

**First Presbyterian Church - Rouses Point NY**  
**Virtual Worship July 12, 2020-Order of Service**

Greetings-Next Sunday-July 19-worship returns to church building. Arrive between 8:50 and 9:10. Masks required. We will film the service for those not able to attend.

**PRAYER OF PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP**

Gracious Lord, nourish the soil of our lives with goodness, courage, hope, faith and love that we may grow in your word and in your way. In Christ's name we gather and pray. Amen

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Come, let us worship the Lord our God, for the Lord is our God, and we are the Lord's people.

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

God of life, Lord of mercy, we confess that, we selfishly make decisions that do not honor you. You are tireless in speaking to us, but we find it easy to close our minds, to refuse to hear what would require painful change, to reject the truth because it is inconvenient. Forgive deliberate denseness of mind, fearful resistance to change, stubborn insistence that our way is the best way. Renew us we pray so we may be open once again to your Word and follow in Christ's way, for it is in his name we repent and pray. Amen

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Readings and Proclaiming God's Word

Old Testament: Psalm 119:105-112

New Testament: Matthew 12:1-14

Sermon "God's Law-What's Love Got To Do With It?"

\*Affirmation of faith: Apostle's Creed

Prayers of the People

Lord's Prayer

Benediction

**Psalm 119:105-112** <sup>105</sup>Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path. <sup>106</sup>I have taken an oath and confirmed it, that I will follow your righteous laws. <sup>107</sup>I have suffered much; preserve my life, LORD, according to your word. <sup>108</sup>Accept, LORD, the willing praise of my mouth, and teach me your laws. <sup>109</sup>Though I constantly take my life in my hands, I will not forget your law. <sup>110</sup>The wicked have set a snare for me, but I have not strayed from your precepts. <sup>111</sup>Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart. <sup>112</sup>My heart is set on keeping your decrees to the very end.

**Matthew 12:1-14** At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them. **2** When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath." **3** He answered, "Haven't you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? **4** He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread—which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. **5** Or haven't you read in the Law that the priests on Sabbath duty in the temple desecrate the Sabbath and yet are innocent? **6** I tell you that something greater than the temple is here. **7** If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice, you would not have condemned the innocent. **8** For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.'" **9** Going on from that place, he went into their synagogue, **10** and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Looking for a reason to bring charges against Jesus, they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" **11** He said to them, "If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out? **12** How much more valuable is a person than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." **13** Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other. **14** But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.

SERMON SUMMARY: PSALM 119:105-112 & MATTHEW 12:1-14

PSALM 119 USES THE LIGHT OF A LAMP AS A METAPHOR FOR THE PURPOSE OF SCRIPTURE, AS GOD'S WRITTEN WORD, AND THE LAW OF THE LORD FOUND WITHIN THE BIBLE.

THIS LIGHT, MUCH LIKE THE LIGHT OF A LAMP OR A FLASHLIGHT GIVES US GUIDANCE BY ILLUMINATING A LITTLE AT A TIME, A PATH THROUGH THE DARKNESS.

HOWEVER, THE LIGHT OF GOD'S WORD, LIKE THE ILLUMINATION OF A FLASHLIGHT OR LANTERN DOES US NO GOOD IF IT IS NOT SWITCHED ON.

THIS IS IMPORTANT WHEN FOLLOWING GOD'S WORD, FOR IT PROVIDES US WITH MORE THAN LIGHT FOR THE JOURNEY. IT CAN ALSO HELP TO RELIEVE ANXIETY, AND LEAD US AWAY FROM SIN.

THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE IS A TOOL GOD HAS SENT TO HELP HIS PEOPLE ON THEIR JOURNEY, AND TO TEACH US TO HOW TO LOVE THE LORD AND OTHERS, AS WE LOVE OURSELVES.

JESUS TRIED TO GET THE PHARISEES AND ALL THE PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IS TO TEACH US HOW TO LOVE GOD, AND LOVE OTHERS.

