

“For as the rain and snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.” Isaiah 55:10, 11. (NRSV)

“Jesus says, ‘See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.’” Matthew 10:16. (NRSV)

Dear Christian friends,

We live in the era of social media and global information/communication. The means by which we can be contacted and from whom are myriad: phone land-line, cell phone, traditional mail, email, Facebook, Tiktok, What’sUp, etc, etc. We can rejoice at how easy it is to contact family and friends – whether they live across the street, across the continent or even on another continent – and the depth to which we can see and hear them. In seconds we can be connected and share our news of joy or sorrow. We can video conference through numerous programs. Even whole Church conventions can be hosted on-line. Other people can contact us also. I receive e-mail notices or requests from people living as near as Calgary or from the opposite side of the globe. People share stories of their lives on Facebook. Colleagues network through Linked-In. I often google topics of interest or need. These technologies are wonderful arts in our lives as we long to communicate with people. They give us access to information for every subject human beings can know.

Unfortunately, as every advantage comes to us from our technology there is someone waiting to use it to exploit us. The more advanced and sophisticated the technology becomes, the more sophisticated the use of that technology by scammers becomes. We grumble about those pesky telemarketers who telephone us. Most people on e-mail have been contacted with a bogus “friend/relative who is in dire straits in a foreign country and need money electronically transferred to them.” Our mail boxes get jammed with junk mail. Rumors and lies spread like wildfire across all forms of communication. People get lured (even terrorized) into releasing personal information or transferring large sums of money all for naught.

The tragic personal stories of being cheated, swindled and coerced by fraudsters are disheartening. They remind us always that we need to be “wise as serpents and innocent as doves” when dealing with any communication other than face-to-face. Some people have experienced the scam where another person’s voice and image are matched via AI to present a real challenge to know the truth from the fraud. I find myself sadly having to be more leary or pessimistic about the truth of an appeal than accepting it at face-value. This is the reality where SIN is present and at force.

God longs to communicate with us also. As the scripture from Isaiah reminds us God’s word and message goes out with true, godly purpose and does not return to God void of its purpose. The message that comes to us through Jesus as the Christ is God’s eternal love and the purity of his being and presence in our lives. These are messages of truth and God, the Eternal Word, promises to remain with us throughout all times of our lives.

As we enter into our summer recess there is a message that can be trusted and constantly renew us in the divine gifts of faith, hope and love: God’s redeeming love in Jesus as the Christ told in the Holy Scripture. Watch expectantly for that daily note from God that he longs to share. Rest secure in his holiness and righteousness. Blessed summer renewal.

In Christ forever, Pastor Kevin.