

Easter 6/Confirmation
May 9, 2010

Acts 14:8-18
426-599-597-596

"We Are Bringing You Good News!"

- I. The good news of the only true God.
- II. The good news of the only Savior from sin and death.

Dear Christian friends, and especially you the members of this year's confirmation class,

These verses are a good reminder of WHAT A BLESSING it is to **be a Christian**. We know and believe in the ONLY REAL God and Savior. These people in Lystra didn't have that blessing. Oh, they were VERY RELIGIOUS. They took their faith very seriously. They were SURE they were right in what they believed. But they were DEAD WRONG. The gods they trusted in were nothing. They were heading to hell and **didn't even realize** it. But now here was Paul telling them, **"We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God."**

Today we have the examination and confirmation of **these young Christians**. We rejoice that they are NOT JUST OUR children but more importantly that they are God's children **through faith** in Jesus. We **rejoice** that over the years God THROUGH His Word has confirmed and **strengthened** them in their Christian faith. **By the grace** of God they have heard and learned – they BELIEVE! – the **"good news"** of the gospel. With the examination they now confess their faith. Like Paul in Lystra they "BRING US GOOD NEWS" – the **good news** 1)of the only true God and 2)of the only Savior from sin and death.

I. The good news of the only true God.

Lystra was a town in **central Turkey**. It was a totally heathen city. Luke reports a **miracle** Paul did there. SIMPLY BY SAYING, **"Stand up on your feet"** Paul had healed a **"man who was crippled from birth and had never walked."** God was OBVIOUSLY working through Paul. But these people in Lystra THOUGHT PAUL and Barnabas **were gods** themselves. So they shouted, **"The gods have come down to us in human form!"**

HOW DO WE EVEN KNOW there is a God?

WHAT do those things tell us about God?

For us to really know God God MUST REVEAL Himself – God must tell us about Himself. God has done just that in the Bible.

WHAT IS the Bible?

The doctrine of INSPIRATION?

Because the Bible is God's Word IT IS?

Because the Bible is God's Word what are we NOT TO DO with it?

In the Bible God tells us that He is TRIUNE?

What are some of the OTHER ATTRIBUTES of God?

The **triune God** is the only real, true God. It DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE what God a person believes in. Paul told these people in Lystra to **"turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and the sea and everything in them."** Evolution is a LIE STRAIGHT from the devil's mouth.

What is the doctrine of CREATION?

We are not GLORIFIED ANIMALS. God gave us souls. God made Adam and Eve **"in His own image."**

What is GOD'S IMAGE?

Not only did God create this world He is still actively involved in it.

What is the doctrine of PRESERVATION?

How can God PROTECT us?

God also uses angels to take care of us. WHAT are angels?

We don't live in that **perfect world** that God had created. The Bible tells us **why**. Adam and Eve thought they KNEW BETTER than God. They **thought** they didn't have to obey God. **Rather** than LISTEN TO and TRUST God they followed the devil instead.

Who is the **devil**?

What is the devil OUT TO DO?

Sin is breaking any commandment of God. Those commandments make clear that GOD DECIDES what is **right** and wrong – not us or what others are doing or what FEELS RIGHT to us. God clearly defined right and wrong with us 10 **unchanging** commandments.

What are the TWO TYPES of sin?

Give me an EXAMPLE of each one.

There is also the truth of ORIGINAL SIN – that **ever since** Adam and Eve fell into sin we are all born sinful and totally corrupted **spiritually**.

What do we DESERVE because of our sins?

The law is one of the two chief doctrines or **teachings** of the Bible.

What are the TWO MAIN DOCTRINES of the Bible?

Give me THREE DIFFERENCES between them.

What are the THREE USES of the LAW?

What are the TWO PARTS of the Bible?

What is the MESSAGE of each part?

That message of the Savior is THE MAIN MESSAGE of the Bible. God gave us His Word that ***“we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing we may have life in His name.”*** That is the good news Paul brought to the people of Lystra. The same good news WE and **our children** have heard and **believe**. The good news...

II. Of the only Savior from sin and death.

How do we know Jesus is TRUE GOD?

What does the NAME Jesus mean?

INCARNATION?

VIRGIN BIRTH?

What two things did Jesus do to save us?

