



White as Snow

Devotion

To put it mildly, there are many people who are not fond of snow. States like Florida and Arizona are full of them. Snow comes with a chill in the air that requires things like coats, gloves, and boots. That chill can bring an ache to joints and sniffles to noses. Snow needs to be shoveled, bringing more potential aches and pains. Snow not only slows getting from point “a” to point “b,” it can make getting there treacherous. There are a number of reasons not to be thrilled when you see the flakes begin to fall.

However, I love snow – not because I’m an excellent skier or because I find shoveling an enjoyable activity. I love snow because I’m a terrible yard keeper! Every spring I start off with the best intentions to keep the lawn neatly mowed, the sidewalk areas cleanly edged, and to win the battle against the incessant weeds. But despite my best intentions, it’s never long until the grass is taller than I’d like, the edge of my sidewalk disappears, and the weeds have shown me who is in control of my lawn. I’m reminded of my failings, until that nice white blanket falls from the sky, covering them completely over.

To me, that covering of snow is a reminder of God’s grace in our lives. The prophet Isaiah writes, *“Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow”* (Isaiah 1:18a). Even if we had the best intentions of keeping our life free from sin, like my hope to keep a tidy yard, we’re completely unable to do so. Our very nature is already sinful, and we stumble into sin on a daily basis. Like my unkempt yard, our lives are filled with the failures of our sin. Yet our Lord graciously promises us in Isaiah that though our sins ... *are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow.*

How can that be? How can our Lord take the failures that our sinful lives are and cover them so that they’ll be white as snow? Again our Lord directs us to His Word for His answer. King David writes ... *wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow* (Ps. 51:7b). There is nothing we can do to make our lives pure and clean like freshly fallen snow. Only our Lord can make our sinful lives white – even whiter than snow. He does so by washing us in the waters of our Holy Baptism where the Holy Spirit mercifully baptized us into Jesus’ death and resurrection, cleansing us from all our sin, and resurrecting in us new creatures, alive in Christ. And this gift is not a seasonal gift, like snow, but a daily renewing blessing!

Where has sin stained your life? Take comfort and rejoice that in the washing of Holy Baptism, you are covered with Christ’s robe of righteousness ... white as snow!

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank You for the cleansing from sin that You have earned for us by Your death and resurrection. Thank You for this grace that has been freely given to us by the work of the Spirit through our Holy Baptism. May we ever bless Your Holy Name. Amen.

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