

Date: January 6, 2025

Read: 1 Peter 1:1-2

Multiplying Grace and Peace

“May grace and peace be multiplied to you.” 1 Peter 2b.

In elementary school I really liked Math, but especially multiplication. So that word jumped off the page when I read the beginning of Peter’s first letter. When you multiply, the numbers get big fast. Here’s a couple of multiplication tricks for you:

$$1098 \times 9 = 9801$$

$$111,111,111 \times 111,111,111 = 12345678987654321$$

If you started with a penny and doubled(multiplied by 2) its value every day for just 30 days, you would have over \$5,000,000 Million in a month!

Multiplication can be pretty amazing. The problem with the people receiving Peter’s letter was that the main thing that seemed to be multiplying was suffering. It may seem that way in our world and, perhaps, even in your life right now. Whether you like math or not, the prayer of Peter is one that we all can appreciate, and it is no trick.

“May grace and peace be multiplied to you.”

Peter’s letter will go on to talk about the suffering Christians were experiencing, but he will also go on to talk about how grace and peace are multiplied to you because you belong to Jesus. You have His forgiveness as a promise, His love as a certainty, His joy that knows no end, His life as your future and your present. His grace – that is His undeserved love toward you exemplified in His cross – covers the multitude of your sin. His peace – won by that same cross and resurrection – goes beyond all understanding.

In times when suffering seems to multiply, remember there is something much greater – the grace and peace of Jesus for you.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, turn my eyes to you that I can glimpse your multiplied grace and peace that is for me.

Today’s Devotion was written by Pastor Jason

Tuesday, January 7, 2025

Read 1 Peter 1:6-16

Secure in His Arms and in His Word

Being God's friend comes with troubles. Oh, not with God-provided troubles but from the world. The World tries in every way to discourage, to tempt, to pull me away from my loyalty to God. All those troubles are really a blessing!

The very fact that life has such troubles gives proof that I am, indeed, leaning on God and live with His protection. The devil does torture his own, those seeking to satisfy themselves only, but only long after they have placed their allegiance in his ways. For me, I know that he merely proves that I am God's child.

There I am, secure in His arms, letting the slurs and bad intentions of others drop off me without my concern. Not that I deserve credit for that, God comforts and distracts me from that which would otherwise dismay me.

And all those troubles also remind me to continue to use the Bible. There I can forget about my experiences - reading about God's people, their troubles, and their rescues by God. The prophets of old, the men of the Bible, searched the Scriptures to see and understand what and how God would rescue them - and I can read the same words and see from the New Testament how those same prophecies worked out.

When I read those words, my faith renews, my excitement returns, and I am strengthened to put my faith into action. To forgive, to share, to pray, to continue to do the best I can for others, especially those others hurting me.

Prayer: Thank you, Lord, for keeping me in Your hands. Use Your Word and presence to improve my living in Your ways. Amen

Today's Devotion was written by Pastor Art Bolstad

Wednesday, January 8, 2025

Read 1 Peter 1:13-16

Be Holy, For I Am Holy

Peter wrote, **“Therefore, [when you have girded up the loins of your mind ... i.e.] preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ”** (v. 13). We should *gird up our loins* and be self-controlled as we look to a living hope in Jesus Christ our Lord with full confident assurance of our salvation. And to be holy, for He has called us to be holy.

“You shall be holy, for I am holy” (v. 16) is written in Leviticus 11:44; 19:2; 20:7, 26. We Christians are declared and called to be. We are born/begotten again of God by grace through faith in Christ. We are what God has made/declared us to be, so we should **“be holy, as [He] is holy”** in all our behavior as compliant children who listen and follow instructions, to **“not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance”** (v. 14).

Martin Luther wrote,

“So far the apostle has described the grace that is offered to us through the Gospel and the preaching about Jesus Christ, and he has taught us what our attitude toward this should be, namely, that we should hold to a pure and unchanged meaning of faith, in such a way that we know that no work we are able to do or devise can be of any help to us. Now when this is preached, reason comes along and says: “Ah, if this is true, then I need not do a single good work!” Thus stupid minds seize upon this and change Christian life into carnal liberty. They think they should do what they please. St. Peter confronts these people here, anticipates them, and teaches them that Christian liberty must be exercised solely over against God. For here nothing else is necessary than faith, that I give God His due honor and regard Him as my God, who is just, truthful, and merciful. Such faith liberates us from sin and all evil. Now when I have given God this honor, then whatever life I live, I live for my neighbor, to serve and help him. The greatest work that comes from faith is this, that I confess Christ with my mouth and, if it has to be, bear testimony with my blood and risk my life. Yet God does not need the work; but I should do it to prove and confess my faith, in order that others, too, may be brought to faith. Then other works will follow. They must all tend to serve my neighbor. All this God must bring about in us. Therefore we should not make up our minds to begin to lead a carnal life and to do what we please.”

Prayer – Lord Jesus, help me not to lead a carnal worldly life; instead, to be holy as You are holy, and love my neighbor. Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Seminarian Nathan Tritch

Thursday, January 9, 2024

Text: 1 Peter 1:17-21

Words to Remember

There are several passages within Scripture that so plainly and beautifully describe the hope that is ours through the Gospel of Jesus that we would do well to consider them and reflect upon them every day of our lives. A list of such passages might include Ephesians 2:1-10, Romans 8:31-38, Psalm 23, John 3:16, and many others. I suggest that our text for today, 1 Peter 1:17-21, belongs among this list.

With this being said, writing a devotion on this text is both very easy and yet, at the same time, exceedingly difficult. It's difficult because nothing that I might say could be more beautiful, more powerful than what we read directly from the text itself. It's easy then because, to fulfill my task here in providing a devotion, all I need to do is direct you to the text.

So, for today's devotion, I encourage you to read 1 Peter 1:17-21. Then read it again. And again. Digest it. Talk about it with someone else. Let the words soak into you. Let the mercy of God and the Gospel of Jesus plainly described in 1 Peter capture you. You are Christ's and He is yours. His promises are *for you*. His sacrifice was *for you*. His life is *for you*. Then, take those words with you throughout your day. Meditate on them. Let them mold how you live today. By doing so, by living with the beautiful and powerful Word of God constantly in your heart, you will experience a peace and joy that the world simply cannot give. You will experience how wonderful it is to live as a child of God.

Prayer: Jesus, all of Scripture is written for me and all others who believe in You. Teach me to hold Your Written Word close in my heart so that I can enjoy all of the benefits of living as one of Your faithful children. In Your holy name, amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Seminarian Micah Brown

Friday, January 10, 2025

Text: 1 Peter 1:22-25

Imperishable

“22 Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, 23 since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; 24 for ‘All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, 25 but the word of the Lord remains forever.’ And this word is the good news that was preached to you.” (1 Peter 1:22-25 ESV).

Over Christmas break I was able to go back home to Aberdeen, South Dakota and on my way home I made a stop on the north side of Kansas City to pick up my brother Gabe and bring him back to Aberdeen with me because his car was in the shop. Gabe is my little brother and he and I are four years apart in age. When I went to college Gabe, and I weren't able to see each other in person as much as we did when we lived together and that was hard for me for a while. I am used to the distance now, but it is still great to get to see him from time to time. During our eight hours in the car together we were able to talk about a bunch of different things and it was great to be able to catch up. This text reminded me of my time with Gabe and the brotherly love that we have for one another.

This text deals with the difficult reality of sin and death and how sin makes humans “perishable.” I hated when I had to move away from Gabe for college because it seemed like the end of the relationship in a way. Being “perishable” through death is much worse than this but thankfully we are not left with only death. God through His word makes us to become imperishable rather than perishable. Through His Word, God has made us who were like the grass and the flower to be like He is. Jesus is the Word of God and because of the preaching that we have heard we are now like Christ. We are filled with the Word and the Holy Spirit through which we are no longer susceptible to the eternal death that threatens every relationship. We can know that on account of Christ and the promise that we have heard from Him there is hope for every person and every situation because death is not the end for us who are in the Word.

Prayer: Lord thank You for coming to us again and again. Help us to eagerly desire to hear from You again and again and thank You for making us imperishable like You through Your Holy Spirit. In Your name we pray. Amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Seminarian Zach Johnson

Saturday, January 11, 2025

Read [1 Peter 2:1-6](#)

Living Stones

I missed worship and Bible study and God's people at Hope Lutheran the last two weeks. And I really missed it. Two weeks ago I preached at St. Paul Otto/Imperial. Last Saturday, I attended a memorial service for my Aunt Cordelia at Epiphany Lutheran in Houston, TX. And last Sunday I attended my brother's church, Fishers of Men Lutheran, also in Houston. I'd never visited these churches before, but my sorrow was turned to joy and I was fed spiritual milk at all three. I met total strangers who I came to know as my brothers and sisters in Christ, and stood together before God with family, relatives, and new friends.

