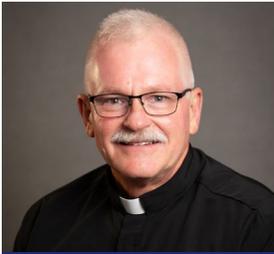


MONTLY DEVOTION



Rev. Michael Schotte
Second Vice-President, Region 3

March Devotion

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”
John 8:31-32

His Word Proclaimed, We Abide In It

“Abide in My Word,” Jesus urges us (*John 8:31*). We are to abide in His Word so that it will be properly proclaimed and heard by us for our life and salvation. At the heart of good and right proclamation and understanding of all of the words that Jesus speaks and are written for us is the proper distinction between Law and Gospel. This is not an outdated concept or only a doctrinal principle from days gone by. It is the way Scriptures—the Word of our Lord—must be understood.

Pages of material have been written, many lectures have been presented, and discussions still continue about what the right understand-

ing of Law and Gospel is. Still, this can be simply summarized. God’s Law holds us accountable before Him. It reveals to us that we are sinners in the presence of a holy God. The Law silences any of our attempts to justify ourselves or to gain His favor because of any good excuse we think we have or any noble deed we think we have done. The Law shows us our sins and what our sins have earned for us—that is, death and eternal condemnation. This can only crush our hearts and open our ears to hear Jesus’ call to us to repent (*Mark 1:14-15*).

“Abide in my Word,” Jesus urges us. Know, too, that He speaks to you the life-saving Gospel. The Gospel is all about the gift of eternal life and salvation that Jesus has earned for you, forgiving all of your sin by His death on a cross. The Gospel is that Jesus came to seek and to save us lost

sinners (*Luke 19:10*) by bearing our sin and its punishment for us. Now we have peace in Jesus, not as the world gives (*John 14:27*), but peace that surpasses all understanding (*Philippians 4:7*).

Is God’s Law, then without purpose or benefit? By no means! It rules our lives and guides us in the way we are to love and serve God by loving and serving our neighbor. The Ten Commandments abide as the beautiful summary of the way of life for believers in Jesus, God’s Son. Because Jesus lives, risen from the dead, we too even now live in this newness of life as we wait for our heavenly inheritance gained for us by Jesus.

Rev. Schotte also serves as pastor of St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Preston.

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