

A Study of the Book:
Handling the Word of Truth – Part 5

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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.

Scripture Reading: Acts 19:13-20 – *Notice that using the right words (doing the right motions) does not automatically bring benefits!*

¹³ Then some of the itinerant [traveling] Jewish exorcists undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, “I adjure [command] you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims.” ¹⁴ Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. ¹⁵ But the evil spirit answered them, “Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?” ¹⁶ And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

¹⁷ And this became known to all the residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks. And fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled. ¹⁸ Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. ¹⁹ And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver. ²⁰ So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

Prayer:

- Fill us with the Holy Spirit.
- Help us understand and believe.
- Cause us to rejoice in Jesus our Savior.
- ...through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- **C: Amen.**

Chapter 11: Evangelical Sacraments: Faith, Not Ritual Works: *God’s gifts are received by faith, not by going through the motions!*

- How does a person benefit from the Sacraments? **Faith is necessary!**
 - Baptism – *God gives the needed gift of faith!*
 - Supper – *It’s for Christians, ones who have already received God’s gift of faith in Jesus for eternal life!*
 - AC XIII: “...the sacraments are instituted not only to be signs by which people may recognize Christians outwardly, but also as signs...of God’s will toward us in order thereby to awaken [with baptism] and strengthen [with the supper] our faith. ...they...require faith and are rightly used when received in faith for the strengthening of faith.” (93)
- To benefit from the Sacraments, faith is necessary:
 - “Faith does not ‘make’ Baptism and the Lord’s supper, but it is by faith alone that sinners receive the gifts promised and bestowed in these sacraments.” (94)
 - “...the Sacrament are God’s own instruments established by His words of promise to deliver the forgiveness of sins to all who receive God’s gift in faith.” (94)

- To benefit from the Sacraments, faith is necessary:
 - Walther: “It is a horrible doctrine...that divine grace is obtained if a person at least makes external use of the Sacraments [apart from faith].” (94)
 - ^{NAU} 1 Corinthians 11:27 ...whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. ²⁸ But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. ³⁰ For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep.
- What is “an unworthy manner”?
 - Luther: “...that person is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words: ‘Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.’
 - But anyone who does not believe these words or doubts them is unworthy and unprepared, for the words ‘for you’ require all hearts to believe.” (Fourth Altar Answer)
- What does it mean to “examine” yourself? We are to ask ourselves?
 - a. Am I *sorry* for my sins?
 - b. Do I *believe* in my Savior Jesus Christ and in His words in the Sacrament?
 - c. Do I *plan*, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to change my sinful life? (Small Catechism, Question 303)
- To benefit from the Sacraments, faith is necessary:
 - “Baptism saves because it joins us to the death of Jesus...” (95)

- “But the focus is not on our faith *per se*, as though our faith constitutes the Sacrament. Faith only receives what the Lord gives.” (97)
- For example: All receive Jesus’ body and blood:
 - Those *with faith* to their benefit.
 - Those *without faith* to their harm.

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!*

- “Awakened” and “converted” mean the same:
 - “One is either alive or dead... so there is only unbelief or faith.” (99)
 - “No matter how weak his faith may be, the person who trusts Jesus Christ is a new creation.” (100)
 - ^{NAU} 2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature...
- “Where the Gospel produces faith, there will be conflict. This conflict is not a state on the road to conversion but a characteristic of the ongoing life of repentance and faith.” (100)
- These passages identify the two classes of people spiritually, lost and found, dead and alive:
 - ^{NAU} Ephesians 2:4 But God, ... ⁵ even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ...
 - ^{NAU} Ephesians 5:14 “Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you.”

- ^{NAU} Colossians 2:13 When you were dead in your transgressions ..., He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions...
- The unforgiveable sin is blasphemy (irreverent speech or action) against *the H. S., the Lord and giver of life!*
 - Walther: “The office of the Holy Spirit is to call men to Christ and to keep them with Him.” (103)
 - “To sin against the Holy Spirit is to refuse the Gospel that He causes to be preached.... It is the obstinate and willful rejection of the very means that the Holy Spirit uses to create faith.” (103)
 - “...the sin...is unforgiveable not because it is too great for Calvary but because the person who commits this sin refuses the gift of forgiveness of sins...” (103)

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!*

- The fruit of the Gospel, not of the Law, is justification (union with Christ) and sanctification (a desire to live for Him):
 - Luther: “The Law of God...cannot advance humans on their way to righteousness, but rather hinders them.” (108)
 - Walther: “...there is a time for...the Law in order to alarm secure sinners and make them contrite [sorry], but a change of heart and love of God and one’s fellow-men is not produced by the Law.” (108)
 - Pless: “It is the Gospel...that gives birth to the new life of faith.” (109)

- The fruit of the Gospel, not of the Law, is justification (union with Christ) and sanctification (a desire to live for Him):
 - “Sanctification comes not from the power of the Law but from the living words of the Gospel, words that take root in the heart and produce good fruits on the lips and in the lives of those who through faith are righteous.” (109)
 - Walther: A “minister...ought to change the hearts of his members [with the Gospel] in order that they may without constraints do what is pleasing to God with a glad and cheerful heart.” (110)
- The Law leads to sorrow for sin, but the Gospel unites to Christ and leads to good works:
 - “The Law must be spoken to diagnose the sin... The Gospel alone can provide healing for the wounds uncovered by the Law.” (111)
 - Think about the great Gospel message of the Christmas angel: ^{NAU} Luke 2:10 “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; ¹¹ for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”
 - “The ultimate aim in our preaching of the Law must be to preach the Gospel.” (111)
 - “The Law is all about human beings, our sin, our failure, and ultimately our death. The Gospel is all about Christ Jesus, His righteousness, His faithfulness, and His atoning death.” (111)
 - “We are never to hesitate speaking the Gospel fully, purely, and freely for the fear that this precious message might be abused.” (112)

Tonight's Conclusion:

↑arise THE NICENE CREED:

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Closing Prayer...

- Faith, not ritual works, receives God's gifts.
- Dead in sin, God had made us alive in Christ.
- The Gospel gets the last word, since the Gospel converts and produces good works.
- ...through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lord's Prayer...

Words of Institution...

Distribution...

Dismissal...

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](#))
- Ash Wednesday is on February 22; please plan to join us at 11:00 a.m. or 7:00 p.m.