In our reading, Peter quotes Isaiah 28 by saying, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." That stone is strong and planted firmly, and Jesus' Church is thriving on it. Here, near the end of his life, Peter is telling the same story he did just after Pentecost: "This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders (Jewish religious leaders), which has become the cornerstone."

To paraphrase the rest of our reading: "You are spiritual milk drinking, spiritual sacrifice offering, spiritual house dwelling, priests and living stones." Just as babies crave milk, believers in Christ crave His Gospel. It feeds us and causes our spiritual lives to blossom! The priests of the Old Testament sacrificed animals, again and again – endlessly – to allow God's people to come before Him at the Temple. Only the most highly prized animals from people's herds were brought for sacrifice, costing those believers dearly.

But now, Jesus has been the sacrifice to end all those bloody sacrifices. They are no more! So now, as members of a holy priesthood, we offer ourselves, our praise, and our lives as spiritual sacrifices to stand before God. Christ was rejected, but He became the living foundation on which the Church stands. Like Him, we're sometimes rejected, but all around the world we're His spiritual House. Also like Jesus, we're no longer dead but are living – eternally. And this is a big house, an enormous house, that Jesus has gathered us into. Come into His presence and enjoy His family!

We pray: Heavenly Father, melt away the snow and any other obstacles that try to keep me from Your House. Bring me to Your Church this Sunday (or Wednesday), feed me Your Gospel and strengthen me with my brothers and sisters. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Pastor Jeff Nelson

Monday, January 13, 2025

Read: 1 Peter 2:7-10

Marvelous Light

“out of darkness into his marvelous light.” 1 Peter 2:9b.

Last week was a LONG week. Two rounds of significant snow left many people stuck inside, but I don't think that's the hard part. The darkness was the hard part. The days are already short, but the thick gray sky that hung over us for more than a week can feel suffocating. There's a reason why many people struggle with depression during the winter when days are short and clouds can be thick. But come Saturday, for the first time in recent memory, the sun appeared! The warmth was wonderful, but the light was marvelous.

This is just a taste of the difference we know by faith. From total and never-ending darkness to continual brightness. From the darkness of sin and the gloom of death, we've been rescued by Christ and brought into the warming, life-giving, joy-providing light of Christ. Sharing in the light of Christ, we are “a chosen race (the new Israel, God's people), a royal priesthood (priests belonging to the King, God Himself), a holy nation (people set apart to do God's will), a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9).”

After so much darkness and being brought into the warm, life-giving light of Jesus, of course, we proclaim the greatness of His mercy!

Prayer: Dear Jesus, Light of World, lead me to proclaim how You've rescued me from darkness and brought me into Your marvelous light. Amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Pastor Jason

Tuesday, January 14, 2025

Read 1 Peter 2:11-17

The Short-sighted Attraction of Evil

Sometimes it seems like evildoers, those who defy God to do whatever they want, sometimes it seems like they are happy, getting their desires, in spite of God. Their defiance of the creator of the universe seems to make their activities attractive, somehow. And yet

While I too am tempted to follow their ways, tempted to be envious of their pandering to selfishness and their desires, that very temptation serves to remind me that while I could be that way, I don't want that anymore. Revolted by what they do and profess, I turn away in disgust. Even thinking about those things twists my insides and sickens me.

Then God reminds me that He cannot be defied. Sure, there is the short-term appearance of success, but the end result of such disgusting behavior shows its true worthlessness. After all, even jumping off a cliff results in a short-term absence of gravity feeling, completed with a smash at the bottom. So, the LORD of creation will indeed serve up the just deserts of defiance.

Their example does not truly entice. Their defiance of God actually reveals their total lack of concern for themselves. God maintains His authority. He brings the results on those who carelessly ignore Him. But He also provides and secures those whose lives continue to rest in Him, not daring or caring to protest or attempt to maintain their own ways. Yes, I left that when I turned away to be God's child. What a blessing God is to me.

Prayer: Please God, take away any attraction I have to evil doing and my own selfishness. Thank You for caring for me anyway. Amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Pastor Art Bolstad

Wednesday, January 15, 2025

Read 1 Peter 2:18-22

Jesus Committed No Sin

“For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly ... for this you have been called ... [for] He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.”

1 Peter 2:19, 21, 22

Peter starts this section off by saying that slaves are to be submissive to their masters with respectful fear, whether the master is right-minded and good or harsh, perverted, and crooked, **“For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly”** (v.19). This is a specific call to Christians who are enslaved, then to all who suffer unjustly. Slave/Master relationship was typical in the ancient world and not always bad. You might translate this today between employer/employee relationships—there are kind and harsh bosses.

Sadly, there is wicked forced slavery still in the world today (estimated 50 million+ worldwide), involving human trafficking of all types, unjust imprisonments, prostitution, forced labor, and kidnapping. Evil and corruption are nothing new among the people of God in the world. Slavery is nothing new to sinful, broken, and redeemed mankind. Yet, for the Christian who suffers as a slave, it is *a gracious thing*. **“For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God”** (v.20). There is Christian persecution that continues around the world, and many Christians endure sufferings for Jesus’ Names sake and the Gospel; for being a Christian, bearing Christ’s Name and boldly confessing the Name of Jesus Christ, even unto death.

Isaiah 53:8-9 foretold of The Suffering Slave, our Lord and Master Jesus the Christ—Who suffered oppression and judgment—in Whom there was no sin or deceit in His mouth, **“By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.”**

The Eternal Son of God came in the flesh, suffered on our behalf, died for our sins, took our place for the judgment of sin upon Himself, buried in a rich man’s tomb, rose from the dead for our salvation and redemption from slavery to sin, death, and the devil. **“For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth”** (vv.21–22). This call is for all Christians to endure suffering and persecution as Christ did for you.

Prayer – Lord and Master Jesus, help me graciously endure unjust suffering and persecution for Your Names’ sake. Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Seminarian Nathan Tritch

Thursday, January 16, 2024

Text: 1 Peter 2:23-25

New and Healthy

“By his wounds you have been healed.”

1 Peter 2:24b

There are few things less enjoyable than being sick. Symptoms of sickness can be horrible – runny nose, fever, body aches, light-headedness, nausea, bowel pain, the list can go on and on. Being sick is horrible.

Well, as horrible as suffering from a cold or influenza can be, there is no worse sickness than sin. And there’s no escaping the sickness of sin, either. Sin is a disease that seeps into every part of a human being – invading mind, body, and soul. And its symptoms are truly horrifying – separation from our Creator, punishment under the Law, eternal condemnation. There is truly nothing worse than the sickness of sin and its symptoms.

Praise God that we are no longer infected! Jesus has cured us. On the cross, He took upon Himself all of those horrible symptoms of sin. He united us with the Father, he bore our punishment under the Law, he took the burden of our condemnation. The symptoms of sin are erased!

Then, Jesus washed us clean of the disease altogether in the waters of baptism. Through Jesus, we are done with sin – that disease has been beaten. Now, that doesn’t mean that sin is no longer present in our lives. Like a cough after a cold, the effects of sin still linger in our lives bringing pain and suffering. But the reality still stands that, by the wounds and works of Jesus, we have been healed. Celebrate your new, healthy life today and every day. Praise God!

Prayer: Jesus, You have made me new. I used to be stuck in a life of sin and suffering. Thank you for healing me! Help me, now, to love those who are still sick with sin so that they might experience the healing that only You can give. In Your holy name, amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Seminarian Micah Brown

Friday, January 17, 2025

Text: 1 Peter 3:1-4

Properly Adorned

“3:1 Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, 2 when they see your respectful and pure conduct. 3 Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear— 4 but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God’s sight is very precious.” (1 Peter 3:1-4 ESV).

I have to say that I am maybe not the most qualified to talk about braiding hair, golden jewelry, or women’s clothing but thankfully Peter moves past those things pretty quickly in a more spiritual direction. It is easy regardless of whether you are a man or a woman to let material things and appearances become a priority in our lives. As sinful people, we are very good at looking at ourselves and doing everything we can to make things about us. We love to look at ourselves but here in this text, Peter reminds us that it is the hidden person that truly delights God. The adornment that God really loves is the gentle and the humble which can be so hard for us to live in but there is also a freedom with the way that God loves us.

When we remember that the thing that God really loves is the humble and the gentle and the person who trusts Him in faith, we are freed from having to worry about ourselves and if we are good enough with what we wear or how we present ourselves. When we remember that God loves us freely on account of Christ we don’t have to worry about our own appearance and material possessions. We can trust that the blessings of Christ which God has clothed us with is sufficient and as a result we are able to please God through humility rather than through our own accomplishments. We bring glory to God now through the faith that trusts that He really is all sufficient for us. The freedom that we have in Christ is the freedom from measuring ourselves by our own successes. Now we are able to claim Christ’s success as our own and live in His glory as humble servants.

