

Pastor Brian's  
Mid Week Message  
Wednesday March 13, 2019

**I GET TO GO TO CHURCH!**

Kay and I were driving down to TLC yesterday...left home about 8:30am...and as we pulled on to Center Road east of Venice I noticed that the parking lot of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church was packed full of cars. Sure enough, as we passed their sign there was listed "Daily Mass 8:00am". I had to wonder, how many of us Lutherans would show up if we offered a daily morning worship service? Rest assured that I am not planning on introducing and initiating this practice, but it did get me to thinking. "The Roman Catholic Church seems to have it going on!" That may or may not be the case though. Part of the Roman Catholic doctrine of justification is that we participate in our salvation through good works. It boils down to Jesus, and His sacrifice, plus our sacrifice of works working together to bring about our access to God's heavenly Kingdom. These good works include attendance at Mass. So are the folks that are attending these daily Masses there to earn points in the quest for heaven or are they there to spend time in the presence of the King; the Creator, Sustainer and the Redeemer of the universe. I don't know the answer to that question and that is not the intent of this paragraph. What I'm getting at is our attitude as we come into the presence of God. Is it coerced...do we come because we feel we have to, through a sense of obligation? Do we come thinking we can somehow earn God's approval, or do we come because we WANT to; want to take time to retreat from this fallen world and be in the presence of our God experiencing His peace, comfort, hope and joy. The secular world by and large views this type of activity (worship) a waste of time, they see no benefit in it, but we know better. We have the opportunity to "waste time" with the King of kings and Lord of lords, who invites us into His presence to receive His gifts of forgiveness and eternal life in Christ Jesus every time we gather for worship. We might see this as "A Royal Waste of Time" ...which is the title of a wonderful book on worship from a Lutheran perspective written by Marva Dawn. You might look for it online, especially if you suffer from insomnia as it's pretty deep. As I look forward to this evening, and the Lenten Worship that begins at 6:00pm, here is another invitation from Jesus to come to Him, to come into His presence and receive from Him what He so wants to give us; forgiveness of our sins and the assurance that we are His own, eternally destined for heaven. As I have said many times, and I will continue to beat this drum often, we don't HAVE TO go to church. We GET TO go to church! God gives us this blessing of worship and invites us to participate; to royally waste time with Him, our loving King.