Welcome Class of 2020!

Today marks the first of a sermon series on the "Fruits of the Spirit" found in Galatians 5: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control.

This sermon series is designed for the benefit of the Class of 2020 and is designed to spiritually strengthen not only our Midshipmen, but to be an encouragement to our congregation.

2020 You must be feeling overwhelmed… and even fearful! You may even be filled with doubt; asking yourself will you make it through Plebe Summer? I call you now to rest upon the Love and Providential Care shown to you by God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. Each one of you has a testimony of how God has strengthened you in the past, each one of you has seen God’s hand, working in your lives… working all things out to your good.

Memorizing Yard Gouge

Since the beginning of time men have built buildings to honor themselves… Trump Tower.

- Main Chapel – Built to remind us of the Providence of God
- The Stain Glass windows in the rotunda.

Christ the Consoler Window (1908) depicts Jesus walking on water hands outstretched asking us to trust in him, the great creator who has power of sea and all creation, and recalls the truth of the Naval Hymn, Eternal Father Strong to Save who’s arms have bound the restless wave.

Farragut Window (Right) (1914) Reminds of the providence of God in its depiction of the Archangel Michael going before Admiral Farragut’s ships as he entered the mine filled waters of Mobile Bay; (fifty years prior).

Sampson Window (Left) (1909) Commemorates the Victory God gave over the Spanish Fleet in 1898; it depicts a winged angel of Peace, on the prow of a ship, as if to say God’s Providence goes before and brings us Peace.

Behind us stands a statue of Christ with his hands opened wide with the inscription Come Unto Me… Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.
Together the image of God’s Providence is clear: Christ is Before You, Christ is Behind You, He sends his angels before you on either side.

**God’s Providential Love in Christ Jesus**

As we see it in our lives, as we see it in this Chapel... Throughout the Bible we see God’s Providential Love. And we see it most clearly in our passage of scripture in keeping and preserving all those whom he loves.

**Romans 8:28** *We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.*

**Things don’t work**... but it is clear from the passage that it is God who works all things to the good of those whom he Loves and are called according to his purpose. All things, good and bad, God uses to bring about something in our lives that is a benefit... that is for our good.

He tells us this purpose in the next verse **29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.**

**You are all in the process of being conformed.** Not just the Plebes in the process of being conformed into good Midshipmen, but all of us into the character reflective of Jesus Christ our Savior.

   Being conformed is sometimes a painful thing. Being transformed sometimes requires breaking, remodeling. The old has to be torn down for the new to be built. This transformation is not easy. We wonder sometimes how the difficult, painful things... yes maybe even the evil things, may be worked by God to our good.

   The Greek word used here is morpha, from which we get the word metamorphosis. Paul is saying that God promises to metamorphize us. He promises to change our very inner essence into the very inner essence of his son Jesus Christ.

   God is moving you – through everything that happens in your life—whether externally good or bad— toward your transformation into Christ's nature. If you love God, everything that happens in your life will mold you, sculpt you, polish you, and shape you into the image of his Son. He is making you like him. He'll give you Christ's incredible compassion and courage to overcome all challenges before you. God is working everything that happens in your life toward that magnificent goal to be like his son. And by the way he said it's predestined. It's guaranteed.
Philippians 1:6 *I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.*

John Stott said: *Our confidence is not in our love for him, which is frail, fickle, and faltering, but in His love for us, which is steadfast, faithful and persevering.*

**Nothing in this life can separate us from the Love of God!**

Paul asks a number of rhetorical questions in chapter eight of Romans with obvious answers of God's providential love. These questions culminate in verse thirty-five: *Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will trouble, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?*

Paul boldly proclaims: *No, in all these things we have complete victory through him who loved us! For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**Nothing in all creation can separate us from the Love of God!**

God’s purpose is to Love you, to transform you, more and more each day, to the image of His Son. For that purpose he is working all things out to your best interest... nothing will separate you from the Love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord!

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This passage challenges us to always remember, even in the midst of your greatest challenge, that God’s great love for us, through Christ Jesus our Lord, enables us to be more than conquerors in every trial of life. Remain steadfast in your faith and take courage in the face of all the trials life may offer.

**God’s Love has made you victorious!**