

St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church
Sermon by Pastor Anthony E. Schultz
The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
July 15, 2018

Christian Worship: Year A EHV®



Romans 8:18-25

¹⁸For I conclude that our sufferings at the present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us. ¹⁹In fact, creation is waiting with eager longing for the sons of God to be revealed. ²⁰For creation was subjected to futility, not by its own will, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in the hope ²¹that even creation itself will be set free from slavery to corruption, in order to share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. ²²For we know that all of creation is groaning with birth pains right up to the present time. ²³And not only creation, but also we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we eagerly await our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. ²⁴Indeed, it was for this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is not hope, because who hopes for what he already sees? ²⁵But if we hope for something we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with patient endurance.

People of God-rescued from the flaming lake of fire in hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

Gilda Radner – a very small person wrote an autobiography entitled It's Always Something. I think that pretty much spells out the news. It's Always Something! There was a soccer team from Thailand – trapped underground in a cave – some 2 miles from the entrance. They have all 12 young men out. How did this

happen? They had to go under water again and again – to get out! Who decided who got rescued next? A couple on their honeymoon took a cruise. They stopped by an island to go zip-lining. The lady got stuck about ½ way. Her new husband crashed into her and died! Did he break his neck? It doesn't say. Does it really matter? There was a guy 19 years old – camping out in Colorado – when he was struck in the neck by lightning? His girlfriend immediately started CPR. Could you do that? Pushing at just the right place – to the rhythm of the BeeGees' "Stayin' alive! Stayin' alive!" *It's always something!* Sometimes the danger is physical. That's bad enough! Often times the danger is spiritual – which is far worse! Today we have this powerful practical Gospel Promise:

We Will Not Be Discouraged!

- I. Painful problems are sure to come~
- II. But Jesus will surely bring us to Heaven!

We are reading from the **Wartburg Project Pericopes – series A**. For 16 weeks in a row – with Jesus' permission we are reading from the letter to the **Romans**. From the second Sunday after Pentecost – until the 18th Sunday after Pentecost – through September 9th we will read from **Romans**! There is so much law and gospel in **Romans** for us to learn and understand and apply to our day to day life. Especially as Pastor Cloute will be installed this afternoon at 4 p.m. Last Sunday we read from **Romans** chapter 7. The Apostle Paul laments: **19So I fail to do the good I want to do. Instead, the evil I do not want to do, that is what I keep doing. 20Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who am doing it, but it is sin living in me. 21So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is present with**

me. ²²I certainly delight in God's law according to my inner self, ²³but I see a different law at work in my members, waging war against the law of my mind and taking me captive to the law of sin, which is present in my members. ²⁴What a miserable wretch I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁵I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord! I wonder if right up to the end of his life the Apostle Paul could close his eyes and see Stephen being stoned to death while he stood there watching the cloaks of the people chunking creamy colored stones at him until he was dead? Do we go to bed at night thinking **what a miserable wretch I am?** Or do we go to bed at night thinking – of all the people I know – I am sure I am one of the nicest? I know I can say, **"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the chief – the worst!"**

Chapter 8. ¹⁸For I conclude that our sufferings at the present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us. ¹⁹In fact, creation is waiting with eager longing for the sons of God to be revealed. ²⁰For creation was subjected to futility, not by its own will, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in the hope ²¹that even creation itself will be set free from slavery to corruption, in order to share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. There are troubles all around! All you have to do is look around! I listen to the radio when I drive around to visit people. I listen to the 80s all the time! *Michael Jackson*. A train wreck. Dying because he couldn't fall asleep without the chemicals they use in operating rooms to knock you out before they operate on your heart or pancreas or brain! The fact that Michael Jackson's Album *Thriller!* sold some 66 million copies does him no good today. *Prince* died in his mansion by his elevator – all alone! **The Blues Brothers** – *John Adam Belushi* was

very gifted – famous for his *intense energy*--and yet died when he was what 33 – from an overdose of both cocaine and heroin. And the person who was found guilty of giving him that fatal *speed ball* was sentenced to 15 *months* – not years – 15 *months*. It is easy to shake our heads when we hear the stories about the rich and famous and exceedingly gifted people who die so young – because of their abuse of drugs and alcohol. And yet a person doesn't have to drive through much of Watertown without seeing all the cars parked by all the bars in Watertown. I almost stopped the other day on my way to Church – when I saw a little grandpa sitting on the gas meter – yes, sitting on the gas meter of a bar smoking a cigarette before going back inside to drink more alcohol. There is spiritual danger all around – and the painful ♥-ache that comes from sin and its bitter consequences. Only Jesus can set us free from sin and all the pain that comes from it. Only the Holy Spirit can enable us to say with the Prodigal – the *Wasteful Son*–**“Father I have sinned against Heaven and am no longer worthy to be called your son!”** For Jesus' sake~ God be merciful to be a sinner. And He is!

