

July/August
2013

Holy Cross Lutheran Church
9770 Foothills Canyon Boulevard
Highlands Ranch, CO 80129
www.HolyCrossHRCO.org
303-683-1300



HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

Words from the Cross

***For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing,
but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.***

1 Cor. 1:18 NIV

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

God is completely holy and just, therefore He cannot overlook sin as we so often do. Yet, it is His immutable will, purely from His gracious and loving heart, that He desires to save us sinners. The only way that He could admit sinners into heaven was by means of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. The person who is to be saved, then, is not merely in need of instruction, but requires some action with the power to remove his natural blindness so that he clearly recognizes his sin and his misery. He needs something to awaken him from spiritual death to spiritual life. His heart of stone needs to be shattered and replaced with a heart of repentance. When he struggles with doubt, he needs to find heavenly comfort and cling with childlike confidence to the promise that his sins are forgiven him for Christ's sake. Finally, he needs a key to unlock the thousand chains by which every person, by nature, is bound to sin so that he can walk in the true love of God and serve his neighbor.

Where, in heaven or on earth, is there a power that can regenerate and renew the human heart? As we discover with the rich man (Luke 16:19-31), the heart is not softened when a person is overwhelmed with earthly goods. How easy it is for such a person to deceive himself into thinking that such good fortune leaves him with no need to repent (for surely, by His abundant blessings, God has already declared Himself to be his Friend). Trouble and distress, on the other hand, have the power to make a person meek and embitter him toward the world and sin. But, as the way demonstrates, without the Word of God there is nothing to drive a person to God. Instead, troubles cause an individual to bemoan his fate and eventually to despair completely.

It is the Word of God alone that has the power to bring a person to true repentance and true faith. Because it proceeds from God's mouth, it is almighty. God is in heaven, where He reigns supreme. When He speaks, things happen. When God said, "Let there be light" (Genesis 1:3), there was light. When He said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters" (Genesis 1:6), an expanse resulted. When He said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered together to one place" (Genesis 1:9), they did so. When Jesus, God's Son, said to the storm, "Quiet! Be Still!" (Mark 4:39), the waters were calmed. When He pronounced the lepers cleansed, the spirits departed. He commanded the blind eye to see, the deaf ear to hear, and even the dead to rise from the grave. In each case, it happened just as our Lord commanded. This same Word of God is written in the Scriptures of the prophets, apostles, and evangelists, and it continues to be preached today by God's true servants. It has the power to make dead souls alive, soften hearts that are as hard as stone, change unbelievers into joyful believers, and transform the children of sin and wrath into the holy children of God.

This is why we study the Bible so intensely at Holy Cross, for if we were to surrender God's Word, we would lose heaven, salvation, and our very souls. Rejection of God's Word is ultimately a rejection of Him, for it is by His Word alone that He comes to us and we to Him. If you would like to increase your knowledge of God's Word, I invite you to attend one of the many Bible studies we offer here at Holy Cross on Sundays and throughout the week, including a wonderful study on "How We Got the Bible" on the Wednesday evenings in July at the church from 7:00 – 8:00 PM which concludes with an ice cream social.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Skelton