

Tuesday Devotional

June 9th, 2020

Today's devotional is an article I found on <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/word/> concerning the preached Word of God. Since our study has been focused on the Word of God and how it encourages our growth in grace, I thought this article was very appropriate. I hope this encourages you.

By the Word

“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”

- Romans 10:17

“We begin our final study on the biblical doctrine of faith with a return to the Westminster Confession of Faith. Yesterday we used the first half of 14.1 as a springboard to discuss the gracious character of faith. The second part of this important summary tells us that faith “is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word: by which also, and by the administration of the sacraments, and prayer, it is increased and strengthened.”

This statement points to Scripture as the means by which the Lord usually works to bring us to faith. As we have seen, it is God's predestinating grace that leads us to believe in the first place (Eph. 1:3–10; 2:1–10), and He ordinarily works through the preaching of the Gospel to call us to faith. As Paul says in today's passage: “Faith comes from hearing” and “hearing through the word of Christ” (Rom. 10:17). God is pleased to save His elect “through the folly of what we preach” (1 Cor. 1:21), namely, “Christ crucified,” foreshadowed in the Old Testament and made plain in the New Testament (vv. 22–24). When the good news is proclaimed, the Holy Spirit quickens the heart and illumines the mind so that the people of God will trust and obey the Savior (Ps. 119:18; 2 Peter 1:21).

Therefore, the wise person will be engaged in every opportunity possible to hear the Word. Doubts may at times creep in to our lives, but if through our hearing of the Word in corporate worship we are made strong by the power of God's Spirit, we will not neglect this vital aspect of following Christ. In like manner, God promised to use preaching to call His people, so we must not neglect the opportunities to foster occasions where non-believers hear the Gospel. The hearing of the Gospel therefore serves this twofold purpose: to call His people to trust in the risen Savior and to strengthen the faith of those who already believe. As a living and active sword (Heb. 4:12–13), Scripture clarifies our minds and reminds us of the Lord's goodness, especially in times of doubt. When the apostles needed their faith strengthened, they asked for Jesus to teach them (Luke 17:5–6). May we also look to His teachings in the Bible to fortify our assurance.

If you fear your attempts to share the Gospel are without power, remember that God will indeed send His Spirit to empower His Word, no matter how feeble the preacher. As you study Scripture, ask Him to illumine their meaning, and when you doubt, devour His teachings all the more intently. If you faithfully attend Lord's Day services, be encouraged that the Spirit uses the sermon, the sacraments, songs, and prayer to strengthen your faith.”

Passages for Further Study: Isa. 55:10–11, Luke 19:1–10, John 16, Rom. 16:25–27