VICARIOUS ATONEMENT?

FOR WHOM did Jesus do that?

The Bible also explains Jesus' work by using the word JUSTIFY.

What does justify MEAN?

What is the doctrine of OBEJECTIVE justification?

Another way the Bible proclaims Jesus is the **only Savior** from sin and death is by calling Him our **Redeemer**.

WHAT does that word redeem mean?

What does it mean when we say Jesus **has redeemed** us...

From ALL SINS?

From DEATH?

From the POWER of the devil?

The Bible also teaches that Jesus is our **only Savior** by calling Him the Christ – the Messiah – the Anointed One. God the Father sent Jesus to be our...

PROPHET?

PRIEST?

KING?

Jesus is true God and true man in one Person. Yet Jesus didn't always look or act like God while here on earth. There was no halo around His head, etc. Jesus **"humbled Himself"** the Bible teaches.

Jesus' HUMILIATION?

EXALTATION?

Jesus' DESCENT into hell?

His RESURRECTION?

ASCENSION?

We don't save ourselves. We can't! We CAN'T STOP ourselves from dying and **ending up** in hell. We can't straighten things out with God. But Jesus has TAKEN CARE of **everything** for us. We are saved by faith in Jesus.

What does it mean to BELIEVE in Jesus?

Why does it TAKE THE HOLY SPIRIT to bring us to faith in Jesus?

WHO is the Holy Spirit?

We call the work of the Holy Spirit **sanctification** – to MAKE HOLY. The Holy Spirit **sanctifies us** – **makes us holy** – by bringing us to faith in Jesus and then also helping us live our faith each day – helping us live holy – GOD-PLEASING lives.

WHY do we want to live **God-pleasing** – **God-centered** lives?

What are GOOD WORKS?

WHAT MEANS does the Holy Spirit use to sanctify and **keep us** in the one true faith?

What does the word grace mean?

What is a SACRAMENT?

What is the sacrament of Holy BAPTISM?

What does the word baptize MEAN?

HOW do you baptize a person?

WHY do we baptize babies?

WHAT BLESSINGS did God give you when you were baptized?

HOW can water do that?

We are baptized only once but our baptism is something for us to LIVE AND ENJOY every day of our life.

What does Baptism MEAN in your everyday life?

What is the Sacrament of Holy COMMUNION?

HOW DO WE KNOW it really is Jesus' true body and blood?

We can't explain this. Holy Communion is a **miracle**. It doesn't make sense – but it's TRUE! Jesus' words are very clear and we simply take Jesus AT HIS WORD. The bread we EAT is Jesus' true body. The wine we drink IS Jesus' true blood.

WHAT BLESSINGS does Jesus' give us in Holy Communion?

I refuse to ask HOW OFTEN we should come to Communion. That's like asking how often I should **come to church** or **read** my Bible. If I think I DON'T NEED to **faithfully come** to church and **read** my Bible – if I **think** I don't need to GROW in my faith – that I don't need God's FORGIVENESS or God's HELP - then I have some REALLY BIG **spiritual** problems. When I understand WHAT Holy Communion **really is** and WHAT BLESSINGS Jesus has for me here – I will faithfully come to Communion.

Communion is a wonderful blessing from God. Yet like any other blessing it can BE ABUSED and **misused**. Then a person is actually sinning. So we are told to examine ourselves **before** we come to Communion.

HOW do you examine yourself?

Jesus is the only Savior from **sin** and **death**.

WHAT HAPPENS when a person dies?

WHO GOES to heaven/hell?

The Bible also teaches that Jesus will return in glory on the Last Day.

WHEN will that day be?

WHO will be raised from the dead?

HOW will people be judged?

HOW do we get ready for that day?

I have three more questions for all of you.

Do you UNDERSTAND that as you are confirmed you are making promises to God?

Do you UNDERSTAND WHAT you are **promising** God?

Are you making those promises BECAUSE YOU WANT to?

We thank God that He has made you and us Christians. We pray that God will continue to confirm and **strengthen** you and us in the true faith as we FAITHFULLY USE His Word and Sacraments. We pray that God will also use us to BRING this "**good news**" of Jesus to others. We pray that God will KEEP US FAITHFUL unto death that we may all receive the "**crown of life.**" Amen.

APOSTLES' CREED