

First Sunday In Lent

Romans 10:8b-13

February 14, 2016

My Fellow Redeemed In Christ,

In The Political Realm Our Nation Has Several Burning Issues That Divide Us As A People. One Of Them Is The Threat Of Radical Islam. How Do We Defeat This Enemy That Is Intent On Destroying Us? And Then There Is The Issue Of Illegal Immigrants. How Do We Resolve This Issue With Compassion But Without Compromising The Integrity Of Our Borders And Our National Security? And Then There Is Question Of Our Economy And Our Growing Financial Debt That Affects Future Well-Being Of Generations Of Americans. Of Course, Many People Have Offered A Variety Of Solutions To These Problems....But What Is The Best Solution; The Right Solution? Or Even Worse...Is There A Solution? But There Is A Much Worse Problem Than These: Death. The Ultimate Question Is How Are We Saved From Death? When We Are Dying These Other Problems Will No Longer Matter To Us. So Then What Is The Solution To Death? No One Has A Solution....That's Why You Never Hear Anyone Talking About It. But That's Ok. Why? Because The Apostle Paul Reminds Us That God **Has Given Us A Solution To Death: Jesus Christ.**

I. This Is Really Good News Because It Means That We Don't Have To Search For A Solution To Death....It's Been Given To Us As A Free Gift In Jesus Christ.

A. Scientists Can't Find A Cure For Death Because Death Is Caused By Something That Scientist Can't Fix. And What Is That? Sin. . Sin Is The Cause Of All Human Misery And Death. Sin Is The Real Problem. And What Is Sin? Rebellion Against God.....Choosing To Live For Ourselves Rather Than For God. And It All Began With Adam And Eve In The Garden Of Eden....They Were Created To Live For God But They Gave In To The Devil's Temptation To Live For Themselves. And So It Has Been Ever Since. People Who Know These Things Estimate That There Are Around Seven Billion People In The World. Think About That....Seven Billion People All Living For Themselves..... And We Wonder Why The World Is The Way It Is? But Of Course, God Could Not Tolerate This.....That's Why He Warned Adam And Eve About The Consequences Of Sin: Death. We Try To Avoid These Harsh Realities Of Sin By

Enjoying Life As Much As We Can. But Sooner Or Later The Realities Of Sin And Death Dampen Whatever Joy We Might Be Able To Find In This Life. But There Is Something Even Worse----- Eternal

Damnation In Hell As Paul Says In His Letter To The Romans, **"...But For Those Who Are Self-Seeking And...Obey Unrighteousness, There Will Be Wrath And Fury" (2: 8, Esv)**. So What Can We Do About This Situation? Nothing. Absolutely Nothing. We Are Helpless Before Death....When Death Comes To Us We Will Have No Choice But To Die. Is There Then A Solution? Or Do We Just Fall In Despair?

B. This Morning, Paul Reminds Us That God Has Given Us A Solution To Our Problem. Jesus Christ. He Was Sent By God To Fix Our Problem....For All Human Beings As Paul Says... **"There Is No Distinction Between Jew And Greek" (V. 12, Esv)**. Jesus Came To Save Us All. Now There Are Many Kinds Of Saviors. For Example If We Were At The Mall And We Were Attacked And Held Hostage By Some Terrorists We Would Be Helpless To Do Anything. We Could Not Save Ourselves. But If A Police Swat Team Stormed The Terrorists And Overcame Them...That Swat Team Would Be Our Savior. They Did What We Could Not Do. And We Would Be Grateful For What They Did. But When It Comes To Sin, Death, And Damnation...There's Only One Savior. Jesus Christ...Who Came Into Our World To Do What We Could Not Do As We Sang In Our Sermon Hymn, **"Not What These Hands Have Done"**. Unlike You And Me....Our Dear Lord Jesus Didn't Have Any Sin...In Our Gospel Lesson We See How He Resisted The Temptations Of The Devil And Never Sinned. And He Did That For Us. He Lived A Sinless In The Place Of Our Sinful Life.. But He Did More. He Also Took Our Place On The Cross And Felt The Full Weight Of God's Wrath Against The Sins Of The World.....Your Sins And Mine...So That With His Death...Our Debt To God Has Been Fully Paid For And Canceled As Paul Says In His Letter To The Colossians, **"...Having Forgiven Us All Our Trespasses, By Canceling The Record Of Debt That Stood Against Us With Its Legal Demands. This He Set Aside, Nailing It To The Cross" (2: 13, 14, Esv)**. And To Prove That This Is TrueOn The Third Day He Rose From The Dead...Again....He Did It For Us To Give Us Victory Over Death In Eternal Life. This Is God's Solution To Our Problem Of Sin, Death And Damnation.

