

March 2019

Dear Friends,

“For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 3:3-14

In his letter to the Philippians, the Apostle Paul reminds us of what truly matters in this life. He warns us about finding confidence in our own strength, instead of what God has done for us in Christ. Paul would have had every reason to boast of his own heritage and religious piety, but when Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus, everything changed. His gaze is shifted away from self and toward the Cross of God’s Son.

This truth did not go unnoticed by Sir Isaac Watts the famous English hymn writer. In his hymn *“When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”*, Watts beautifully captures the true nature of repentance:

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

When God brings us to repentance, He strips away that which we value most, so that we may clearly see the gift He has given to us; the “Prince of Glory.” In the death and Resurrection of Jesus the Christ, we have been given the forgiveness of sins in His blood, life and salvation. God has brought us into a blessed union with His Son, which Paul describes as being *“...found in Him...”* It is God’s *“...love, so amazing, so Divine...”* that transforms our lives forever.

May God grant us grace to celebrate the victory of the finished work of Jesus Christ this Lenten season as you survey His wondrous Cross.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Chuck Bylkas

“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” Galatians 6:14



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Several years ago, the Seminary board of directors established the Inter-Lutheran Seminary Endowment Fund. Funds contributed to the endowment are not used for current day to day operations. Only the annual earnings of the endowment will be used for the seminary's needs thereby ensuring the continued existence of this funding source. This is the preferred method used by many non-profit entities, especially ongoing religiously focused organizations such as seminaries.

While this is an excellent strategy, it has proven a challenge for us to actually meet the minimum funding requirements. Until now, the fund has existed but remained unfunded. By the Lord's grace we have been blessed with a large contribution to fund the Inter-Lutheran Seminary Endowment Fund. We would love to build on this generous contribution to grow our endowment into a major source of ongoing seminary support.

Although the seminary still needs the financial ongoing regular contributions of our supporters, please consider the endowment fund for your planned giving needs. The seminary has chosen the InFaith Community Endowment Fund (the renamed Lutheran Brotherhood Foundation) to administer our endowment fund. They will provide experienced legal advice to help guide you with any contribution questions done through estate planning in addition to lump sum contributions, IRAs, property and securities. For more additional information, please contact Kirk Otto, Jr. at (715) 294-4343 or Cheryl Hendrickson at (906) 482-3337.