

## PASSIONATE FOR SOUND DOCTRINE Colossians 2:9-15

April 6, 2008; Pastor Tom Olson

### INTRODUCTION

Imagine you need to go to an important meeting in a town you never have been to. Just get in your car and go and keep driving until you get there...foolish... That is how some people try to get to heaven.

If we don't know the route, how will we get to our destination? Truth is important. A map is truth. It is important to the driver. The Bible is truth. Biblical doctrine is important. If we don't stand for something WE WILL FALL FOR ANYTHING. Martin Luther wanted people to study the Bible for themselves.

ALASKA: Naknek Community Lutheran Church—no one knew what the Lutheran church taught. They came from all backgrounds. How would I teach them?  
Confessions, catechism, creeds...  
Simple "Alaska style:"  
Word Alone  
Grace Alone  
Faith Alone

### I. THE WORD ALONE: JESUS CHRIST IS THE WORD OF GOD; THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD

Colossians 2:9-10 *For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, 10 and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;*

God's Word tells us that Jesus is Lord. God's Word tells us that in Jesus we are complete. God's Word about Jesus Christ "produces faith" and brings salvation:

Romans 1:16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes...*

Romans 10:17 *So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*

Coon Valley Lutheran Church—climb a stairway into the pulpit! Why do the old churches have high pulpits? Because the pioneers knew that faith came through the Word of God.

What is this "Gospel" that we preach? It is good news...we must never forget that...let's

review the message:

Without salvation we are lost but God loves us and has a wonderful plan for our lives. 1 John 3:1 *See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God.*

Jesus died on the cross as our substitute and shed His perfect blood as the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Romans 5:8 *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

Whoever repents and believes in Jesus has full forgiveness and the gift of everlasting life. Mark 1:15 *"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*

WE ARE LOVED BY GOD. John 3:16 *For God so loved the World that He gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*

NO OTHER "RELIGION" HAS GOOD NEWS THAT **GOD LOVES US!** Ask a Muslim or a Buddhist some time about the love of God. That concept is foreign to them. Try to find this in their books:

Jeremiah 31:3 *For long ago the Lord had said to Israel: "I have loved you, O my people, with an everlasting love..."*

The WORD ALONE about Jesus Christ is the power of God for salvation.

**A Lutheran is someone who uses the Bible to tell people about Jesus.**

## **II. GRACE ALONE: THE WORD OF GOD; THE SACRAMENTS**

Colossians 2:11-15 *and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; 12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, 14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.*

GRACE IS GOD'S FAVOR TOWARD US. God reaches out to us with the power of the cross to bring us to Christ and keep us in Christ. We are dead in our sins before Christ saves us and gives us spiritual life. A dead man contributes nothing.

Colossians 2:13 *And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,*

New member's class the pastor asked a candidate: *Did you contribute anything to your salvation? Man: Yes I did. Pastor: What did you do? Man: I did all the sinning and running away from God and Jesus did all the forgiving and saving and running after me.*

**BAPTISM:** verse 12—*in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; 12 having been buried with Him in baptism.*

Water baptism is one way that God reaches out to us with His grace.

PENTECOST SUNDAY: Acts 2:37-38

*Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" 38 And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 "For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself."*

If you have never been baptized with water, bring your household and God will touch you with his forgiveness and Holy Spirit as the verses tell us.

**HOLY COMMUNION:** God also strengthens the assurance that we are forgiven through the Lord's Supper.

1 Corinthians 11:23-31 *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 25 In the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ...28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him 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.*

The Lord's Supper is so powerful that that it is dangerous to take it in a wrong way. That is why we wait for our children to be instructed at an age of discernment. Christ gives us His holy body and blood in that faith building meal.

We call Baptism and Holy Communion:

Sacraments—because they have an outward sign and a promise attached to it.

Means of Grace—because God promises grace through them to those who believe.

**A Lutheran is someone who believes that you are saved by God's grace.**

Review our first two fundamental doctrines:

The Word Alone: God uses his written Word to bring us the good news of Jesus.

Grace Alone: God uses the Word and Baptism and Communion to create faith and sustain faith. God is the one seeking us, we are not the ones who seek God.

**III. FAITH ALONE:** How does this become personal? By Faith!

*Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, that no one should boast.*

Martin Luther, the young priest, could not understand how he could be saved. He knew all about Jesus and the cross but he didn't know how to receive Christ. He was a troubled soul until he read Romans 1:17b *"But the righteous man shall live by faith."*

When Luther realized that this salvation comes through simple TRUST in Christ, he "felt like he was born anew."

We call it JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

This faith in Christ according to Ephesians 2:8&9 is a GIFT OF GOD. God wants to give us faith. If we meditate on His Word and commune at His table our faith will be KEPT strong.

Many people are defeated because they think they have to drum up faith. To drum up faith is as foolish as trying to climb up to a cloud. Faith is not something we produce. **Faith is trust in God.**

One thing I learned during my winter with cancer is that faith is not something that convinces God to heal us. But **faith is simply the ability to trust whatever Christ chooses to do.** And that is different for each of us.

As one person reads the Word of God he may be given faith to trust Christ for a supernatural healing. But another person may be lead to verses that ask him to trust Christ for strength to endure a time of illness. Another person may be led to verses that urge him to trust the Lord's decision to allow him to die at a young age for higher purposes. For each person the circumstances are different: healing, coping, dying but faith is the same... IT IS THE ABILITY TO TRUST JESUS AND HIS SPECIFIC WORD TO YOU.

**A Lutheran is someone who believes that we are saved by faith in Christ and not by**

**our own good deeds or by a religious denomination.**

That takes us right back to the Word of God: the Bible and Jesus. The three fundamentals of sound doctrine are so important...don't forget them...judge everything by them.

The Word Alone

Grace Alone

Faith Alone

If we keep those three points straight we will be solid, balanced and protected from false teaching. These three points are unique to the Christian faith. No other religion has them... Christ, Grace and Faith.

So now you know the three basic foundational teachings of the Lutheran church. They can be summarized by two words: Trust God.

*Come every soul by sin oppressed there's mercy with the Lord. And He will surely give you rest by trusting in His Word. Only trust Him, Only Trust Him, Only trust Him now. He will save you, He will save you, He will save you now.*

*Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.* That is sound Lutheran doctrine!

Amen