

A Study of the Book:
Handling the Word of Truth – Part 4

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^{NAU} 2 Timothy 2:15 “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”

Opening Worship:

Invocation... C: Amen.

First Reading: Mark 10:17-22 ESV – *No one can make himself good; instead, it is God’s gift to us through Jesus!*

¹⁷ And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” ¹⁸ And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.’”

²⁰ And he said to him, “Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth.” ²¹ And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”

²² Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

Second Reading: Romans 6:5-18 ESV – *Alive in Christ, we are free from our slavery to sin!*

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who has died has been set free from sin.

⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.

¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹² Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. ¹³ Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin will have no

dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

¹⁵ What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶ Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, ¹⁸ and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

Prayer:

- Repentance
- Victory over sin
- Justification by faith
- ...through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- **C: Amen.**

Chapter 8: Right Repentance: *It hammers away at everything a sinner seeks to cling to for security and comfort that is not of Jesus Christ!*

- Thinking about the summary statement above, let us understand that “The Law can uncover our lack of love for God, but it is powerless to create this love.” (72)
 - Thinking about last week: How do we show our love for God?
 - ^{NAU} John 14:15 “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”
 - So **how** can the Law uncover our lack of love for God?
 - What is the **power** that creates our love for God?
 - ^{NAU} 2 Corinthians 5:15 and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for

Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

- The Gospel should be offered to:
 - Those who have been made contrite (sorry for their sins) by the Law (seeing their inability to keep it perfectly).
 - Those who fear God's wrath and punishment.
- How are people brought to such positions?
 - "We must not imagine that contrition is a good work which we do, but something that God works in us."
 - "A person who wants to make himself sorrowful desires ever to **increase** his sorrow over sin. But a person merged in the **right kind of sorrow** yearns to be rid of it." (73)
 - "**Worldly grief** frets over earthly loss... **Godly grief** laments hell itself.... When we behold someone in terror of hell, we are to comfort him." (73) How?
- The preaching of repentance (narrow) should come before the preaching of the Gospel (narrow).
 - What is repentance?
 - Broad: Sorrow for sin AND faith in Christ for forgiveness.
 - Narrow: Sorrow for sin.
 - What is the Gospel?
 - Broad: All of God's Word (Law and Gospel).
 - Narrow: God's forgiveness through Jesus Christ.
- The preaching of repentance (narrow) should come before the preaching of the Gospel (narrow).
 - "You must proclaim the Law forcefully..."
 - "The call to repentance is the call for a changed heart..."
 - "But the moment you begin to speak of the Gospel, the Law must be hushed."

- The Law makes sinners [SOS], but the Gospel takes sinners and declares them to be saints..."
- People should not be taught that they are converted / saved / forgiven / redeemed as soon as they get rid of certain sins, for example: drinking, lying, not attending worship.
 - "Virtues may be praiseworthy and beneficial when it comes to life in human community, but virtues do not save us from God's wrath." (76)
 - ^{NAU} Romans 14:23 "...whatever is not from faith is sin."
 - First, God makes us new on the inside through Christ; then, from the joy of forgiveness, comes good fruit!
- Faith should be described in a such a way that fits all believers of all times.
 - "Faith is not determined by disposition."
 - "A person with an irritable temper keeps that disposition..." (77) That is part of his **old nature**, but he also desires – with his **new nature** – to honor his Savior!
 - "The life of faith may never be described as a life without sin but a life that is lived trusting in the forgiveness of sins that Christ bestows." (78)

Chapter 9: The Power of Sin: *For those who share in Jesus' victory over sin, their lives are no longer dominated by sin!*

- True believers in Jesus are different: Their lives are no longer **ruled** by sin.
 - As Christians we still sin, but our attitude is different:
 - We don't want to sin, but sometimes we do.
 - We are thankful for God's forgiveness through Jesus.
 - ^{ESV} Romans 6:11 ...consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹² Let not sin

therefore reign in your mortal body...¹³ ...present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life...