Prayer: Lord thank You for winning for us glory beyond anything that we could have imagined and for transforming us into Your people who can rest in Your accomplishment with humility and gentleness toward others. Help us to be even more humble and gentle. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Seminarian Zach Johnson

Saturday, January 18, 2025

Read 1 Peter 3:7

The Grace of Life

Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

Marriage has come a long way since Adam and Eve. Today we have “no-fault” divorce. We have pre-nuptial agreements, we have “open marriages”. Society insists that everything in a relationship must be equal, as men and women are equal in all ways. They’re so equal, it doesn’t even matter if it’s a man and woman, or two women or two men. It appears society is nearly ready to condone marriage between more than two people. Progress is great, isn’t it?!

No, God noticed that despite all the amazing animals around him, Adam didn’t have any helper “fit” for him. So, God took a rib from Adam and created Eve – the perfect partner for Adam. They literally were, “bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” and became one flesh, were naked, and were not ashamed. This was marriage before sin entered the picture.

I don’t believe that this passage is solely talking about marriage, as there are plenty of husbands who are the “weaker vessel” compared to their wife, as well as children, parents, and others who are weaker than us. These all deserve “honor” from us as fellow creatures of God, and especially when they are brothers and sisters in Christ.

But a Christian marriage is special and unique in this world. Married Christians are sinners as much as anyone, but we know *forgiveness*. When we sin against each other we (eventually, begrudgingly, reluctantly – choose your favorite) remember God’s forgiveness for us and return that toward our spouse. And the world sees this and takes note. God’s grace which has given us life itself is revealed to the world by wives and husbands who graciously forgive each other after leaving the toilet seat (up/down – pick your favorite).

And our spouse reminds us of God’s ongoing, gracious provision for us, as we see His care in providing us a helper, perfectly fit for us. Husbands and wives, we have the perfect role model in Jesus, Who despite being God Himself, nevertheless honored us weaker vessels.

We pray: Father, thank You for giving me the spouse You have given me and/or the parents, family, and friends that remind me of Your love for me. Help me to honor those weaker vessels around me to show the world what that love looks like. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Pastor Jeff Nelson

Monday, January 20, 2025

Read: 1 Peter 3:8-12

Unity of Mind

“Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.” 1 Peter 3:8

The opening part of 1 Peter 3 spoke about marriage and the unity of husband and wife. Today, Peter expands his view to how all of God’s people live together. What is most striking in this beautiful list is that every single phrase focuses our attention on others.

Unity of mind – not just that we agree, but we are united through faith in Christ.

Sympathy – brings to mind Paul’s encouragement to “weep with those who weep.”

Brotherly love – could certainly bring to mind “rejoice with those who rejoice.” (Rom. 12:15)

Have a tender heart – compassion for others, a heart turned toward others, not coldly closed off to yourself.

Have a humble mind – I love the simple description from the Lutheran Study Bible, “not exalting oneself in pride but considering others as Christ did.”

Every phrase leads us in heart and mind to turn toward others and their needs. Why? We have unity with Christ. He put You entirely above Himself. His heart and mind were focused on you and your everlasting well-being. And as “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8), He remains focused on you and your everlasting well-being. That means you can be focused on others because Christ has given you all things needful and provides for you still each day. His faithful love has joined us to Him AND to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Reflect the mind of Christ that you have been united to: have sympathy for those hurting, rejoice in brotherly love with those who have joy, show tender compassion to those in need, and humbly listen and care for those around you. After all, Christ has done all of this completely for you yesterday, today, and forever!

Prayer: Dear Jesus, lead me to be so united to you in mind and heart that Your love for me overflows in sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Pastor Jason

Tuesday, January 21, 2025

Read 1 Peter 3:13-16

Relinquishing the Need for Power

My LORD! You keep reminding me that I speak with my actions, not only with my words. You have saved me from the bondage of selfishness and evil. Now, You have given me the right and ability to live my life Your way. Thank You.

But my old way, the way that puts myself first, doesn't do things that way. I am constantly pulled back towards seeking my own way. My feelings want to get what I want, in any way that I think will help.

My desire seeks to enhance my favorability with others so that they will do what I desire. So, I seek to find power over others, power from my personal skills, rather than trusting God to protect me and get me the life I really want (and not the small immediate interests that have neither true joy nor lasting value). I can live God's ways but not by my own ability. He lives in me and supports my efforts.

Humility is hard. Oh, it's not so much that I am superior but I fear not having the power, the dominance, to force others to pay attention to me. I worry that my weak appearance will attract evil. The worry problem is real, but not needing worry. After all, God has already won! He has defeated evil and so, as I trust in Him, then He will provide my protection.

The real problem is my wish to be in control, and not look to God. The solution is, as always, to turn to God for help and comfort. He never fails me.

Prayer: Thank you, oh LORD. Thank you for being trustworthy and reminding me that I am secure in Your care. Amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Pastor Art Bolstad

Wednesday, January 22, 2025
Read 1 Peter 3:17-22

Baptism Saves Through Jesus Christ's Resurrection

*“Baptism, which corresponds to **this**, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”*

1 Peter 3:21

Peter walked us through God-willing-suffering; How it is better to suffer for *doing good* rather than *doing evil/wrong*. Now, Peter said, **“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit”** (v. 18). Christ took our place of death for our sin; An exchange of His Righteousness for our unrighteousness, in order that we would be *put to death* in flesh and *made alive in the spirit* (see Rom 6: 3-7; Col 2:12-13; 3:1-3)—to be declared righteous and brought to God in Heaven through Christ's death and resurrection in Holy Baptism.

Christ **“went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. Baptism, which corresponds to *this*, now saves you ...”** (vv. 19-21).

Johann Gerhard (1582-1637), *Lutheran Orthodoxy* church father wrote;

*“For hell is called “captivity” (Ps. 68:18; Eph. 4:8), “a lake without water” (Zech. 9:11), “a prison (φυλακή) in which the last penny must be paid” (Matt. 5:26; Luke 12:58; **1 Pet. 3:19**), “the court (αὐλή) and palace of Satan” (Luke 11:21), “the fiery furnace (κάμινος τοῦ πυρός) where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matt. 13:42) ... Not only did Christ feel in His most holy soul the very pains of hell at the time of His suffering (Ps. 22:2; 69:17; Isa. 53:11), which was His metaphoric descent into hell ... but He also immediately before His resurrection from the dead descended into hell and destroyed it as a glorious and triumphant victor (Ps. 68:[18]; Hosea 13:14; 1 Cor. 15:55; Eph. 4:8; Col. 2:15; **1 Pet. 3:19**), which was a real and proper descent into the location of the damned. Moreover, from each descent is the point proven that there is a hell. Christ descended into hell that we may ascend into heaven, just as He died that we might live” (Johann Gerhard, *On the End of the World, and On Hell, or Eternal Death*, 180, 203; **boldface and italics mine**).*

This corresponding appeal to God for a good conscience **IS Baptism**—You have been brought safely through the waters of Holy Baptism in Jesus' death and Resurrection that saved you from the everlasting condemnation of sin, death, hell, and wrath of God to everlasting life and salvation.

Prayer – Lord Jesus, thank You for victoriously defeating the power of sin, death, hell, and Satan, that I may live in the power of the Gospel for salvation in Holy Baptism in Your Name. Amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Seminarian Nathan Tritch

Thursday, January 23, 2024

Text: 1 Peter 4:1-6

A Surprising Life

Over Christmas, Jen and I visited her family in Chicago, and while we were there we decided that we would visit the annual *Christkindlmarket* downtown. The *Christkindlmarket* is a huge German market hosted in a large city square lined with vendors and food stands. It was a lot of fun, but it was also very crowded. Immediately when we stepped onto the square, we were swept away with the current created by the sea of people slowly walking through the market. Walking with the current was cramped and uncomfortable, breaking from the current to stop at a vendor was difficult and frustrating, and going against the current was nigh impossible. In fact, to even try going against the current would have infuriated everyone around me – strangers and family members alike. At the *Christkindlmarket* it was clear – you either go with the current, or you get trampled.

In our reading from 1 Peter 4, Peter encourages his readers to go against the current. Because of Jesus, we are no longer stuck in the current of sin, slowly walking to damnation. Instead, we have been given new life in Jesus. We have been set free from sin. The current of sin no longer affects us. Now, that leaves us with two options. We can take our new lives and live completely removed from the current of sin, secluding ourselves from the sinful world. Or we can jump back into the current and walk against it. Peter encourages his readers to take the second option. We have been set apart from the sinful current of this world. Let us now jump back in and show the world a different way to live – the way of faith. Now, by doing so we will get shoved, we will get ridiculed, we will get stepped on, but we will also be witnesses of Christ's Gospel to a world that desperately needs it.

