

Message for Sunday, August 2, 2026
Scripture: Romas 9: 1-6 NRSVue
Title: "Where to Start with a Broken Heart?"

Welcome

Announcements: Giving Options... box in the back, online, QR code etc. Special Offering for August is the ARC; Men's Coffee resumes on Tuesday, August 4th at 7:30AM in Verde Hall: The book club will meet Tuesday, August 4th at 9:30AM in Verde Hall.

Fellowship of Love

Song

Call to Worship

L: My people were hungry.

P: There are too many to feed.

L: Give them something to eat.

P: We have only five loaves and two fish.

L: You have everything you need.

P: It would take a miracle.

L: With God, all things are possible.

P: In Christ, new hope has dawned.

Unison Prayer

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Even when our faith falters,

O Lord, we will not let you go.

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Even though we are battered and bruised, O God, we will not let you go.

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Even when our bellies are empty, we know that your presence will satisfy us.

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We need your blessing,

O God, and we will not let you go. Amen.

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L: As we come to this time of offering, let us remember that giving is an opportunity to respond to God's generosity with our own.

Offering/Song

Scripture: Romans 9:1-6 NRSVue

I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit—

² I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were

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accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own brothers and sisters, my own flesh and blood. ⁴They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; ⁵to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever.^[a] Amen.

⁶It is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all those descended from Israel are Israelites,

L: The word of God, for the people of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

Meditation: Where to Start with a Broken Heart?

Life isn't easy sometimes. Currently, in my own life, I have several friends who are going through some really difficult and painful times. I'd really like to talk about those situations directly; but this is not the time or the place that is best for those conversations. I can, however, talk about my own pain, my own experience, and why that relates to what we are seeing happening and what we might do with this passage today.

A few months ago, Sophia told me that I don't speak about this part of my past too often and I realized she's right; I haven't spoken a significant amount about it over the past 10 years. Not because I don't think about it, but because it's a part of who I am now and it really

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influences how I believe and how I practice my beliefs. In short, to quote a recent musical Hadestown, "we're going to tell it again." I've occasionally spoken about an event that shaped much of my faith journey. That was the death of my friend Leddia during my sophomore year of college. This would have been early in 2001. It is a very painful event in my life. A fully treatable situation if caught, but it wasn't, and it resulted in the loss of a life at 20 years of age. That pain in turn has shaped me over the years. There is power in telling the story, power in remembering the pain.

This short passage is one about Paul's pain. Paul's pain, his heartbreak, is in regard to his own people, the nation to which he belongs is rejecting Christ. We are not going to fall into some of the traps here. We are not going to make the mistake of thinking that this is about converting the Jewish people to Christianity. That has been used to support antisemitic practices for many years. Nor are we going to make John Calvin's mistake, and go into the next few chapters, 9-11 and make it about double predestination. Double predestination is the idea that God not only actively chooses those who are saved, predestination, but also actively chooses who is damned, hence the double. We are not going to make those mistakes because we know we are dealing with some pain and hurt. And we are going to do it like Paul does, by starting with what we know.

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Quoting Hadestown, "It's a sad song; it's a tragedy but we sing it anyway. Because to know how it ends but to still sing it anyway is to hope that it will turn out differently."

Paul starts with what he knows. He knows that he, and we, are a product of the crucifixion of Christ. In Chapter 8 verse 39 he tells us, "nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The crucifixion stands for the love of God and that love will NEVER separate any of us from God's love.

Paul's anguish, his pain, is trying to understand why someone would reject what God has done. Our pain, maybe in not understanding why a loved one won't accept Christ, or losing someone, leaving us wondering the state of their eternal soul, should not be short circuited into trying to know who God has saved or who God has damned. Instead, it should go to what we know. That God's love is not separated from anyone.

As I have sought to walk this path of being a Christian, and of trying to lead others in their faith, I have to go back to what I know. God loves everyone. Period. Who is saved and who is not is not something for me to judge. I can only judge the fruits of that walk. I rely on God's love. I will always default to that. I invite you not to short circuit your theology. Start with what you know, start with what Paul knows. That God loves you. Then build from there. Amen.

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Entering into a time of Holy Communion

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING Communion Liturgy

UMH pp. 13-16

L: The Lord be with you.

P: And also with you.

L: Lift up your hearts.

P: We lift them up to the Lord.

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

P: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

L: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

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P: Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

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L: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

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L: On the night in which he gave himself up for us he took bread gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

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L: When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

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L: And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

P: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

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L: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

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L: By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

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Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

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P: Amen.

Communion; Song; Song

Benediction

Song

Goodbye