

## Sermon notes for the Sunday Sexagesimae 2010

Isaiah 55: 10-11

Luke 8:4-8

Hebrews 4:12-13 “Resting in the Lord”

**“For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.**

**13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight.**

**Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”**

*Grace, Mercy and Peace from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*

### **Isaiah – the invisible effect**

God's Word goes out and accomplishes what He desires it to accomplish. Though we often do not see what its purpose is or the effect outwardly. As the rain, its need and affect are profound. But the change that does happen to us is not just internal but with God. Before we were seen as sinful before God, black because of our transgressions, but through the Word of God, through the Sacraments, through Confession and Absolution, we are washed clean. Last week we saw how Delia was baptised into the death of Jesus Christ, to begin a new life that was given to her through the washing away of her sins. God no longer looks at her as lost, but saved, one of His. And in the Book of Life, her name is up there with each and everyone of ours.

*How is God's Word having an effect on you, how visible is this effect?*

## **Luke – being right to be affected**

though God's Word is like water, it can do very little for us if we are in the wrong place, if we are between the thorns or on the rocks, or on the path where things are hard, the rain will begin and create growth, but faith will not grow.

***“15 But the seed on the good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.”***

Last week we heard how those who winners, those who run the race to get to the goal are those who do not just run for themselves but for Jesus Christ, who proclaim Him, so that they are not the only ones who finish. But that those who are winners are called overcomers. Today those same winners are given another name, those who “persevere”.

Again we are hearing that from our baptism it is not an easy ride, nor is it a certificate that you get once and then don't have to worry about again, but that it is a journey and often as Luther said a “daily battle” that we must wage against the world, the devil, and our sinful natures.

Just how do we wage a battle when we are tired, when we are struggling to cope, and feel so alone in this world? By resting in the Lord, by putting our faith again in the one who created us, who created in us faith. How do we cope by making sure we return to the one who gives us rest, in whose arms we can just rest. As we get to understand in Hebrews today, in the rest of the Lord we expose and prepare ourselves for the Word of God to grow in and through us. But without that rest, we often become hardened, or surrounded by thorns, trodden underfoot, and do not overcome the daily and continuous battle against the world, the devil, and our sinful natures.

*Are you truly hearing and retaining the Word of God, and is it giving you rest?*

## Hebrews – resting in the Grace of God

The people of Israel entered into Canaan, a rest after their years of struggle and travel in the desert. They entered into a rest that was temporal, and God offers us a similar rest in Him, but this rest is not temporal but eternal. To doubt the Lord's presence and His power in your life is to live a life that is not taking the time to be still in His presence and hear what He has to say. The people of Israel (Exodus 17) tested God (at Meribah and Massah) when they asked where He was in their suffering. That is why they remained in the desert for 40 years, so that that generation would not enter the promised land, the land referred to as “**the rest of the Lord.**” Psalm 95:11

We are always looking to understand God's will for us, how He wants us to live our lives for Him. And the text for today is no exception, it's all about the Sabbath rest, how we should not work on the Sabbath, and why.

You ask why we should rest on Sunday, why we should come to church, why we should seek our rest in the Lord? “**v11 Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.**” - referring to the people of Israel.

God's Word is a two-edged sword, it can either judge and punish, or it can forgive and bless. In our rest we are given that rest and forgiveness we always seek. So often all we seem to hear and feel is the judgement and punishment. We feel as if we have been in the desert for 40 years, as if God is not on our side.

We come and rest in the Lord because it is here that God has called us to be on the Sabbath, and it is here that God comes to us personally through Word and Sacrament. Through the Sacraments to cleanse us from our sins once again, to purify us, and through His Word to strengthen us, to divide the good from the bad, to encourage and strengthen us, and to send us into the world again

with renewed courage and strength to live our lives for another 6 days to His glory.

Our rest on the Sabbath is so that we do not have reason to doubt that God is there for us, that He cares for us and that He is with us, but that we might know just how present He is and how as we enter His rest in part today, just how great His eternal rest will be.

Amen

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*Are you finding rest in the Lord? Is your Sabbath(Sunday) a day of renewal in faith?*