So, think of ways to move against the current today. Maybe it's volunteering at a shelter. Maybe it's donating resources to a ministry. Maybe it's talking about Jesus in a secular setting. Whatever it is, live against the current of this sinful world and show it that Jesus provides a different, better way of life.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for making me new in the waters of baptism. Help me to live my new life in a way that is pleasing to You. Help me to witness Your love and mercy to the people around me who are stuck in sin. Help me to become more and more like Your Son, Jesus, my Savior in whose holy name I pray. Amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Seminarian Micah Brown

Friday, January 24, 2025
Read 1 Peter 4:7-9

Living with the End of All Things in View

“7 The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. 8 Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. 9 Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.” (1 Peter 4:7-9 ESV).

I feel like these three verses have a lot of moving parts in them. It would be easy to go in several different directions with this devotion, but I think that there is at least one common thread that we can look at. In this text, Peter emphasizes self-control, sober-mindedness, prayers, love for one another, and hospitality. All of these are mentioned with “the end of all things” in mind. I think that it is clear from looking at all of these things that the disciplines of the Christian life are important to Peter and the Christian life as a whole. All of these things are things that we know are important and when we look at the things that Peter lists, we may recognize that some of them are easier for us than others. We get good at seeing each of these things individually but sometimes I think we forget to look at them as a whole and consider what it looks like to live the Christian life, to live as those who have been redeemed by Christ.

There is an essay that I like by C.S. Lewis titled “The World’s Last Night” and in that essay Lewis challenges his readers to live as though tonight were the world’s last night and that when morning comes Christ will come back with it. I think that this essay is in the same vein as the words of Peter and in the essay, Lewis points out one character in a play by Shakespeare who, though he has every excuse to do something evil, refuses, and this character who doesn’t even have a name in the play is killed for his refusal to do evil. Lewis’ point is that this character didn’t know how the play was going to end but he did what was right regardless and that makes him like us. We don’t know exactly when the end will come but we should live knowing that this story is going to come to an end and that means living the way that Peter describes, sober-minded, self-controlled, prayerful, generous, and loving.

Prayer: Lord thank you for the time that you have given us and help us to live as you would have us live in this and be Your light in this world which is coming to an end. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Seminarian Zach Johnson

Saturday, January 15, 2025

Read [1 Peter 4:10-11](#)

“Good Stewards of God's Varied Grace”

When I worked over at Scott Air Force Base, a new guy came to the office I was in. He was introduced as “Michael” and seemed like a nice guy. Later, I was talking to him and called him, “Mike”. He was quick to correct me. “I was named for the archangel. It wouldn’t be right to call him, “Archangel Mike”, would it?” I couldn’t argue with that logic, and called him by his proper name forever after.

This encounter illustrates quite well a lesson our reading teaches. This section of Peter’s letter began, “The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled...” Today’s reading continues this thought. It helps explain how we should live in these end times by highlighting a way in which we’ve been changed.

When we were baptized, our old self died and out of the water emerged a new creation. Freed from our old, sinful slavery, we’ve now been given “God’s varied grace” and have begun a new life. We’re now told, “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace”.

When you think about gifts that God gives, what comes to mind? Michelangelo’s masterful skills at painting the ceiling of the Sistine chapel? George Handel’s ability to write the Hallelujah Chorus? Those were gifts from God, all right! And Albert Pujols had a God-given talent to entertain baseball fans!

“I don’t have anything like that, though. I guess God didn’t give me much in the way of gifts”, we might think. But my co-worker Michael understood the meaning of “God’s varied grace”. He had a very common gift – a name. Everybody’s got a name! But his name (which means, “who is like God”) was a gift which came from God, and God doesn’t give worthless gifts.

His name reminds him, every time he hears it, that he is a little like God, because God’s only Son washed away his sins and made him God’s own child. And every time he explains to someone why he shouldn’t be called “Mike”, he witnesses God’s gracious, life-changing gifts to another person. In this small act, “God is glorified through Jesus Christ.”

Most of us don’t have the rare gifts of painting masterpieces, writing beautiful music, or the ability to hit 697 home runs in major league baseball. But all believers have gifts – some unique ones, many that are common. But when we use any of those “ordinary” gifts to serve one another with the attitude of Michael, God is glorified. “To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

We pray: Gracious Father, thank You for the gifts You’ve given me. Make me to use them to serve others, so we all see You in Your glory. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Pastor Jeff Nelson

Monday, January 27, 2025

Read: 1 Peter 4:12-14

Through the Fiery Trial

“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.” 1 Peter 4:12

“No one has ever had it THIS bad!”

“How could anyone make it through THIS?”

At some point in your life, you’ve probably had similar thoughts cross your mind. Some trial, heartache, or isolating event leads you to surmise that you’ve just got it worse than anyone else and probably in all of history.

Peter doesn’t minimize such difficulties. He calls such a time, “the fiery trial.” That certainly sounds anything but pleasant!

What Peter does give us is perspective. He is specifically talking about facing persecution for the faith, but the truth is that God’s people are always facing fiery trials from Satan. It’s just that sometimes, we see them more clearly.

When the heat from Satan’s fiery trials scars us, Peter offers to us the encouragement that we are not alone in such a blaze. Christ experienced more than His share of explosive confrontations and His enemies even put Him to death. Yet He rose to life to prove that any harm inflicted on Him (and us!) is only temporary. In the end, our living Lord will prevail, and thanks to Jesus, we will too.

The pain and difficulty you face is as real as the scars in Christ’s hands and feet, but the promise of your Savior is that while you share in Christ’s suffering in various and painful ways in this life, your fiery trial and pain will end. And Your Savior who has walked through the trial of the cross for you and walks through your fiery trial with you, is your reason for confidence in the fire until you “may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed” and every fire extinguished.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, grant me patient faith in You through every fiery trial. Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Pastor Jason

Tuesday, January 28, 2025

Read 1 Peter 4:15-19

Letting the Lord Take Care of It

God has called me to live in His ways. The Ten Commandments are not a set of orders but rather a pathway for His people. So, I would expect the government to be happy with me (assuming I keep them, of course). But life in this sinful world doesn't always match what it should be. I don't manage to stay faithful all the time, why should I expect the government (whether official or just public opinion and actions) to also act in God's ways? In fact, often it doesn't.

So, sometimes I serve as an instrument demonstrating that the governing authorities in the world don't like God or His followers. I want to resist, I want to try to stop wrongdoing when it hits on me. I know I need to rest in my God and let Him take care of it, but it's hard. It's hard to not fight back and it's hard to not be the one to punish wrongdoers, especially when I can get revenge that way. But my Lord told me, "Revenge is mine."

The world would love to do harm to me, and then watch me doing wrong back. They consider perfection. So I turn to our LORD. I talk to Him. At least then I'm not reacting to the others. I plead for help, not necessarily for payback to them, but for His power in my heart to take away my anger, to guide and live with me as I rest in Him. That way I rest in Him and let Him take care of it.

Prayer: Please help me, my LORD. Help me to forgive and let You take care of it. Amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Pastor Art Bolstad

Wednesday, January 29, 2025

Read 1 Peter 5:1-4

The Chief Shepherd

“And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.”

1 Peter 5:4

The Apostle Peter writes as a fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ and partaker of the glory of God to be revealed—he exhorts/appeals to the elders of the Church assembly to “**shepherd the flock of God among you**” (v. 2). This is a Word for the elders who are to *shepherd the flock of God* to be faithful witnesses and overseers, for they are under Christ’s authority.

Peter appeals to the elders to *shepherd the flock of God* to be examples of a good pattern for life in Christ here in the world with eagerness and willing oversight. Not lording/having mastery over the Church, not with compulsion, and not for dishonest and greedy gain. These instructions are clear and imperative for the elders. Peter also proclaimed words of promise and salvation to those partakers “**in the glory of God that is going to be revealed ... And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory**” (v. 1, 4).

Peter is exhorting and addressing the elders (pastors) specifically in this text to be faithful, and then proclaims a promise, *you will receive the unfading crown of glory*—salvation.

The Word of God for salvation and glory in Christ is an everlasting promise in the mercy and grace of God revealed to all the Church scattered throughout the world, to you, and for all the world to receive and believe. God uses His elder/shepherds here on earth to proclaim that Gospel Truth and faithfully lead His Church by example in word and deed. God acts in lovingkindness for our salvation on our behalf in Christ crucified and risen from the dead, for all people—sinners redeemed by His precious blood on the cross. You have received God’s gift and promise of salvation in the glory of God and are declared righteous on His account for the sake of Christ, the Chief Shepherd of our souls.