Ii. And Because God Has Given Us This Solution We Can Be Absolutely Certain Of It. **Martin Luther** Became The Great Reformer Of The Church When He Discovered That An Uncertain Salvation Is No Salvation At All. You Can't Be Comforted By Something You Cannot Be Sure Of.

A. He Learned The Hard Way That We Could Never Be Certain Of Our Salvation If It Depended In Anyway On What We Do. The Roman Catholic Church Told **Martin Luther** That He Could Be Saved If He Believed In Jesus And Did Good Works. But He Learned That He Could Never Be Sure That He Had Done Enough Good Works Or Had Done Them With Pure Motives. If I Told You That You Could Be Saved From Sin And Death If You Would Just Live One Day Without Sinning—Just One.....You Would Fall Into Despair—Because You Can't Even Live One Day Without Some Kind Of Sin. When It Comes To Our Salvation From Sin, Death And Damnation, The Worst Thing We Can Do Is Look At Ourselves....How Many Good Works We Have Done, Or How Pious We Are, Or What Good Christians We Are—For If Look At Ourselves We Will Only See Our Sin....And We Will Doubt.

B. But We Can And We Must Be Certain Of Our Salvation Because Jesus Christ Has Done It For Us.. He Did Everything Necessary For Us To Be Saved From Sin, Death, A And Damnation, Just As He Said From The Cross, **"It Is Finished!" (John 19: 30, Esv)**. In Our Text Paul Says Not Once But Three Times....That If We Believe In Jesus Christ We **"Will Be Saved" (Verses 9, 10, And 13)**. And This Is True For All People. God Does Not Play Favorites As Paul Says: **"The Same Lord Is Lord Of All, Bestowing His Riches On All Who Call On Him. For Everyone Who Calls On The Name Of The Lord Will Be Saved" (V. 13, Esv)**. To Believe In Jesus Christ Simply Means To Trust In His Promise That By What He Has Done...He Has Saved Us From Sin, Death, And Eternal Damnation. To Put Our Trust In Someone Is To Believe That They Can Do What They Say. When We Have Surgery, We Believe In The Surgeon Can Help Us; We Trust In Him. And So It Is With Jesus Christ. Paul Says That If We Confess Jesus With Our Mouth And Believe In Him In Our Heart We Will Be Saved. Paul Says That All Those Who Believe In Jesus Christ Are **"Justified" (V. 10, Esv)**. This Means That Because Of Jesus Christ God Now Looks At Me **"Just If I'd"** Never Sinned. And So It Is With You. Jesus Has Taken Our Sin Away. And This Promise Becomes Ours By Faith... Simply Believing That What We Are Told.

That's What Paul Says: **"The Word Is Near Your Mouth And In Your Heart That Is, The Word Of Faith That We Proclaim)" (V. 8, Esv).** Do You Want To Be Right With God? Do You Want God's Forgiveness And Peace? Do You Want To Be Raised From The Dead To Eternal Life? Then Simply Believe What I Am Telling You Is True. For What I Tell You Is What Paul Tells You. And What Paul Tells You Is What Jesus Tells You. And What Jesus Tells You Is What God Tells You. And If You Believe, Paul Says **You "Will Not Be Put To Shame" (V.11, Esv).** In Other Words On The Judgment Day When Jesus Returns To Raise You From The Dead With Your New Transformed, Glorified, And Sinless Body To Enter Eternal Life, That New Heaven And New Earth..... You Will Not Be Disappointed That You Put Your Faith In Jesus Christ.

Conclusion: At The Beginning Of The Sermon I Mentioned That Our Nation Was Facing Several Burning Issues That Divide Us As A People. And Truth Be Told.. These Kinds Of Issues Will Always Exist....There Is No Permanent Solution To Any Of Them. But There Is One Problem We Do Have A Solution For: The Problem Of Sin, Death, And Eternal Damnation. God Has Given Us Jesus Christ Who Has Done It All For Us As He Said On The Cross—**"It Is Finished!"** This Is The Message That We Christians Have To Share With The Whole World. Many Will Not Believe. But For Those Who Do....They **"Will Not Be Put To Shame."** Amen.