²²For we know that all of creation is groaning with birth pains right up to the present time. ²³And not only creation, but also we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we eagerly await our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. It is impossible to imagine the splendor – the flawless wonder of the Garden of Eden before sin! Take your lawn. What is growing in your front lawn? Is it Kentucky Blue Grass? What else is growing in your front lawn – *crab* grass – *quack* grass? Do you know the difference? Do you have Creeping Charlie? Do you have Dandelions? Do you have

those Dandelions with little stickers all over them? Do you have those thistles – with the pink/purple flowers that turn into a thousand little wispy seeds? Do you have clover – three leaf and every once in a while four? Are those little white flowers bad or are you supposed to let them grow! And what are those weeds that spread on the ground – little reddish green tubes – and then these little flat leaves that grow in clumps? Then there are the weeds and the grass that grows in the crack at the end of your driveway! What's with that? And I suppose you can declare chemical warfare against all these hearty little plants – and the juice you spray on a few weeds in inconvenient places and the spray can make you sick! Imagine a world where there were not mosquitoes that bite you around the ankles – and when you smack them – there is a little red dot where they used to be and they itch until you are on the brink of going nuts! And that's just some of the little things! Creation itself is frustrated with apples that are full of worms and little bugs long before they are ripe. Sunflowers are frustrated when their massive stems break long before the sun flower seeds are ripe. Creation is frustrated when squirrels and ducks and geese and deer and raccoons and opossums and muskrats and groundhogs are on the highway in the dark. Creation is frustrated when little baby ducks are washed down street drains until police officers and fire fighters find them and rescue them. It is all a painful mess and will continue to be a mess until Jesus returns!

²³And not only creation, but also we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we eagerly await our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. I can't wait to get to Heaven! I read the other day about a man who went to

school and studied very hard because he always wanted to work taking care of the sick, the suffering and the dying. Finally he graduated and was just days away from going to work. He went on one last quick vacation – to the Grand Canyon! He fell! I thought – I can't believe it! The headline said he fell 500 feet! That's like 50 stories – ballpark – and so? How high – to the peak of the Church? 30 feet – three stories? That would make 500 divided by 30--that's over 16 times as high as the peak of the Church! How did that happen? At first guess I thought I bet some guard rail gave way – some barrier that was supposed to keep him safe failed! Then I read this poor soul was seen taking off his backpack and climbing over the rail! They said this guy was lots of fun – enjoyed goofing around – liked to have fun! What a terrible tragedy if this is all right – and so?

These things go painfully wrong all the time! It has been said we are in the inbetween times! We know about all the pain and frustration of this world. We kind of know about Heaven – but not so much! If you want to read about Heaven – to learn more about what it's going to be like – where do you look? Look in God's Word. Read your Bible! Read **The People's Bible** – the volume of **Revelation** written by Prof. Wayne D. Mueller. Read the **Commentary on Revelation** by Dr. Sigbert W. Becker. Read **The People's Bible Commentaries on Isaiah and Ezekiel** and on **Daniel** who were all afforded glimpses into Heaven. Be painfully aware of false prophets who like to talk about a *Rapture* and a *Millenium* and all kinds of false doctrines and false teachings. Remember just a few weeks ago Jesus said, **“Beware of false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly they are ferocious wolves!”**

But hope that is seen is not *hope*, because who hopes for what he already sees? ²⁵But if we hope for something we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with patient endurance. In this world – in this life – we will have troubles – sometimes incredibly painful troubles. But we rejoice in the hope of eternal life for Jesus' sake. There was a little baby boy – just 5 months old – under a pile of sticks – out in the middle of nowhere. It was just 46°! A sheriff's deputy walking through the wilderness for some 6 hours – heard the faintest infant crying when he found this helpless little baby. This is the kind of terrible things that keep on happening in this world – all spoiled and ruined by sin. The pain and sadness in this world are all on account of sin. The precious good news is – Jesus died on the \dagger to wash away all our sins then rose triumphant. That means whenever we die – whenever Judgment Day comes – **our sufferings at the present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us.** We will say with the angels forever: *Thank you, Jesus!* Amen!

To God alone all glory!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Rev. Anthony E. Schatz". The signature is written in black ink on a light blue rectangular background.