- True believers in Jesus are different: Their lives are no longer **ruled** by sin.
 - Walther: “If a person allows sin to rule over him, this is a sure sign that he is not a Christian, but a hypocrite [claiming to be a Christian when he is not], no matter how pious he pretends to be.” (83)
 - Pless: “Those who live under the dominion of sin will face condemnation.” (83)^{NAU}
Ephesians 5:5 For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.
- True believers in Jesus are different: Their lives are no longer **ruled** by sin.
 - “Does this mean that Christians are perfect and without sin? Not at all.” (83)
 - “Sin remains, but **its dominion has been broken** in those who live by faith in Jesus Christ.” (83)
- True believers know they **need** and **have** God’s forgiveness through Jesus for every sin.
 - Some speak of mortal (greater) and venial (lesser) sins, teaching that some condemn and some do not. Such talk confuses Law and Gospel by “excusing rather than forgiving sins.” (84)
 - “Every sin – both mortal and venial – is to be recognized for what it is: sin.” (84) Walther: “Small sins become great when they are regarded as small.” (86) All sin condemns!

- “However sins may be classified – mortal or venial, great or small – there is forgiveness for all sinners who come with a broken spirit, looking to Christ alone [for forgiveness].” (85)

The Church: Community of the Gospel: *People are justified by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, not by their association with churches that rightly teach God’s Word!*

- Christ, not the church, is the Savior!
 - Luther: “...the church is: holy believers... This holiness does not consist of...long albs, or other ceremonies of theirs [the Roman Catholic Church] that they have invented over and above the Holy Scriptures. Its holiness exists in the Word of God and true faith.” (87)
 - Walther: “There are still Christians in the Reformed Church, among the Methodists, yea, among the papists.” (89)
- All doctrines are important, but our salvation is connected to our justification in Christ.
 - “...our condemnation of false doctrine is not a blanket judgment on Christians who ‘err in the simplicity of their hearts, but only to obstinate false teachers.’” (89)
 - Robert Kolb: “Biblical teaching is like a human body. Christ is the head; decapitated it dies. When the arm of Baptism is cut off, or the foot of eschatology badly mangled, the whole body suffers. It can survive with serious injury, but it may also hemorrhage and bleed to death.” (89)
- All doctrines are important, but our salvation is connected to our justification in Christ.
 - “Church fellowship [between our church and other churches] is not based on the presence of devout Christians but on the pure

teaching of God's Word and the right administration of His Sacraments." (90)

- "Church fellowship is not based on compassion and inclusiveness but on a common confession of God's Word." (90)
- ^{NAU} 1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I exhort you, brethren... that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.
Rightly believe God's Word!

Tonight's Conclusion:

↑arise Creed (Apostles' Creed, *Third Article – Sanctification, and Luther's Explanation – EXPANDED*):

P: What is the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed?

C: I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

P: Do you have the ability to believe in Jesus Christ?

C: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him.

P: How have you become a Christian?

C: The Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.

P: What is the Holy Spirit doing to bless all Christians?

C: He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

P: How is God, through Jesus, blessing all Christians every day?

C: He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers.

P: What will happen when Jesus returns?

C: On the Last Day Jesus will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all who believe in Him as their Savior.

Closing Prayer...

- **Right Repentance:** *It hammers away at everything a sinner seeks to cling to for security and comfort that is not of Jesus Christ!*
- **The Power of Sin:** *For those who share in Jesus' victory over sin, their lives are no longer dominated by sin!*
- **The Church: Community of the Gospel:** *People are justified by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, not by their association with churches that rightly teach God's Word!*
- ...through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lord's Prayer...

Benediction... (2 Thessalonians 3:16) **C: Amen.**

- *Thanks for attending this Worship-Study!*
- For those who did not attend last Sunday, an offering plate is available on the hallway table. [Tithes, offerings, good works; they "are not the root but the fruit of faith."](#) ([Handling the Word of Truth, 32](#))
- Please join us next Wednesday at 7:00 for part 5.

The final chapters; please join us on Wednesday, January 25 at 7:00 p.m.

Part 5 – January 25:

- **Chapter 11: Evangelical Sacraments: Faith, Not Ritual Works:** *God's gifts are received by faith, not by going through the motions!*
- **Chapter 12: Alive by the Gospel:** *Let us understand that being converted, awakened, born again, etc. is God's work to make us alive in Christ!*
- **Chapter 13: The Gospel Gets the Last Word:** *The Law is never to be used on an unbeliever to entice him to stop sinning, thus to become more godly!*