HIS POINT WAS TWOFOLD. FIRST, WHEN DOING GOOD YOU DO NOT VIOLATE THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW, WHICH IS TO DRAW US CLOSER TO GOD.

AND JESUS' SECOND POINT WAS THAT HE HAS THE DIVINE AUTHORITY TO INTERPRET SCRIPTURE, AND SAY WHAT IS AND IS NOT ACCORDING TO HIS FATHER'S WILL.

THE PROBLEM THAT THE SAVIOR WAS CONFRONTED WITH, SPECIFICALLY CONCERNED THE COMMANDMENT TO REST ON THE SABBATH.

THE COMPLAINT OF THE PHARISEE'S AGAINST JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES WAS THAT PLUCKING FOOD ON THE SABBATH, WAS TECHNICALLY CONSIDERED TO BE WORK.

JESUS, BY SAYING HE, AS THE "SON OF MAN" IS LORD OF THE SABBATH, WAS EXPLAINING HE HAD THE AUTHORITY TO PERMIT HIS DISCIPLES TO HARVEST/WORK ON THE SABBATH.

JESUS PUSHED HIS POINT EVEN FARTHER, WHEN A LITTLE WHILE LATER HE OPENLY HEALED A MAN ON THE SABBATH. HEALING OR HELP WAS ALLOWED IF SOMEONE WOULD DIE WITHOUT IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE, OR TO HELP A WOMAN IN LABOR, BUT NOT FOR LESSER THINGS.

THE JEWISH UNDERSTANDING OF GOD'S LAW AT THAT TIME, WAS THE MAN'S INJURY WAS NOT IMMEDIATELY LIFE THREATENING. THIS MEANT, IN THEIR VIEW, JESUS SHOULD HAVE WAITED UNTIL SUNSET, WHEN THE SABBATH WAS OVER TO HEAL HIM.

THE SAVIOR'S TEACHING WAS THAT GOD DID NOT INTEND THE SABBATH LAW TO FORBID HELPING SOMEONE. HE POINTED OUT, SINCE THE LAW PERMITTED AN ANIMAL TO BE RESCUED OR HELPED ON THE SABBATH, IT EVEN MORE SO ALLOWED THOSE MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD TO BE HELPED.

THUS THE PURPOSE OF THE SABBATH, WAS BOTH FOR THE BENEFIT OF PEOPLE TO GIVE US REST, AND TO HONOR GOD.

CONSIDER HOSEA 6:6, WHERE GOD GIVES A MESSAGE TO HIS PEOPLE THAT INTERPRETS HIS COMMAND TO OFFER SACRIFICES, SAYING: "FOR I DESIRE MERCY, NOT SACRIFICE, THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD RATHER THAN BURNT OFFERINGS."

1 PETER 4:8 EXPLAINS GOD'S WILL IN A SIMILAR WAY, SAYING: "ABOVE ALL MAINTAIN CONSTANT LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER, FOR LOVE COVERS A MULTITUDE OF SINS."

THE KJV- SUBSTITUTES THE WORD "CHARITY" FOR LOVE, WHICH IS A WAY OF EXPLAINING HOW LOVE IS SHOWN.

THUS LOVE FOR GOD AND LOVE FOR OUR NEIGHBOR AS OUR SELF IS NOT SHOWN BY THE RIGID KIND OF LEGALISM OF THE PHARISEES.

THIS BRINGS US BACK TO THE THEME OF LIGHT, AND GOD'S WORD AS A LAMP FOR OUR FEET AND LIGHT FOR OUR WAY. AND IT BRINGS US BACK TO JESUS AS THE WORD OF GOD MADE FLESH, AND THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD, WHO HAS COMMISSIONED CHRISTIANS TO CARRY HIS LIGHT.

OUR SAVIOR CALLS US INTO HIS LIGHT. JESUS CALLS US TO FOLLOW THE LIGHT OF GOD'S WORD, HIS OWN LOVE, AND PRAY FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT'S GUIDANCE. AMEN