

Matthew 10:34-39

June 28, 2020

“We Need It”

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

4th Sunday af. Pentecost

Rev. Brent Hartwig

Grace, Mercy, and Peace be unto you from Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior and God our Heavenly Father. Amen! Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

[Hyperbole]

Maybe you have heard it said...

1. I've told you to clean your room a million times!
2. It was so cold, I saw polar bears wearing hats and jackets.
3. I am so hungry I could eat a horse.
4. I have a million things to do today.
5. We're so poor we don't have two cents to rub together.
6. That joke is so old, the last time I heard it I was riding a dinosaur.
7. You could have knocked me over with a feather.

Maybe you have heard it said, and maybe you have said it.

These are all examples of hyperbole.

hy·per·bo·le [hahy-pur-buh-lee]

Hyperbole comes from a Greek word meaning "excess,"

and it is a figure of speech that uses extreme exaggeration to...

make a point or show emphasis.

It's the exact opposite of understatement.

You see, hyperbole is used rhetorically to get a reaction.

For my son Noah, at the age of 3, it was the car wash.

“Never again.” He hated the noise of the drive through car wash so bad, he would say, *“Never ever again.”*

For my mother, it was medicine.

“Not in a million years. I will never take a pile of pills.”

For Jesus it was...

***“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth.
I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.”***

To be sure,

Christ DID bring “peace on earth” as the Christmas angels announced (Lk 2:14).

And just earlier in this very chapter,

Jesus sent his twelve apostles to bestow his “peace”

on the houses and individuals who received them and their words (Mt 10:13).

So what did Jesus really mean?

The translation might be clearer like this...

Jesus said: “I have not *only* come to bring peace, but *even more* a sword.

[*Picture*] The book of Revelation paints this picture of Jesus:

Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. ... And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. (Rev. 19:15a, 16)

Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword:

The idea isn't that Jesus holds a sword in his mouth like some Pirate of the Caribbean, NOR is this a picture of Jesus “spitting swords.”

This is a dramatic way of referring to the power of His Word.

Christ conquers by the power of His Word.

Five times... Five times in the Book Revelation,

John emphasizes that Jesus' sword comes out of His mouth.

[*Word of God*] The Word of God is powerful. It does what it says. You see...

Scripture wasn't written in a vacuum.

It comes from the Father.

It is inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Its central theme is the Person and work of Jesus Christ

[*Law and Gospel*] The Bible is a sword and it brings peace.

The Bible is Law and Gospel.

When I explain Law and Gospel, I use the two mountains.

At Mt. Sinai God gave us His Law in the 10 Commandments.

The Law tells us what we are to do.

It convicts us of our sin.

It is preached to unrepentant sinners.

And It serves as a guide for penitent believers.

At Mt. Calvary God gave us His Gospel. Jesus suffered as our redeemer.
The Gospel tells us what God has done.
It saves us.
It is preached to troubled sinners.
And It creates a living faith.

You see...

God's Word does not merely floating out there as an example or as a guide.
It seeks you out, and it drives into your deepest heart.

It calls out ... like a SOS distress call.

The distress call SOS is another way of understanding Law and Gospel.

SOS The Law Shows Our Sins! The Word of God kills you.	SOS The Gospel Shows Our Savior! Then brings life!
---	---

Yes, you have to die to sin.

You have to feel the cross utterly crush you,
make you despair of any attempt you might try to please God.

This is more than just a matter of your own feelings.

All our sins were put on Jesus and hung on a cross 2,000 years ago.
You participated in Christ's death *JUST AS MUCH* as you participated in Adam's fall.

You have a relationship with Christ and the cross.

That relationship will kill you, either in Baptism or at your death and judgment.

Yet, when Christ pours out His grace on you
through Baptism, Absolution, and the Lord's Supper,
that body, that blood,
that holy name,
that risen and exalted Lord makes you so alive that you can never die again.

Even if you depart your body,

God has a real and certain way of putting all of you back together
forever, whole, sinless and so full of joy and peace
that even the sad things of this life will become blessings.

Law and Gospel – God is active and at work.

This action works through the incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.

It goes beyond feeling good and right living to Jesus, the Source of all goodness and love. And He is there for you. That is why Law and Gospel shapes how we read and apply the Bible, and that is why we study Scripture. ***WE NEED IT!***

[***We Need It***] We need the Church community.
 We need the Word of God.
 We need Law and Gospel.

The Church is not intended to be a drive-through, touchless car wash, where we simply come to get ourselves cleaned up and do nothing more for anyone else.

The church is rather a full-service station. This is a full-service church where people come not merely to be served but to serve.

 Noah used to cry at the mention of a car wash.
 Now, Noah loves the car wash.

The Word of God is not to be left on a shelf to collect dust, but rather to collect our time as we spend reading it. It contains the very medicine we need for whatever is going on in our lives.

 My mom used to say she would never take daily medicine.
 Now, she willingly takes medicine, her pile of pills to keep her well.

When a Christian is killed by the sword, carries the cross, and suffers the loss of his former relationships and status – perhaps even giving up his bodily life (10:28) – because he clings in faith to Jesus, that believer will discover that he has found real life forever.

 We need the Church community.
 We need the Word of God.
 We need Law and Gospel.
 And we need Jesus!
 Yep, we need it! Amen!

As followers of Christ, “Keep loving one another earnestly
And show hospitality to one another without grumbling.” AMEN! (1 Pt 4:8-9)
