

Concordia Lutheran Conference

Daily Devotions

By Carl M. Zorn

for the

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

- SUNDAY -

Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. – II Corinthians 11:28-29.

[Note: The word “worthy” in this devotion does not mean “deserving,” but rather “fit,” or “suitable”]

Do you note this earnest admonition of the Holy Ghost? You must examine yourself to see whether you are worthy to receive the body and the blood of Christ under the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper for the remission of sins. Who is worthy to do this? Fasting and bodily preparation, appearing with due modesty and reverence at the Lord's Table, this is, indeed, a fine outward training and a praiseworthy custom; but they are nothing but outward acts which even a hypocrite may perform. The right and true, in fact, the only worthiness consists in believing these words: "*Given and shed for you for the remission of sins.*" If you approach the Lord's Table regarding yourself a forlorn sinner, seeking forgiveness through Jesus Christ, and if you then rely on the words: "*Given and shed for you for the remission of sins,*" you are worthy and well prepared. But he that does not believe these words, or doubts them, is unworthy and unprepared. For when God, out of great mercy, gives us the body and blood of Christ and says: "*For you!*" namely, for the remission of sins, He wants us to believe this with a glad and grateful heart. Thus you see that partaking of the Lord's Supper worthily is not effected by any external preparation, nor by thinking pious thoughts or by doing various deeds of your own choice or making. Thank God that it is not so! But if you come as a poor, miserable sinner who heartily desires to obtain salvation through Christ, which salvation is offered in the Lord's Supper, then you are acceptable with God, the Merciful. Examine yourself with regard to this.

PRAYER. – O Lord Jesus, Thou callest sinners to the Supper which Thy grace has provided—such sinners as rely upon Thy gracious Word. Grant me grace always to approach Thy Table as a poor sinner, hungering after grace and trusting Thy Word which promises grace, and to receive the forgiveness offered me therein with a believing heart. Amen.

Christ says: Come, ye heavy-laden, I your weary hearts will gladden;
They that are yet strong and well, despise the best physician's skill

Couldst thou earn thine own salvation, useless were my death and passion;
This feast is not spread for thee, if thine own helper thou wilt be.

If thou this believest truly, and confession makest duly,
Thou a welcome guest art here, this heavenly food thy soul shall cheer.

Hymn 441, 5-7. (ELHB)

* Scripture reading for Sunday. Epistle: Ephesians 3:13-21 Gospel: Luke 7:11-17