



What do we have to offer?

From time to time I switch things up and throw out a "Question *FROM* Pastor." The above question is one of those.

I asked, "*What do we* (as Christians) have to offer?" at the end of a couple of recent studies. The first was a study on the beliefs of Mormons. In that study we found that Mormons use a lot of the same terms we use (God the Father, Jesus, Heaven, Grace) but they define those familiar terms with very unfamiliar (and unbiblical) meanings. But the bottom line on Mormonism - as recounted by folks who have left the Mormon church - is the teaching that our ultimate salvation does *not* rest on Jesus but rather on things we do for the church and for God. With the resulting uncertainty and great anxiety of "Never knowing if you have done enough."

What *do* we as Christians have to offer someone in that situation?

In a word: Peace. The peace that comes from the "blessed assurance" of eternal life. With Christianity there's no "cross your fingers and hope against hope that God is in a good mood on the day you die!" We have the blessed assurance of a salvation that rests not on what we have done for God, but on what God has done for us in the person of His Son Jesus.

As I've said many times, if I've come to my last breath and my two options are to 1) trust in what I did for God OR 2) trust in what God did for me through Jesus.... that has to be the biggest "No-Brainer," in all of history! There is no way that I'm going to place my trust in what I have done, because I know how totally imperfect I am. Thank God we are not stuck with that "trusting in what I have done" choice. We have the peace of knowing that what Jesus did for us on the cross was full, complete and perfect payment for all of our sins. It's all on Him - literally!

The second time I asked "*What do we* (as Christians) *have to offer here?*" was after we watched a video where people were being interviewed and were asked lots of questions about spiritual things. Their answers were "all over the board" except in response to this one question, "*Are you fearful of the future?*" To a person, their answers were all in the affirmative, "Yes," "Absolutely," "Terrified," "Of course," "Very much so!" And who can blame them. It seems our world is going from bad to worse daily.

So, what **DO** we as Christians have to offer someone who is fearful of the future? Fearful for their lives. Fearful for the lives of their kids and grandkids. Fearful for humanity as a whole?

In a word (again) Peace. Peace that comes from knowing (as one of our Today's Light reading summaries said,) "*We don't know what the future holds, BUT we do know Who holds the future.*" And, of course, that One who holds the future died and rose so we could spend that future with Him for, well, for eternity! No matter what happens in the future here on earth, everyone who trusts in Jesus can have the peace of knowing an eternal future where nothing bad ever happens again. Ever.

Is there someone you know who needs that peace right now? Invite them to join you to find it in Jesus at one of our Holy Week services and on Easter Sunday.

Thanks for asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net