

SERVICE INFORMATION
Minnesota Valley Church
December 4, 2022
Second Sunday in Advent

PRELUDE: Ruth Antal (Osthus Singers)

CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 50:1-6

PASTOR: The Mighty One, God, the LORD,
speaks and summons the earth
from the rising of the sun to the place where it sets.

50+: From Zion, perfect in beauty,
God shines forth.

49-: Our God comes and will not be silent;
a fire devours before him,
and around him a tempest rages.

50+: He summons the heavens above,
and the earth, that he may judge his people:

49-: "Gather to me my consecrated ones,
who made a covenant with me by sacrifice."

ALL: And the heavens proclaim his righteousness,
for God himself is judge.

HYMN #4 "Rejoice, All Ye Believers"

CONFESSION OF SIN: *Psalm 51:1-7 Have mercy on me. O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil*

in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place. Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

PRAYER

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE/ADVENT CANDLE

READER: Dave Osthus

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: *Malachi 4:1-6 "Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire," says the LORD Almighty. "Not a root or a branch will be left to them. 2 But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall. 3 Then you will trample down the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I do these things," says the LORD Almighty. 4 "Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel. 5 "See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. 6 He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse."*

GOSPEL LESSON: *Luke 21:25-36 "There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. 26 Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. 27 At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." 29 He told them this parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees. 30 When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. 31 Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near. 32 "I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. 33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will*

never pass away. 34 "Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. 35 For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth. 36 Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."

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

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

CONFESSION OF FAITH: *I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible.*

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made; Who for us, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, And was made man; And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, He suffered and was buried; And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, And ascended into heaven, And is seated on the right hand of the Father, And He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, The Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, Who spoke by the Prophets. And I believe one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the Resurrection of the dead, And the Life of the world to come. Amen

GLORIA PATRI: Ambassador Hymnal p. 4 (please put on screen)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER

TWO PRAISE SONGS: Picked by Lisa

SERMON TITLE: "AN EXPECTED HOPE: HOPE THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT"

December 4, 2022; Pastor Tom Olson; Romans 15:4-13

THEME: Our theme for this Advent of 2022 is AN EXPECTED HOPE. Today we face a very neglected topic in the church. It is the roll of the Holy Spirit in the first Christmas and in our lives today. The Holy Spirit is the one we relate to every day now that Jesus has ascended into heaven. Yet the Holy Spirit is almost unknown to believers. If we are going to have "An Expected Hope" we need to get to know the Holy Spirit much better. Today we will begin that journey with our Epistle Lesson from Romans 15:4-13. Let's talk about it!

I. THE MEANS OF HOPE: THE WORD OF GOD IS THE VEHICLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Romans 15:4 For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

SUPERNATURAL: The Bible is a supernatural book. It was breathed into existence by the Holy Spirit "breathing words" into the hearts and minds of the writers. **2 Timothy 3:16 tells us that "all Scripture is inspired by God."** Some modern translations use the words "God-breathed" for inspired. That means that the Words of God have a supernatural power to them. The promises can be something we stand on. The laws in the Bible give us solid guidance for a good and fruitful life. The message of the gospel is the central them. When we consume the Word of God, the Holy Spirit creates faith and give guidance and empowers us to overcome the evil one.

STORIES: Our text here says that all the Old Testament stories were put there to teach us and encourage us. God put very honest and real accounts of success and failure in the Old Testament. He

did it for our sake. This week in OK Bible study we looked at some of the mistakes Abram made by not obeying God and the serious consequences of those poor decisions. We also saw his right decisions he made that resulted in great blessing to his family and to the whole world. Paul says that the end result of knowing the Word of God is HOPE.

WORD: In the New Testament the idea of being filled with the Holy Spirit and filled with the Word of God are interchangeable. A Word-Filled Christian will be a Spirit-Filled Christian.

Ephesians 5:18&19 tell us to "Be filled with the Holy Spirit resulting in songs, hymns, spiritual songs, melody in our hearts and thankfulness." Colossians 3:16 tells that the same joyful, thankful heart full of songs of praise are the result of letting "the Word of Christ dwell in us richly."

THE WORD OF GOD IS THE MEANS OF HOPE AND THE VEHICLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

II. THE OBJECT OF HOPE: JESUS IS THE FOCUS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Romans 15:5-12 May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, 6 so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. 8 For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs 9 so that the Gentiles may glorify God for his mercy, as it is written: "Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing hymns to your name." 10 Again, it says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people." 11 And again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and sing praises to him, all you peoples." 12 And again, Isaiah says, "The Root of

Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; the Gentiles will hope in him."