Prayer – Lord Jesus, the Chief Shepherd of our entire being, strengthen Your shepherds under Your authority to faithfully care for the souls of Your Church, strengthen the flock among them in Your unfading glory to be revealed. Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Seminarian Nathan Tritch

Thursday, January 30, 2024

Text: 1 Peter 5:5

A Life of Humility

“Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” – 1 Peter 5:5b

This is perhaps one of the most difficult lessons we can learn while living the Christian life: humility. And this lesson is difficult because the world, our society, and our own sinful nature actively pull us away from living this way. We live in a world that encourages us to stand out, to compete against others, to be better than others. We live in a society that encourages us to put ourselves as priority #1. We live in a state of sin that encourages us to think only of ourselves – what’s best for me, what’s important to me, what’s in it for me. Pride is a tough habit to break. And it’s one that none of us will ever be rid of on this side of heaven and the New Creation when Jesus returns. But knowing this, Peter still encourages his readers (including us) to live humbly. Why? Humility goes against the grain of the world! It creates challenges while living in our self-serving society! It goes against my desires as a human being! Why should I live humbly?

Because it’s worth it. God opposes the proud *but gives grace to the humble*. For evidence, look no farther than our Savior, Jesus Christ. Jesus is the very essence of humility. He lowered Himself to take on our flesh and blood. He endured hunger, thirst, sickness, and pain. He carried a criminal’s cross and brought the punishment of sin upon Himself – not because He was forced to, but because He wanted to. He humbled Himself lower than anyone ever had before and lower than anyone ever will again. And by doing so, He received grace. He rose again from the dead and was exulted above and beyond death itself. The humblest of the humble took on His rightful place as the greatest of the great.

In the waters of baptism, we were adopted into Jesus’ humility. We were baptized into His death. Therefore, we were also baptized into His glory, His life, His grace. Let’s live like it. As Jesus put others before Himself, let us do the same.

Prayer: Jesus, thank You for humbling Yourself for me and all who come to faith in You. Help me to live a life of humility so that I may better serve my neighbor and witness Your love in my life. In Your holy name, amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Seminarian Micah Brown

Friday, January 31, 2025
Read 1 Peter 5:6-7

Because He Cares for You

“6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, 7 casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:6-7).

I'm sure it won't be much of a surprise for any of you reading this to hear that I am planning to talk about humility. Humility is a virtue that all Christians can always progress in so it is always worth revisiting. Everyone struggles with humility, that's part of what it means that we are fallen and now have a sinful nature. We always want to make ourselves God and focus on what we want and what will benefit us but these verses from 1 Peter are a great reminder to us of how we are called to live now as Christians. Peter doesn't just leave us with the instruction to be humble, but he paints the picture for us a bit more. Peter points out the mighty hand of God as something that might scare us but even more as something that will be a blessing to us.

Peter teaches us that the mighty hand of God will exalt the humble. Those who are humble under the authority of God have hope for a future exaltation but that isn't all we have. In the here and now Peter has something more to say about what this humility looks like. Peter teaches us that humility now looks like submitting our anxieties to God because we know that He cares for us. It takes humility to trust someone with the things that make us anxious. It is hard for us to go to others, especially with those things that burden us, but this is the beauty of humility. When God gives us humility, we are able to bring these things to Him with absolute confidence because we know who He is and how He cares for us. We know that God cares for us because we know Jesus. Jesus cared for us so much that He came all the way to earth to bear all our sin and all of our anxiety and He carried all of that to the cross where He proved once and for all just how much God cares for His people.

Prayer: Lord help us to be humble like You were humble and help us to cast all of our anxieties on You and to know that You care for us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Seminarian Zach Johnson

Saturday, February 1, 2025

Read [1 Peter 5:8-9](#)

“Lions”

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. 1 Peter 5:8-9”

My mind does strange things when I go to the dentist. Frequently, in order to get my mind off the unthinkable things the dentist is about to do to me, I challenge myself to try to go to sleep before it's his turn. So far, I haven't been successful. It might be the thought behind today's reading, “be sober-minded; be watchful.” I just can't bring myself to fall unconscious when someone carrying drills, sharp pointed objects, and with doctoral-level training in how to use them is about to attack my mouth.

Of course, in our text the adversary isn't just a dentist. No, “the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” Like today, in Biblical times lions were one of the most feared animals. If you were a shepherd, one could steal your livelihood. A lion could tear you apart and eat you, as some early Christians experienced in the Coliseum.

But some people, then as now, are consumed with taking the fight to the lion. Samson literally tore one to pieces. Young David, before fighting Goliath, had killed both lions and bears. Today, lion-tamers put their heads inside lion's mouths to show us how well they've subdued their beast. But, no thanks, I'll stick to just the dentist, thank you.

We are confronted by the devil, though, and he does seek to devour us. Even though he's only like a lion, his “devouring” means being eternally digested by the flames of hell. His attacks run the gamut – sickness, weakness, aging, bullies, unfairness, crime, depression, hunger – you name it. The devil is a master of all tricks against us. David wrote about these attacks, “they gathered together against me; wretches whom I did not know tore at me without ceasing; like profane mockers at a feast, they gnash at me with their teeth.”

But what did David, the lion-killing king do? He turned to the Lord: “rescue me from their destruction, my precious life from the lions!” Our text tells us that we have company in these attacks. Our entire Christian family of brothers and sisters is sharing in these attacks.

And we do well to resist the devil, “firm in our faith.” This faith, after all, is in none other than the One Who is greater than being merely “like” a lion: “one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered”. Jesus is that Lion, and He has torn the devil into pieces and put him in chains. He can roar, but the Lion of Judah protects us.

We pray: Holy Spirit, strengthen my faith in the Lion of Judah as my Lord and Savior. When I'm attacked, lead me to the consolation of my brothers and sisters, who understand what I'm going through. Amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Pastor Jeff Nelson

Monday, February 3, 2025

Read: 1 Peter 5:10-14

Good As New...and Even Better

“After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.” 1 Peter 5:10

As I sat down to write, I still had Jeff’s words about visiting the dentist in the back of my mind. (see Saturday’s devotion) I’ve spent a fair amount of time in dentist’s offices. This is not because I had a ton of cavities. Actually, I didn’t have a cavity until I was in my 30s. But I made up for it with a skateboard.

In perhaps my greatest shining moment of athletic prowess mixed with the kinds of ideas that a group of 11-year-old boys comes up with, one day we were racing down our street, kneeling on skateboards. As I prepared for a showdown with one of the neighbors, I put my knee on the back of the skateboard. It swung up and cracked the bottom half of one of my front teeth clean off. Half the tooth was gone, and the root was exposed to the air. Pro tip: Don’t do this. Any of it. Don’t kneel on a skateboard. Don’t sever half of a tooth off. Don’t have the root of your tooth exposed to the air.

Needless to say, I needed a dentist immediately. Upon arriving the dentist looked, grimaced, made a few jokes how “that had to hurt” (He was correct. He was not funny.), and then promised me, “We’re going to make this good as new.” That was not true. It has been patched up, then patched up again “permanently,” required a root canal, re-shattered (thanks to an elbow at basketball practice), rebuilt, then removed entirely, and replaced by an implant. I’m missing a few steps, but this was over the course of 25 years. It’s pretty good now...for now...but it has never been good as new.

Peter’s promise is different than my dentist’s promise. Mostly, that’s because it’s God’s promise. After suffering a little while from the attacks of Satan that have been talked about in the previous two devotions, God himself will make you “as good as new.” The words (restore, confirm, strengthen, establish) are a mixture of medical and building terms for setting/healing a broken bone and laying a solid foundation. This verse could easily be translated, “God himself will strengthen, strengthen, strengthen, and strengthen you.” Get the point?

In time, our God, who has made us share in the eternal glory of the crucified and risen Jesus, will absolutely strengthen you. You can depend on this promise. He will hold you up, heal you from the scars Satan leaves, and be your foundation of faith and hope. This is what He promises to do day after day as you return to His word of forgiveness and life.

Even more – in eternity, you will share in the everlasting glory of Christ, who has defeated Satan for you. You will share in His resurrection, and every scar and agony of this life will not just be gone, but you’ll be good as new – and even better.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, grant me strength and renewal in You. Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Pastor Jason

Tuesday, February 4 2025

Read 2 Peter 1:1-4

The Same Faith as the Apostles

God has given me the same faith that He gave to the Apostles! But I don't use that faith, that is, I often fail to trust my God. I know He is trustworthy and will keep me through any situation, but I keep wanting to be able to see the future and trust God through my superior knowledge.

Hmm, when I say that, I begin to see how wrong I am. I can't possibly know the future as well as God, and certainly not better than Him. But I keep wanting to trust myself! So, I say, I need to use the faith He has given me, to trust Him through anything.

That ties in with the idea that I have faith like the Apostles. I have their knowledge of God and His faithfulness. Partly I have that knowledge through their own writings, through the Bible that God has given me through their work. But I have the same God living in me, protecting me, and inspiring me to live a life pleasing to Him. So I can't insist that while they endured, and lasted through bad times, how can simple me? I am like them, from their very words, and He has demonstrated in me to me, that He is faithful to me.

