



His Word Is Truth!

This article is written by Pastor Tom Eckstein of Concordia Lutheran Church in Jamestown. "His Word is Truth" will appear in this paper every 3rd Monday.



The title for today's article is: **"Comfort and Encouragement When You Have No Desire to Attend Church Services."** Before I address the various reasons we may be tempted to not attend Church Services, I will first explain what Church Services are and why Christians need to attend them.

Many people wrongly think that attending Church Services is something we do for God. But God doesn't need anything from us nor is God impressed with our attempts to show Him how good we are by attending Church Services. Then why should we attend Church Services? The

answer is found in that word "Service." You see, God longs to serve us sinners! The focus of a faithful Church Service should be on Christ and all that He has done to serve and save us sinners who are lost without His salvation. God's Son lived a perfect life in our place. God's Son died on the cross in our place of damnation. God's Son conquered death for us by His bodily resurrection. *The salvation that Jesus accomplished for us by His life, death and resurrection is given to us personally through the gifts that God has given His Church.*

God serves us at Church Services when we are Baptized. Baptism is one way that God serves us and gives us His gifts. Many Church Services begin with the Trinitarian Invocation: **"In Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."** We do this to remind ourselves that we Christians Worship the One, True God who has revealed Himself to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit (see Matthew 3:16-17 & 28:19-20). In addition, the Trinitarian Invocation reminds

us of our Baptism and that we are to live out our Baptism every day through repentance and faith in Christ (see Romans 6:1-4).

God also serves us at Church Services through His Word that we speak, sing, read and hear. God uses His Word to give us repentance and faith in Christ. God uses His Word to nurture us in our faith and transform our minds so that we can discern between false teaching and the Truth of God. God uses His Word to comfort us and give us eternal hope in Christ. At Church Services we sing the Word of God in biblical hymns; we hear the Word of God when the Holy Scriptures are read, and we are blessed by faithful preaching that applies God's Holy Word to our lives today. In 1st Timothy chapter 3 the Apostle Paul writes the following to a young pastor: **"Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching... Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them... Watch your life and**

doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers." (Also see 2nd Timothy 3:14-4:1-4)

Finally, God also serves us at Church Services when we receive the Lord's Supper. Jesus said: **"Take, eat. This is My Body given for you. Take, drink. This is My Blood of the New Testament shed for you for the forgiveness of your sins."** (See Matthew 26:26-28; also 1st Corinthians 10:14-17 and 11:23-32). In the bread and wine blessed by Christ's Words (spoken by the pastor) we receive the very Body and Blood that Christ gave and shed for our salvation. *Jesus serves us sinners in His Holy Supper!*

Therefore, Christians should make attendance at Church Services a priority in their lives because God calls us there so that He can serve us with His gifts! In Colossians chapter 3:16 the Apostle Paul writes: **"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms,**

hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God." Also, in Hebrews 10:25 we read: **"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching."**

The devil will tempt us to avoid Church Services for various reasons. *Maybe we avoid faithful Church Services because we don't hear what we want to hear* **But God tells us what we NEED to hear for our good!** *Maybe we avoid Church Services because we think that we don't need it.* **But then we must repent of our arrogance and remember that we are all sinners who need the gifts God gives us in His Services as well as the fellowship of other Christians.** *Finally, maybe we think that we're too sinful to attend Church Services.* **But Church Services are for repentant sinners who long to hear the Good News of forgiveness and new life in Jesus! At**

Concordia Lutheran Church fellow Christians who are also fellow sinners gather at Services to be served by God so that we might rejoice in His forgiveness in Christ and receive the strength we need to live faithfully as His people during the week.



Please read the next "His Word is Truth" on Monday, July 20th!

Next month Pastor Eckstein will continue his series:

"Comfort and Encouragement from Holy Scripture." The topic of next month's article will be: "Comfort and Encouragement When God Doesn't Seem to Answer Your Prayers."

For more resources about Christian teaching and issues, go to Concordia Lutheran's web page: www.concordiajt.org

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