND CARES FOR HIS WIFE

Ephesians 5:25-33 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. 28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church- 30 for we are members of his body. 31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." 32 This is a profound mystery-but I am talking about Christ and the church. 33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Life is difficult for a husband who is not respected, and a wife struggles if she does not feel loved. Just like with submission, A WIFE CANNOT FORCE HER HUSBAND TO LOVE HER any more than a husband can force his wife to respect him. She cannot make him feel guilty, she cannot nag him about it...that will only drive him further away. IT HAS TO BE HIS CHOICE.

- **CHRIST IS THE EXAMPLE:** God gives us men a tall order here. He tells us to love our wives in the same way Christ loves the church. Note what words he uses "HE GAVE HIMSELF UP FOR HER." Just reduce it to one word: GIVE. What can we give? We give what she needs and likes: a home, food, clothing, protection. A wife has emotional needs to that are met through TIME, CONVERSATION, and EMPATHY. Husbands tend to be problem solvers who offer solutions. That is not what wives want. They simply want active listening and words of comfort...not outlines of how to fix the situation. Wives like gifts too...everyone is different...a husband needs to discover what kind of gifts encourage their wives. Usually, most women want simple gifts that remind them that their husband is thinking of them. **CHRIST IS THE EXAMPLE**
- **ONE FLESH:** Notice here that the man leaves his parents and cleaves to his wife. It is his choice to take on the responsibility of marriage and in so doing he is choosing to take on the complicated task of keeping a woman feeling secure and happy. This is a lifelong learning process, **MEN STRUGGLE WITH UNDERSTANDING WOMEN**, but one can learn what works and what is not helpful, in time.

Notice Paul's two-word summary of a good marriage relationship: LOVE and RESPECT. *"Each one of you must love his wife as himself, and the wife must respect her husband."* Someone once asked, who should be

the first one to do it and get it going? The answer I heard was this, “THE ONE WHO IS MOST MATURE.” A HUSBAND IS TO CARE FOR HIS WIFE. The final aspect of A PEACEFUL HOME IS THIS...

III. CHILDREN OBEY THEIR PARENTS

Ephesians 6:1-4 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 "Honor your father and mother"-which is the first commandment with a promise- 3 "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." 4 Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

TESTIMONY: I have always been a compliant child, so I can't understand what it would be like to disobey my parents. I am sure that as a toddler I had times of defiance but not too much. I likely got a few spankings. But I have always been crushed by a look or rebuke from my parents for poor behavior. But some children are strong-willed and difficult. Sharon was good at guiding our children and even when they were nursing babies would not let them get their way. I never would have thought of that. They got put on a schedule and had to learn right there that fussing would get them nowhere. Some people learn to fuss as a child and spend the rest of their lives fussing, much to the chagrin of those around them.

PROMISE: Notice here that obedience to parents carries with it a promise, “*it will go well with us and we will have a long life.*” How many-a-young person have lost their lives doing something they knew their parents would not want them to do. I remember at age 16 the pastor talked my parents into letting me drive his car to a winter Lutheran Evangelistic Movement youth rally in Minneapolis. My hometown didn't even have a stop light. My dad was not in favor of it but relented. It was snowy, slippery and dusk in St. Paul when we got there, and I ended up getting in an accident at the corner of University and Raymond. I totaled the pastor's nice Volvo. It was a warning to us all to listen to parental concern. Even to this day I ask myself this question when trying to make a decision: “What would my parents tell me to do?” I know if I follow that thought, things will go well.

FATHER'S ROLE: Fathers can take an active role in helping their children to be obedient. We are not to exasperate them. What does that mean?

- It means CONSISTENCY—demonstrating obedience to the commandments you expect your children to obey. Inconsistency causes confusion and rebellion.
- It means TIME—there is nothing children want more from their fathers than time...as infants, holding them, as small children, playing with them, as teens—working with them side by side and doing adventures together...as adults, visiting them and lending a helping hand when life gets hard for them. There is nothing that will rescue a rebellious teen faster than a father spending time with that child. I have heard of pastors of time-consuming churches that have a rebellious child who quit the church and took on a 40 hour per week job in order to dedicate more time with that struggling child. It really helped.
- Parents can read books, look at the example of other parents and learn from older couples as well in techniques to teach children to be obedient. We are all learners and not all of us came from homes that did it as well as they could have.
- Notice also that it is the father's responsibility to train and instruct his children in the Word of God. When we baptize a child, parents promise to bring their children to church and to place in their hands the Holy Scriptures. Sunday school is a special time for children to gather around the Word of God to set a pattern of lifelong Bible study with other believers. But Sunday school is not enough, it is just a few minutes a week. The Word of God must be taught in the home.

Many people in the world today would scoff at my sermon and say I am out of touch with modern times. But most of them will end up in the divorce court sooner, rather than later. **THOSE WHO FOLLOW GOD'S WAYS WILL HAVE A PEACEFUL HOME.** God's way is the best way. It is the way of joy and peace. **DO YOU WANT A PEACEFUL HOME?** If you don't have joy and peace in your home life, I encourage you to consider God's plan for a happy and peaceful home with respectful wives, loving husbands, and obedient children.

I would like to close with verse four of our next hymn: ***"O Lord, our God, our homes are Thine forever! We trust to Thee their problems, toil and care; Their bonds of love no enemy can sever, If Thou art always Lord and Master there; Be Thou the center of our least endeavor: Be Thou our Guest, our hearts and homes to share."** Amen*

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

HYMN #326 "O Give Us Homes Built Firm upon the Savior"

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 "Doxology with Three-fold Amen"

POSTLUDE: Ruth Antal