

# Concordia Lutheran Conference

## Daily Devotions

By Carl M. Zorn

for the

### Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Trinity – Sunday –

*Not every one that saith unto Me, “Lord, Lord,” shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. —Matthew 7:21*

Luther once complained of the “great crowd which listens to God’s Word as though it were a mere trifle, and hear the preaching of the Word of God only from custom and at the end of the year know as little of it as at the beginning.” Luther here speaks of merely nominal Christians, who pay no real homage to their Creator and show a great lack of reverence for Him and for His Word.

Let us beware of nominal Christianity. Let us not overlook a danger to which we too are particularly exposed. Or is there no danger that the true doctrine (*orthodoxy*) which we have received be with us merely a matter of the memory and intellectual understanding and not a living power moving and changing the heart (James 1:22)? We have received the true doctrine [“*the faith once delivered to the saints*” – Jude 3] as our particular heritage. We know that in the true doctrine we have the true Christ and the true way to eternal life. But in the very manner of receiving the true doctrine freely through its preaching (Isaiah 55:1) a danger is lurking; for what is obtained at small cost is generally little appreciated. Those who have by God’s grace come to the knowledge of the truth and have had to fight (“*contend*” – Jude 3) to keep it realize its inestimable value, whereas with their children, who received it through them during days of peace and unity, it may be a dead treasure, little or not at all “*tasted*” – I Peter 2:3) and hence little appreciated. Do our souls also know the value of the treasure we have inherited? Woe indeed to the man who professes the Gospel-truth before men, but in his own heart does not value it, or whose own soul is indifferent to it and even loathes it!

Shall we be found as people knowing the truth but not loving it? God forbid! The Gospel-truth must not be a light in the understanding only; it must burn in the heart, enlightening the soul with the “*hope [that] maketh not ashamed*” (Romans 5:5). We must practice it in our daily lives. Deeds speak louder than words. Vain and idle is the profession that is not carried out in practice. “*For if any be a hearer of the Word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself and goeth his way and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was*” (James 1:23-24). O beware of such merely nominal Christianity!

**Prayer** — Grant, O Lord, that the precious Word that makes me Thy child by faith in Christ Jesus may ever be my comfort against Satan, sin, and death; and may I value it more highly than all worldly honor or temporal dignity. Cause me to conform my life to Thy precepts and finally to die a Christian death! Let me not only say with my mouth, “Lord, Lord;” but enable me to do Thy will from my whole heart, contending for the true Christian faith unto the end, that I may be both a hearer and a doer of the Word, sincerely confiding in Thy grace for Christ’s sake and manifesting forth that faith in a truly Christian life. Amen.

Jesus, Thou art mine forever, never suffer me to stray.  
Let me in my weakness never cast my priceless pearl away.  
Hymn 357, 5