

Faith Life Weekly 9/3/09

Reflection:

Friends, this has been a very difficult two weeks. As you know the ELCA voted on a sexuality statement and four ministry policies. I, along with many people in this church have been in prayer over these issues. People are hurting and broken. I invite your prayers. It will be a time of decision for many.

The matter comes down to an interpretation of God's Holy Word. It is about the honoring God's Word, the truth of it, over against some cultural mores. Jesus says very clearly in John 8, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." As a Lutheran Christian I also honor God's word in such a way that I do not add to the words of Holy Scripture nor take away from them. As the apostle explains in Timothy, "All scripture is inspired by God and useful for reproof, for correction, and for training up in righteousness." The Bible is the sole source and norm for our faith and life.

It pained me to sit on the assembly floor of this church wide assembly, I was there, and hear people, well meaning people, even leaders of the church, read scripture and stop short of the ending. We cannot do this.

So the Apostle also warns, "I am astonished that some are turning to a different gospel - there are some who are confusing you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ." (Galatians 1: 6-7.)

Jesus himself even warned, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves." (Matthew 7:15)

Peter said it this way: "Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in your faith..." (1 Peter 5: 8-9)

Take a moment to get back to the truth of God's Word, God's Holy Word friends. Keep it Holy. Honor it. Claim this as season to read the Bible daily and to soak up God's truth, every bit of it. Some among us haven't opened the pages of scripture since we were in Sunday school or at best during confirmation. The Bible is God's book to us, God's guide for our lives, the source of our very being, and it always points, it must point, to Christ, other wise it is an out right lie. So do not lie or deceive with God's Word.

Martin Luther, the great reformer posted a note on the wall so the Wittenberg church in Germany because the church had taken human traditions, human ways and mores, cultural venues, as the truth. He would not stand for it any more.

In Luther's words, "Here I stand!"

SONG:

"Word of God Speak", by Mercy Me

(You can find the tune and video at: You Tube, Mercy Me, Word of God Speak;
www.youtube.com/watch?v=XhIUxROorSI)

***I'm finding myself at a loss for words
And the funny thing is it's okay
The last thing I need is to be heard
But to hear what You would say***

[CHORUS]

***Word of God speak
Would You pour down like rain
Washing my eyes to see
Your majesty
To be still and know***

***That You're in this place
Please let me stay and rest
In Your holiness
Word of God speak***

***I'm finding myself in the midst of You
Beyond the music, beyond the noise
All that I need is to be with You
And in the quiet hear Your voice***

[REPEAT CHORUS 2x]

***I'm finding myself at a loss for words
And the funny thing is it's okay***

Prayer:

“Oh God, God of the mighty seas, God of a hundred stars, God of thousands of thousands of sands, God of our salvation, how we can honor you? How can we speak the truth in a world full of complex issues? Breathe the truth of your correcting winds, breathe the truth of your mighty powers, breathe the searing heat of your righteousness, lend the balm of your healing powers, center your peace through us, and through your church. Help us to speak the truth in love even when it may offend or hurt. Be that truth for us. Point us all the time to your light. Let your light shine for all the world to see. We plead with you, Oh Christ, lead the way. Amen.”

R.F.