LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH GARNER, NC 10/28/18

A Reminder of Grace

In the name…

Let us pray…

More than 501 years ago Christians were told what is meant to be a Christian or to be in God’s good graces so that they could be part of the life that followed because the life at their present time was not an easy one. They would be required to attend worship regularly. They would be required to give to the Church regularly. They may receive other penances to keep themselves right with God. They had to DO certain things to EARN life eternal with God and even with that, you could never be quite sure. Martin Luther bought into that during his early years also. Then he rediscovered the gospel much of it in letter to the Romans

We now, expeciallys as Lutheran know all about this. However, we sometimes still

Hear such statements, I live a good life. I follow the commandments. I lead

Bible studys I help lead worship., give to the poor help the needy. However, like

the people of Jesus time, Luther’s time, and now our times, we catch

ourselves saying similar things.

However, our reading this Reformation emphasize God’s even Jeremiah. God tells

how is going to give His people a new covenant. The old one which was

given when they broke out of Egypt, this new one was already a covenant of grace

all about God, what God would do not them He would forgive their iniquity and

remember their sin not more. That is huge because if you remember this

“chosen” people did not live up to the righteousness God expected.

Even the kings were less than just rulers. Yet God is saying all that is in the past. Oh no,, not even in the past, but obliterated. Out of sight out of mind. Israel’s sins were out of God’s sight. They needed a reminder of that. And so do we.

Then Israel had a few hundred years to forget this new covenant God had given His people. They had rules and laws for everything eating. Righteousness meant keeping all of them. We met the young man who asked Jesus what he needed to do to enter the kingdom and Jesus told, give up all he had. He could not do it.

In the gospel today we see there were Jews who believed in Him. They thought just their Judaism by the fact they were descendents of Abraham that made them free. They did not think they had anything to be set free from. Jesus directly indicts them. You have sinned and if you have sinned, you are a slave to sin. Through the Son they can be free indeed. Free of what they did not know they needed to be free of, their sin. And so Jesus reminded them of that and and we are reminded.

Like them, we too might think we got it made, because we have been Christian or Lutheran all our lives or maybe even recently changed our way. The Christians of Luther’s time in Germany knew no other way and when he rediscovered Romans he told his people of another way, the way of God’s grace. Luther recognized the law as necessary to keep order, and reading Romans the second use of the Law is that we would recognize our sin. And so that Law makes no distinction, that all have sinned and fallen short of God’s glory and so we are driven to the promise of Jesus Christ. And that makes Justification by Grace so much greater. That justification simply comes about by our faith in the One Who justifies.

We are reminded of that again and again in the lessons, an if w have not been reminded of that throughout the Church year then we must be on the day Grace was rediscovered. Reformation Sunday.

A man dies and goes to heaven or at least arrives at the pearly gates. Peter meets him there and says, “this is how it works, you need 100 points to get in. You can tell me all the good things you have done and I will give you a certain amount of points for each item depending on how good it was. When you reach hundred, you are in.

Okay I was married to the same woman for 50 years and never cheated on her, even in my heart. O that’s good Peter said, you get 3 points. 3 points only.

Well I attended worship regularly each Sunday and tithed and gave service to the ministry.

Excellent Peter said, 1 point.

I started a soup kitchen and worked in a homeless shelter for veterans.

Wonderful 2 more points Peter said.

2 points the man said, at this rate the only way I can get to heaven is by the Grace of God.

Come on in, Peter said. And the man walked quietly.

No boasting because Paul in Romans says our boasting is not because of works of the Law, but by Faith.

Our take away from today has to be we are “Justified by Faith through Grace” so we should not boast but praise God for His love.

In the name,,,