So often I need to stop fussing and wait with Him. He doesn't fail me, He surprises me with joy and success in places I didn't realize I could see success. What a God I have!

Prayer: Oh, God, You have repeatedly blessed me. Please keep me living in You enjoying your blessings and serving in your ways. Amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Pastor Art Bolstad

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Read 2 Peter 1:5-7

All Diligence in Faith, Fear, and Wisdom

Having become partakers of the divine nature of the Holy Triune God by the promises of God through Baptism and faith in the full knowledge of our Lord and God Jesus Christ—crucified for our sins and risen from the dead—the divine power and wisdom of God (see v. 3-4), we have escaped the corruption of sinful desire in the world. Peter then said in our text today,

For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love (2 Peter 1:5–7).

Peter said to apply all diligence with your faith to moral excellence (*virtue [here means:]—a good/fine committed character of knowledge that is worthy of praise—good works is what faith produces; fruits of the Holy Spirit*), and in **virtue, knowledge** (*comprehension and intellect possessed by God now given and possessed to Christians by grace through faith in knowing God in Christ Jesus*), and in **knowledge, self-control**, in **self-control** (*restraint of emotions, desires, impulses*), a **self-controlled godly** fear and **perseverance/steadfastness** (*bearing and holding up in difficulties and suffering with patience and endurance*) in **godliness** (*awesome respect—the fear of God displays piety, devoutness, loyalty, and reverence to God*) with **brotherly affection/kindness** (*sense of affection for each other—fellow-Christians*) in **love** (ἀγάπην, *agape/en—very intimate love without limit*) that comes from the divine sacrificial love of God in Christ.

The Proverbs mark the fear of God all Christians possess by God and should have—*godliness*; **“The fear of the LORD [YHWH] is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight [understanding]. For by Me [Wisdom of Yahweh—Jesus Christ incarnate—the Holy One] your days will be multiplied, and years will be added to your life”** (Proverbs 9:10–11).

Prayer – Lord Jesus, You have granted us full knowledge of Your divine power in Your wisdom; Your incarnation, glorious death for our sins and victorious resurrection from the dead, and call us partakers in Your divine nature by the gift of faith. Grant us all diligence in faith, fear, and wisdom; excellence in virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly affection, and love as we trust in Your promises today here in the world, and wait in the hope of Your return of the Last Day. For You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Seminarian Nathan Tritch

Thursday, February 6, 2024

Text: 2 Peter 1:8-11

New Life

“For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” – 2 Peter 1:11

On the surface, these might be tough words to understand. Peter seems to be saying, “if you live in this particular way and do these particular things, then you will earn entrance into the kingdom of God.” This understanding of Peter’s words drips of self-righteousness and works-righteousness. The problem with that is plain: we are sinful! We are incapable of perfectly living the way that Peter describes. It is impossible for us to earn salvation! We cannot be saved or made righteous by our works!

So, is Peter wrong? Is the divinely inspired Word of God misleading us? By no means! Our understanding of it needs adjusting. Peter is by no means suggesting that we are saved by our works, nor does he imply that we earn righteousness. Instead, he’s making it clear that only Jesus saves – only Jesus opens the door of salvation for us. What’s more, not only does Jesus open the door of salvation for us, **He also changes us completely**. When the Holy Spirit created faith in us, we were made new. And with this new life, we are called to live in a new way – a way of humility, love, and service to our neighbors. Faith and this new way of life come hand-in-hand.

And that brings us to Peter’s warning in this passage. You have been created new by faith in Jesus – live like it. Live like it because it’s who you are. Live like it because it’s who you have been made to be. **If you don’t live like it, you run the risk of forgetting who you are**. That is Peter’s point to his audience, and that is his point to us today. We have been saved through the faith given to us. We are new now. Let’s live like it lest we forget what Jesus had done for us. Let’s live like it because our neighbors need us to. Let’s live like it because that’s who we are. Let it be so in us, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Prayer: Jesus, help me to live the new life that You have made for me. Help me to do this for the sake of my neighbor. And help me to do this so that my own faith might be strengthened and enforced. Embolden me in faith and love, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Seminarian Micah Brown

Friday, February 7, 2025
Read 2 Peter 1:13-16

Confidence for Real Life

“13 I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder, 14 since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. 15 And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things. 16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.” (2 Peter 1:13-16 ESV).

I think we sometimes forget that the people who saw Jesus were real people who really cared about what they saw. It is hard enough for us to remember that Jesus was a “real person” by which I just mean that He is a man with a personality and a shoe size and a favorite food. It’s easy for us to think of Christ as just a two-dimensional person in our daily lives, but we all know that He is much more than that. If we tend to think of Christ as a two-dimensional character how much more do we probably think this way about the disciples? Peter in these verses leans on his humanity to connect to the readers of his letter.

Peter was near death as he wrote this letter, and he uses it as a moment to point to Christ and he does so by reminding them that he was an eyewitness to what Christ had done. It would have been an amazing thing to meet and talk to someone who had heard Jesus speak and saw His majesty as Peter puts it. Peter wanted to be a living example and point others toward Christ because what Peter had already experienced, we will get to experience for ourselves. All people who believe in Christ will see His majesty when we join Him. Peter was aware that he was dying soon but he had no fear because He knew where He was going and Who he was going to. We can be confident and without fear as well because we also know where we are going and Who we are going to because Christ has shown His majesty to us to give us a future life with Him.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank You for the ways that you show us Your majesty. Help us to look always to You and to hope for the life that You have shown us. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Seminarian Zach Johnson

Saturday, February 8, 2025

Read [2 Peter 1:19-21](#)

“Word, Prophecy, and Light”

Peter knew something about prophecy. When he'd first encountered Jesus, he prophesied to himself that despite what this stranger said, he knew the future much better. They hadn't caught any fish all night; he knew for a fact they wouldn't catch any by going out and following this Man's directions. How'd that go for Peter?

Peter went up the Mount of Transfiguration, prophesying that setting up tents would be the best thing to do. Jesus said otherwise, and He saved the world. Peter loudly prophesied that he'd never deny Jesus, only later to cry tears of despair at what he'd done.

But now, Peter is near the end of his life. And he's learned a thing or two from following Jesus. This reading is him sharing one of the pearls of wisdom that Jesus, along with Peter's own string of bad prophecies, had taught him. Peter knew his personal strength did not include prophecy – he was a downright horrible prophet! But Jesus taught him and explained to Peter all the Old Testament prophecies about Him, and they gave Peter life.

Peter had been a first-hand witness to Jesus' fulfillment of countless of those prophecies. He'd seen God's glory through His miracles, His teachings, His life, and His death. He'd seen the risen Savior, and witnessed Him ascend into heaven. And now, God's prophetic Word remained standing, mighty and strong. A lamp, shining in the dark world around him. A light that strongly points him, Peter – denier of Christ – to the morning star, which brightens the dawning day.

Some men and women are gifted in being able to imagine the future, but Peter's faith lay in God's Word. Pastors and other believers who tell about Jesus, while tempted to insert themselves and their own wisdom into what they say, know that only God's prophetic Word shines through the darkness. Thankfully, God never erased Peter's personality. We love to read of him ceaselessly putting his foot into his mouth as he said the first, stupid thing that entered his mind. And God used the personalities of all those He inspired to speak His Word, and still does.

But God's prophetic Word shines through. Through Moses, through David, through Peter, through you and I. We repeat God's Word, by God's Spirit, and it continues to shine.

We pray: Thy strong word did cleave the darkness; At Thy speaking it was done. For created light we thank Thee, While Thine ordered seasons run. Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send! Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end! (LSB 578)

Today's Devotion was written by Pastor Jeff Nelson

Monday, February 10, 2025

Read: 2 Peter 2:1-3

Being Aware of What You Eat

“But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.” 2 Peter 2:1

There seems to be a lot of discussion recently about the food that we consume. Concerns have been raised about artificial coloring, hormones used in the animals raised for consumption, micro-plastics in food and water, and more. I have no doubt that these concerns are worth being investigated and better understood. After all, what you take in makes all the difference in whether you are healthy or sick.

You can appreciate the great concern that Peter shows, then, regarding what’s being sold and consumed. Of course, he wasn’t concerned about micro-plastics (botulism was probably a bigger issue for the food supply in his day). He wanted to slap warning labels on those preachers and teachers who were pushing a spiritually poisonous diet.

We have a tendency to think all teaching about God is generally good, or at least better than nothing. Yet this is like saying, “Whatever you eat is fine. The main thing is that you’re eating something. So, just find what tastes good and suits you – whether that’s a banana, a block of butter, or a handful of batteries.” We all know that such a sentiment is bananas! What we take in matters and makes a difference in whether we are healthy, sick, or dead.

