

WEEKLY DEVOTION – Tuesday, August 17, 2021
Pastor Bruce Kischnick, Grace Lutheran Church, New Albany, IN

“Rain on Water”

READING: Ephesians 1:3-8 – Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will – to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.

On several occasions in the past four or five weeks I have had to run in the rain. I don’t really mind that in the late spring and through all of the summer. It’s rather refreshing! What’s on my mind today though are the three times I have seen someone watering their lawn while the rain was pouring down. On one corner that I run around every time I run the people there last year installed an automatic irrigation system. I’m sure it’s set on a timer with scheduled soaks for a preset amount of time. The system does not know or care that the rains are pouring down. It just does what it is programmed to do: it waters the lawn.

Church on the Rock has a similar system with a similar result. Whether it’s sunny out or raining cats and dogs, the sprinklers come on when the program says they’re to come on. Whenever I witness these things, I shake my head and think, “What a waste of water!” I know the extra water will just run off and go into the gutter and down the storm drains, but the owners are going to have to pay for the water AND in our area the New Albany Municipal Utilities sewage bill. Seems like a waste, right?

In our text for today St. Paul uses the word “lavished” when talking about the grace of God in Christ Jesus. It’s the same word St. John uses in I John 3. Both of the Evangelists use that word because they see that God has poured out on his people such an abundance of spiritual blessing and spiritual gifts that it seems extravagant and costly – and it is!

God could certainly have done less for us, right? He could have made us jump through certain hoops and required of us certain sacrifices. Most of the pagan religions of the world have such requirements. He could have offered us a half-measure, something short of heaven and not so eternal. He could have abandoned humanity altogether and started over on some other planet in some other corner of the universe. But, he didn’t. That’s not his way. God is love, and in his love for his creatures, he could not hold back. He could not abandon us nor give us less than his absolute best. He sent to us his very own Son, knowing what the world would do to him, say of him, think of him. He poured his grace out upon us and it will never be any different.

St. Paul says that God did all of this “according to his pleasure and will”. God would not have it any other way. He created us, then redeemed us, and now sanctifies us in Christ Jesus in order that we “may be his own and live under him in his kingdom and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness.” He pours this out upon us, having paid a great price for us. It’s more than we deserve. It’s more than He had to do. It’s more than we can ever understand or repay. He simply wants us to respond to his love with our love for him. It’s like rain on top of watering – more than is needed, but it allows us to flourish and produce rich and abundant fruit, all for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

PRAYER:

ANNOUNCEMENT(S):

- 1) Our celebration of Pastor Woods' 25th Anniversary of his Ordination is planned for August 22 in late service and in the dinner to follow the service. Watch for details that should have come to you on a postcard. Be sure to respond to it. What a blessing he has been to us!**
- 2) GRACE-on-WEDNESDAY starts tomorrow with supper at 5:30 and classes for kids and adults from 6:00-7:30. Come on over!**