WE SHOULD FEAR, LOVE AND TRUST IN GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS

May 21, 2017 John 14:15

Dear friends in Christ, especially, Miranda and Shane.

This is a day you will never forget. You have been studying Luther’s Small Catechism now for two years and the day has finally arrived. This is one of the many high points you will experience in your life. But eventually you will get back to your routine in life.

The question that applies to each of us is this------Can I maintain this sense of excitement about my walking with the Lord for the rest of my life?

Life can get complicated, busy, filled with many other things that occupy my time. Will I be strong enough to keep the promise I will make today? Well, first of all, lets not focus on you. Let’s always keep the main thing the main thing.

And what is the main thing for any Christian? Our God. Jesus. Our one and only Savior from sin, death and the power of the devil.

The setting for our text is Maunday Thursday evening and Jesus is preparing His disciples for the ordeal ahead when Jesus will suffer and die. Among many other things He says to them: “If you love Me, you will keep My Commandments.”

There are 10 that God gave to us. The first is----Thou shalt have no other gods before Me. What does this mean? We should fear, love and trust in God above all things.

There is only One God and He it is who has saved us thru the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We know this, have learned it at home, in Sunday School and Confirmation and at church.

But, what sometimes happens is that ‘things’ get in the way. All the things that we want to do shove God out of our lives. And the more you skip church to do something that you want to do, the easier it becomes on your conscience. Before you know it, Sunday is not church day anymore; it becomes a day off; a day to rest; a day to go to the golf course, ball park, a cook out. You have left the faith and heaven is no longer in your future. You have become a heathen and hell will be your eternal home. This is, or course, a worse case scenario.

This is exactly what happened to the 12 tribes of Israel. They stopped worshipping the true God for gods of their own making. They forgot the God who had saved them and had promised them a fantastic future. To their eternal regret.

As Christians, God has promised us a fantastic, out-of-this-world home in heaven. Jesus said, “If you love Me…” Why would we not love Jesus? He has rescued us from eternal suffering in hell by shedding His holy blood at the whipping post and on Calvary. He rose from the grave on the third day, taking away the power of death. He said He is coming back one day to take all who love Him to a place He has prepared.

Like a Green Bay Packer running back, we have to keep our eyes on the goal. Our time on this earth is like a morning fog. Soon gone. The years fly by---years that God gives us to prepare for the trip of a lifetime----the one way trip to heaven.

For all those who fear, love and trust in God above all things.

Fear----We are in awe of our Mighty God who has created the universe. Who made everything we see from nothing, creating by saying; “let there be”. He made man from dust and woman from his rib. How awesome is all His creation.

Love----We love God because He is the Almighty Father who sent His only Son Jesus Christ to earth to pay the penalty, death, for our sin. Our sins are forgiven and eternal life is ours. We deserve to go to hell because we do not always obey God’s commandments. We are, by nature, sinful and unclean. But God loves us so much that He sent His Son to save all who would believe Jesus to be the promised Savior.

Trust----We trust what God says because God always keeps His word. We trust God when He says that the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. God promised a Savior in the days of Adam and Eve-----He came in the person of Jesus centuries later. He took care of the people of Israel on their journey to the promised land---water out of a rock, clothes that didn’t wear out for 40 years, delivering them from the army of Pharaoh at the Red Sea.

He promises to care for us on our journey to heaven thru His Word and Sacraments---keeping us in the faith so that we do not lose our reward. It is by the power of the Holy Spirit, given to you at your Baptism, that moves and motivates you to keep Sunday as Church day in your lives. The Holy Spirit reminds you to keep that which is of first importance in your life----love for God---of first importance. Over everything else.

God bless you both this day and always and may God also continue to bless us all with saving faith as we daily meet the many challenges of life that are also temptations that would replace something else where God should be.

Life here, important and enjoyable as it sometimes is, is only temporary. We all experience days of great happiness and days of great sorrow. But, as redeemed children of God, we can look forward to the fantastic, impossible to describe, never-ending joy that will be our heavenly home.

And right here, in God’s house, is where we prepare for the day of lift-off.

Can you imagine walking around heaven with your rejuvenated body? Being reunited with friends and relatives who have died in the faith? Can you imagine seeing God in all His radiance? Can you imagine an eternity where there is no devil to make life miserable? He and all his angels will be roasting in the lake of fire.

Until then, don’t forget Jesus, your best friend and only Savior. Remember that Sunday is the day Jesus wants to talk with you, keeping you ready for that greatest trip of your life---home to heaven. It could be soon or it could be after your 50th birthday---or sometime in the distant future. But, He promises to raise you and everyone else from the grave, and give to believers in Jesus---only believers----a glorified body fit for that new exciting home called heaven. God bless.