So, Peter refers to false teachers as bringing “destructive heresies.” False teaching is destructive – poisonous! Some false teachers denied the “Master who bought them,” meaning they distorted who Jesus is, and therefore were feeding deadly poison to all who would consume their teaching. Peter is clear that this would ALWAYS be a problem in this broken world.

The answer is to return to Saturday’s devotion and reading and be grounded in the light of God’s Word, especially in the Master who has bought you by His blood. We return to the Word again and again because every concern for our spiritual well-being is worth investigating and understanding. We need to know what we are eating whenever someone is speaking about Christ. We need a diet high in Scripture, especially in the Word of forgiveness and life found in the good news of Jesus. We need to regularly feast at the table of Christ to receive His body and blood that deliver forgiveness, life, and salvation. After all, what you take it, makes all the difference in whether we are healthy or sick.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, protect me from false teaching by leading me to daily feed on Your word of life. Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Pastor Jason

Tuesday, February 11, 2025

Read 2 Peter 2:4-10

The Intended Blessing of Authority

Why should I listen to people in authority? There are many times when I am sure that I know what to do better than some know-it-all insisting that I should do it his way. Yes, they have the image of being in charge; but I know what to do better than they do (or I am sure anyway).

So, I go merrily along - until my LORD faces me with my selfish spirit and makes me realize that whatever special knowledge I have, He hasn't given me authority over those He has put in charge. Oops. I'm sorry, LORD.

He promises to take care of me - but if I do my own thing, He can't have his people do their part. They would be busy picking up the pieces I have spoiled in my selfish focus. God has put authority on the earth for my benefit. He puts some in His places; He deposes others; but I don't fix them by ignoring their authority.

It's very shocking to think about the bad examples in the Bible - Sodom, Saul, Nebuchadnezzar, etc. When they didn't listen to God, they lost their contact with Him. Who knows much or cares much about them today? Yet He guides even those who occasionally fail Him - David, Peter, me. He guides me so that His other guides, authorities in this life, can guide and care for me. I had Parents, Teachers, Police men, Governors, etc. I haven't always liked them or even agreed with them - But God has brought me here!

Prayer: Thank you, my God. Thank you for guiding and shoving me back to the guides You have sent me. Keep me in your will. Amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Pastor Art Bolstad

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

Read 2 Peter 2:11-16

The Unrighteous Against the Righteous and Glorious Ones

False prophets, false teachers, and blasphemers of God (*the unrighteous-ungodly-unrepentant ones*) despise good authority—denying The Master JESUS (Yahweh is salvation) and His redeeming blood—God’s blood that paid the wages of all sin in His death on a cross. They do not tremble in fear when they arrogantly and self-willingly, dare to speak audacious evil and “**blaspheme the glorious ones** [angels-of-God]” (2 Peter 2:10). Even angels in their strength and power cannot bear the judgment of Yahweh God, and do not speak blasphemous judgement *against the righteous glorious ones* before Yahweh God. Yet, *unrighteous* people are like unreasoning irrational animals,

These [unrighteous people], like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction, suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you. (vv. 12–13).

Peter makes no mistake here; fallen angels, false prophets, and false teachers revel in deception while they feast with and among you, they deceive with heresies and bring destruction, and will be destroyed in their own destruction. As Peter says, “**suffering unrighteousness/wrong as the wage for their unrighteousness/wrongdoing.**” Ultimately, *the unrighteous-ungodly-unrepentant ones*, will suffer the full penalty of the wages of sin in everlasting death in their denying the blood payment of The Master JESUS—blaspheming and rejecting The Holy Spirit, thus rejected The Father.

They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. [*They are*] **Accursed children!** (v. 14). The *unrighteous* have forsaken the right way. They have gone astray following the way of *unrighteousness* just as Balaam loved the wages of *unrighteousness*. Yet, Balaam was rebuked for his lawlessness by a donkey who spoke with the voice of a man, and restrained the madness of the prophet (see Numbers 22:28-30).

The fact and Truth is that our Lord, God, and Master JESUS the Christ, has bought us with His precious blood, paying the wages of sin in His death for us on a cross, and rose from the dead on the third day for all mankind—so that we would have everlasting life in His Name. And by grace through faith in JESUS Christ alone, we are declared *righteous* and godly with the *glorious ones of God*, who need not be afraid of evil doers and *unrighteous* ones who seek our destruction. For we have been Baptized into Christ and have received everlasting life, forgiveness and salvation in Christ from everlasting death.

Prayer – Lord JESUS, thank you for Your grace and truth, grant us patience and godliness in suffering as Your people in the world despised and blasphemed for Your Names sake. For You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Seminarian Nathan Tritch

Thursday, February 13, 2024

Text: 2 Peter 2:17-19

A True Teacher

In chapter 2 of 2 Peter, Simon Peter warns against false teachers, prophets, and anyone else who might work to steer believers in Jesus away from faith in Him. In our three verses for today, Peter makes plain the terrifying reality that awaits such evildoers. He says that false teachers are “waterless springs and mists driven by a storm,” inheritors of nothing but “the gloom of utter darkness,” and “slaves of corruption.” This is the reality for those stuck in sin. Indeed, this would be our reality if not for the interjection of Jesus Christ.

Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus has won for us a different way. Through Jesus, we are not “waterless springs” or “mists driven by a storm.” Rather, He has baptized us into His own living water. Jesus said, “whoever drinks of the water that I will give to him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a *spring of water welling up to eternal life*” (John 4:14). Through Jesus, we are not inheritors of “the gloom of utter darkness.” Rather, Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, *but will have the light of life*” (John 8:12). Through Jesus, we are not “slaves of corruption.” Rather, He said, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and *the truth will set you free*” (John 8:31-32).

The false teachers of this world who oppose Jesus only lead to drought, darkness, and slavery to sin. But praise be to God that He has given us a different teacher – a perfect Master – a holy Lord. He has given us His own Son, God made flesh, Jesus Christ. Let us strive to live all of our days enduring in His living water, His bright light, and His freedom from sin.

Prayer: Jesus, you have saved me from the destruction that I earned when I was Your enemy. Thank You for the new life You have won for me. Help me to live in a way that glorifies You so that I may be a witness to others of the joy of Your Gospel. In Your holy name, amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Seminarian Micah Brown

Friday, February 14, 2025
Read 2 Peter 2:20-22

In the Muck and the Mire

“20 For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. 21 For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them. 22 What the true proverb says has happened to the: “The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire.” (2 Peter 2:20-22 ESV).

In the text for this Valentine’s Day, we get a wonderful pair of images to ponder from 2 Peter chapter 2. We get the dog and its vomit and the sow and her mire. These are lovely things to think about as we prepare for dinners with that special someone or maybe just enjoy a nice night in. Peter is talking about false teachers and those who are tricked by them to follow anything but Christ. Peter has nothing good to say about them and we should hear him out. Peter in this letter has been warning the people of the danger of falling away from the faith and he has been encouraging them to build one another up in their calling to Christ. This is perhaps one of his most graphic warnings about what it looks like for believers to turn from Christ.

Peter knows that for the people to turn from Christ really is like the dog returning to its vomit. Christ through His life death and resurrection has led us like you would lead a dog away from something gross and brought us to something so much better, but we know what dogs do. Dogs still try to go back to the gross thing they found whenever the scent of it passes their nose. We still try to cling to the things that Christ has called us away from and Peter is reminding us that we don’t want to be like the dog. We want to be the people that follow Christ, and we aren’t alone in this. Christ still walks with us and still calls to us when we like dogs run back to something foul. He still seeks us out and, in His mercy, leads us to better things. We have a hope in Christ that is worth grabbing on to and we have the promise that even when we fall Christ still calls us back to Himself.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, thank You for calling to us continually and making us Your people. Help us to follow You and never turn back to the sin that You have freed us from. Be with us when we do fall and remind us that Your voice is still calling out to us, and You are always seeking us. In Your name we pray. Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Seminarian Zach Johnson

Saturday, February 15, 2025

Read [2 Peter 3:1-7](#)

“God’s Promise”

“They (scoffers) will say, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.”” 2 Peter 3:4

We just heard about false prophets in chapter two. These “slaves of corruption” were trying to tempt, twist, and trap believers into sinful living that would draw them away from Jesus. 2,000 years ago, this might have been a danger for believers, but not today, right? No, just as the serpent tempted Adam and Eve, he and his followers (including our own sinful flesh) are still at it. As soon as we successfully resist one temptation, another one is waiting to be sent our way.

But today’s reading turns in a new direction – one that’s been getting stronger with every passing year. It doesn’t even deny Jesus’ existence, His miracles, His life, death, and resurrection. It simply asks, “But what has God done for you lately?” It demands that we explain why Jesus hasn’t yet returned – “He said, “I am coming soon,” right?” And all we can say is, “Well, yes...”