FAVORITE: The gospel of Jesus Christ is the favorite topic of the Holy Spirit. You know if a person is filled with the Spirit because they love to talk about Jesus. Everything about Jesus is precious to them. They love to tell about his birth in Bethlehem, his life and teaching, his death on the cross and His resurrection. They love to tell about His ascension into heaven and how He is working everything out for His return and the exciting kingdom He is going to usher in. A Spirit-filled person loves to talk about Jesus coming again. The second coming of Christ will be a favorite topic. A Spirit-filled person longs to see Jesus more than any other person who has died and gone to heaven. JESUS IS THE FOCUS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

DEVIL: The devil works hard to get new Christians to take their eyes off of Jesus and put them onto doctrinal debates and a focus on the lives of anyone but Jesus. The devil would rather that you forget about Jesus and focus on a popular preacher instead. That is why our whole church year is built around the life, ministry and teaching of Jesus. This is where the joy is found. And "the joy of the Lord is our strength." The best way to get the devil out of your life is to focus on Jesus. When that is our focus the devil will say, "I can't stand Jesus and I am going to move out of this soul." One man who was an expert in casting demons out of people once told me that the best way to get a demon out is to get that person to know Jesus better and better. Then the demons leave and never try to come back when Jesus is the focus.

UNITY: Our text here in Romans 15:5 tells us that as we "*follow Christ*" we get a "*spirit of unity*." I feel closer to people from different churches and denominations who love Jesus than I do with people in my own group who are caught up in anything other than the "*old, old story, of Jesus and His love*."

FOCUS: As we focus on Jesus, the Holy Spirit will start to feel happy to be with us. That is what makes Holy Communion so important...it is a focus on Jesus.

ERROR: Some people make communion a focus on themselves and their own sin and their own holiness. That is a big mistake. Jesus said, ***“Do this in remembrance of me.”*** When Jesus said “let a man examine himself” the point is not self-focus, the point is we examine ourselves to see if our focus is on the cross of Christ. ***1 Corinthians 2:2 For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. People who focus on being holy struggle with sin far more than people who focus on the cross of Christ.***

QUESTION: What is your focus in your spiritual life...is it your own holiness or the Holy Lamb of God giving his life on the cross? That is where the power of the Holy Spirit is found. The law of God is powerless to save but Paul reminds us in Romans 1 that ***“the gospel is the power of God for salvation.”***

JESUS IS THE FOCUS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

III. THE RESULT OF HOPE: OVERFLOWING POWER IS THE EXPERIENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Romans 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

PRINCIPLE: There is an amazing principle found in this great verse. Here it is: the more we TRUST in the Lord the greater will be our HOPE, JOY, PEACE AND POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT in our lives. Trust produces Hope. Trust produces Joy. Trust produces Peace. Trust produces the POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. Do you want to be filled with HOPE, JOY, PEACE AND THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT? I sure

do...more and more. The only way for that to happen is to collapse into the arms of the Lord and trust Him completely. When we are confident that God is intimately involved in our lives, then instead of trying to fight the unchangeables, we ask God what He is doing and what He is teaching us. TRUST is absolutely key for the ABUNDANT CHRISTIAN LIFE.

UNSTOPPABLE: Christmas is a perfect story of how this works. God was fulfilling prophecy of the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem from descendants of King David. Nothing could stop God. The Roman Empire could not stop Him. Powerful and wicked King Herod could not stop Him. God is working all the time. There is a neat song on Christian radio about this called “God is Working...”

***Sometimes your faith and the facts don't line up
When you're trying to believe
But you feel like giving up
You need to know
He doesn't take any day off
And He promised He would finish
Everything that He start
You need to know
God is working
Working in your life...
Sit back and let Him work
Let go and let Him work
Pray and let Him work
Let Him work in your life
God is working
Working in your life...
Just before you start to fall apart
Remember God does all His best work in the dark.***

JUST TRUST THE LORD and He will flow through you with the power of the Holy Spirit. OVERFLOWING POWER OF THE

HOLY SPIRIT IS THE END RESULT OF **TRUSTING** IN THE LORD.

COME: As you come to the Lord's Table today, come with the prayer on your heart that God will fill you with the Holy Spirit as we focus on Jesus. Amen

HYMN #5 "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

HOLY COMMUNION (Dave Fischer prep and help)

DOXOLOGY: (To the tune of Edelweiss) *May the Lord, Mighty Lord, Bless and keep you forever-- Grant you peace, Perfect peace, Strength in every endeavor. Lift up your eyes and see His face, Feel His grace forever. May the Lord, Mighty Lord, Bless and keep you forever.*

POSTLUDE: Ruth Antal