But every year this argument gets a little stronger. It makes us wonder what Jesus meant. It leads us to have doubts. We begin questioning other things. Our modern world has legions of “scientists” that swear that there was no Creation of the world by God. It “just happened”.

Peter cited a defense that may have helped against the scoffers of his day when he pointed out: “The same Word of God that formed the earth out of water also flooded the world and delivered Noah and his family from drowning.” Today, those same scientists ignore the immense body of evidence that points to a worldwide flood that occurred around that time in geological history, leaving the exact signs that should be expected. But still, we listen to their story.

So, we return to the Word. “In the beginning, the Word was with God and the Word was God”. Just as God created the World with a word, so God claimed you as His son or daughter with a Word and with baptismal water. God’s Word prophesied He would send us a Savior Who would be the offspring of a woman, a child of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and that He would be of the tribe of Judah and an heir to David’s throne. That happened, as witnessed by countless peoples of all faiths and countries.

God’s Word revealed the Savior’s birthplace, the time of His birth, the amazing detail that it would be a virgin birth, that many infants would be murdered and that this Savior would be saved by travelling to Egypt. Jesus was born, and everything happened, as the Word said. God’s Son would minister in Galilee as a prophet and priest and be rejected by the people. Details of His entry into Jerusalem, His suffering, death, and burial were prophesied by men moved by the Spirit. And His resurrection, ascension, and exaltation at God’s right hand were written in the Psalms and fulfilled and witnessed by hundreds and thousands.

“Where is the promise of His coming”, the scoffers asked? God has kept all His promises so far and Jesus will return, in His own, good time. Soon.

We pray: Lord God, Heavenly Father; protect us from the deception of scoffers. Sanctify us in the truth; Your Word is Truth. Amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Pastor Jeff Nelson

Monday, February 17, 2025

Read: 2 Peter 3:8-12

Patience

“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.” 2 Peter 3:9

Quick show of hands - who's finished with Winter? If your hand isn't up, perhaps it is frozen. Yes, it is still February, which is living up to my belief that it is the longest month of the year no matter how many days there are. But Winter just feels extra long this year and waiting for Spring is hard when we don't like waiting for anything.

Don't believe me? I've talked to at least three different people in the last week bemoaning that many packages from Amazon are taking up to four days! That feels like an eternity when you are accustomed to items showing up in less than 48 hours.

In our instant world, we have little patience for slowness. When our online order doesn't arrive within 48 hours, when I have to wait for a self-checkout station to open up at the store, when someone doesn't return our text within a few minutes, we can become visibly upset. How different it was for Abraham! He was 75 years old when God promised He would make Abraham's descendants into a great nation (see Genesis. 12:1-4).

The years passed, and the promise remained unfulfilled.

It took 25 years before God's promise became more than words. God reiterated His promise when Abraham was 99. Abraham was confused and Sarah, his wife, laughed. They didn't understand God is not bound by our timetable. Well, you know the rest of Abraham's story. You know Sarah became pregnant and gave birth to Isaac and God's promise was kept.

All too often we believers share Abraham's doubts. When we consider the trials in our lives and terrible events in the world, we wonder when or if God will ever step in and make things right. We can find our answer by listening to St. Peter who said, the Lord is patient and wants everyone to repent, but the day will come when He will return, on His timetable.

In the meantime, Peter calls us to follow our faithful Lord, who always keep His promises. We cling to each promise from our Lord who forgives our impatience along with the rest of our sin, for thankfully He is patient toward us, even when we are impatient.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for keeping every promise, through Christ, Our Savior. Help me to trust Your timetable and to live each day in patient endurance, as I await His promised coming. Amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Pastor Jason

Tuesday, February 18, 2025

Read 2 Peter 3:10-13

Confidence While Waiting

The world looks so strong and endless. I get tired of struggling, so I also get discouraged. I wonder: Why keep diligently striving to be faithful when my life is short and the world will obviously outlast me? I set myself against the world forgetting who lives in me and strengthens me. Alas!

The real problem comes from my self-interest; my personal preoccupation with my lazy desire for an easy life. But my LORD didn't have such an easy time. Leaders mocked Him, people faked interest to try to trap Him. Eventually, they lied to kill Him. So why should I have it easier? Well, I do.

He won the victory; He had done the hard part, with His death and resurrection. Now He gives me the benefit. So, I want to join Him. And He reminds me that though the world seems too strong, it has a termination point. It doesn't exist as is forever, while I am already living in my Lord, simply waiting for the destruction of this old world and the promise of the new world.

Ah, that promise! Things will be made new, without the contamination our sin has made to this world. A new heaven and a new earth means my future home doesn't have an ending. I want to keep my eyes on His promises - on His promise to be with me and His promise that the future is mine. When the present world is too much, He comforts me and points me to that future state.

Prayer: What a blessing You have for me, LORD! Thank you. Build up my confidence and love for You. Amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Pastor Art Bolstad

Wednesday, February 19, 2025
Read 2 Peter 3:14-16

Waiting for the Things to Come

Peter said here in this text you are waiting and looking for something to come. Waiting and looking forward THE DAY OF THE LORD (YHWH)! —the coming and appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Last Day. Waiting for the New Heavens and the New Earth. Peter said to be found by Jesus when He comes to be by Him in Peace, to be diligent and without spot and blemish.

To count and consider “**the patience of our Lord Jesus Christ as salvation**” (v. 15). For you are in the Peace of the Lord Jesus Christ, reconciled to God in His atoning sacrificial death that paid for your sins, satisfying the Wrath of God for your sin. In Christ you are beloved and diligent without spot or blemish in His righteousness and holiness.

Peter said some pervert, twist, and wrest these truths of the Scriptures, Paul and says *some* of his writings of Scripture “**are hard to understand**” (v. 16)—of the Last Day and things to come. The unknown revealed to come is certain—just as it is certain that Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead on the third day as foretold and fulfilled. It is clear and can be understood by the wisdom of the Lord Jesus Christ by faith alone. Make no mistake, the Scriptures are clear and we are always growing in wisdom and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will come visibly on the Last Day to judge the living and the dead and bring in the New Creation in The New Heavens and The New Earth, where He will dwell among us His people in His righteous perfection and holiness forever.

Dr. Francis Pieper noted on these *Last Things* to come and the context of this passage,

The context shows what kind of things these are. They pertain to the Last Things, the destruction of this universe and the new heaven and the new earth, a matter of which the context immediately preceding speaks. These things are, of a truth, difficult to understand, embody mysteries for us, inasmuch as we have but an imperfect conception of the great change to be effected by the destruction of the world and of the new heaven and the new earth. (Francis Pieper, [Christian Dogmatics](#), vol. 1, 327).

Prayer – Lord JESUS, You have promised Your glorious return on the Last Day. Grant us Your eternal wisdom and guidance and The Holy Spirit this day as we wait and look for Your return. As we have received faith, life, forgiveness of sins, and everlasting salvation in You alone, Lord Jesus. Help us receive, understand, and learn Your Word always; To believe, teach, and confess Your Word and Truth to all people to receive faith and life and understand Your Word rightly. For You live and reign with The Father and The Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. Amen.

Today's Devotion was written by Seminarian Nathan Tritch

Thursday, February 20, 2024

Text: 2 Peter 3:17-18

A Journey of Faith

Life is a journey. Such a statement has become a type of cliché within our culture today. However, it is nonetheless true. Life is a journey full of ups and downs. And we who are on the journey of life will be pulled in many different directions, meet many interesting people, learn of many unique perspective, and grow in many unforeseen ways. Life will challenge us. Life will change us – life will make us grow. Since this growth is inevitable, the question becomes this: into what will you grow?

One option is this: we could grow into beings who are further separated from God. This could be accomplished by listening to false teachers and others who attempt to distract us from the Truth of God’s Word. Growing in this way is not a good idea, this much is clear. Peter dedicated the better part of his second letter addressing this very same issue, after all.

Instead, Peter presents a second option: by the grace of God, we could grow into beings who further glorify Him. God has given us His incarnate Word, Jesus Christ. He has given us His Written Word, Scripture. He has given us one another for strength and encouragement, His church. God has given us all the tools we need to grow into individuals who look more like Jesus. So, let us “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Throughout this journey of life – the highs and lows, the moments of strength and the moments of weakness, the moments of confidence and the moments of doubt – let us look to Jesus alone. Let us look to His Word for guidance. Let us look to His sacraments for assurance. Let us look to His church for encouragement. Let us remain faithful to Jesus alone so that, as we journey on in this life, we might grow into beings who further glorify Him.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You hold all things in Your hands, and in You, my future is secure. But I do not know what the future holds for me. Use all of the events that will take place in my life – the trials and triumphs – to form me into the image of Your Son, Jesus Christ. In His name I pray, amen.

Today’s Devotion was written by Seminarian Micah Brown