

Does the World take God seriously? Definitely not. Let me give you an example. God says, Love your neighbor as yourself. The world calls that stupid and therefore God stupid. The world says you need to learn to love yourself and only then can you love someone else. The world calls God stupid—look at how they view his word—not the word of God—just the word of men. They say He doesn't really mean what he says. The world calls God ignorant and unloving. This shouldn't surprise us since that is what Satan said in the Garden of Eden to Adam and Eve. The world calls God weak. They say that God could possibly have made the world in six-24 hour days. The world calls God a liar. They say his word is full of contradictions. They say, "he says he is loving, but his word says something else. The world does not take God seriously. They deny his existence. The world thinks that they are god and that they are in control. The world does not take God seriously.

Do we take God seriously? I don't like to say it but we don't always take God seriously. God says, "Love your neighbor," but that isn't always that easy, is it? God says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." But we spend more time in fantasy and fiction books or in movie theaters than reading the living word of God. God says, "Faith comes from hearing the message and the message is heard through the word of Christ." Yet again and again we make excuses for a son or daughter or grand-daughter. We know they are not in the word of God, but we say and try to convince ourselves they are still a believer, even though we know they are not in the word of God. There is no faith apart from God's Word. God says, "Mark and avoid those who teach contrary to the Word of God." Yet so often we look at other churches that teach things contrary to God's Word and think those small differences aren't so important. If they are not important, then God is a liar. How often don't we treat the devil not as a roaring lion seeking to devour us, but rather as a nice little kitty?

How many times have we acted like God is blind? He doesn't see my sin. How many times have we acted like God is deaf? He doesn't hear my hate or anger. Or my sin isn't really all that bad. Do we take God seriously? Often times, no.

God is serious. He is a judge. He is not some senile Santa Claus figure. He is omnipresent. He is holy. He is all-powerful. He hears all. He sees all. He knows all. He means what he says. His Word is true.

Take God seriously for God is serious about sin. The wages of sin is death—not a slap on the wrist. Not just a stern look. Not just a shaking of the head. Hell is real. It is a place of torment. It is the final destination of sinners.

When we take God seriously, his Word leads us to understand this about ourselves. Each of us must understand this. I stand naked before God all alone sinful and unclean. I stand before the holy God who is angry with the wicked every day. I stand as one whose righteousness is as filthy rags. My problem is not that I have done this or that wrong; all that I have done is wrong. I have not done even one perfect thing. I can therefore find in the law not one thing that will help me or comfort me before God. My guilt is not relative. My need is not partial. My ruin is not by a degree. There is no escape. My guilt is 100% my own. My need is absolute. My ruin is total. If I deny it, I call God a liar. If I try to minimize it, I am just hiding from reality and thus from God, refusing to take God or my condition seriously.

God is serious about sin and he is serious about his love for us. Just as the need in me is total, so the solution to that need is total in Jesus, his Son. Just as the guilt in me is all my own, so the removal of guilt must be accomplished by another and righteousness won by another, his Son. Just as the curse of death and hell is totally mine, so the total complete redemption needed to be accomplished by another in my place.

God is serious about his love for us. Where do we learn about this? Here in God's Word and nowhere else. Here at Crown of Life from God's called messenger to you. God is serious about saving us. From depths of despair because of our sin, God raises us up to the joys of heaven. He didn't send a flunky. He came himself. No second rate salvation. God the Son took on human flesh and blood. Perfect and holy in every way, Jesus fulfilled the law in our place. Perfect and holy, Jesus gave his life on the cross to pay the full price or death that God demanded for sin. Total redemption. Complete salvation. It is finished. The whole world is reconciled. And Jesus, the risen Savior, who paid the penalty of our sin now pleads as our defense attorney. He pleads our case and he pleads it perfectly. Sin had been paid for in full. And the heavenly Father listens and agrees for the Son accomplished his good will.

God loves you so much he didn't just give his son for you. He did not spare his Son for you. So great is our guilt. So great is God's love. Our Salvation cost God his son and he gave him willingly. And Jesus won our salvation for us willingly. And through this God-breathed Word the Holy Spirit brings us to faith gladly. God wants all men to be saved.

Take God seriously and you will be in this useful word. This word teaches the only right way to heaven-faith in Jesus. This word rebukes and corrects when we sin. This word trains us to live for him who died for us.

This word equips us to serve the Almighty for eternity. Cherish this Word. Sunday School/Lutheran Elementary School/Catechism class/Bible Class, MLS.

Take God seriously and find great certainty. The wages of sin is death—true, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is by grace you have been saved, not of yourselves—it is a gift of God, not by works so that no one can boast. Can the person who tries to work himself to heaven be certain that he will get there? Never. Can the person who relies on a personal decision for Christ ever be certain that he will get to heaven? Never. But you and I who trust in God for salvation can be certain for the Almighty, all-merciful, faithful, gracious, loving God has done everything to save us so that we can have great certainty.

And when we struggle with doubts, go back to the Word and hear about God's love for you and then come here to the altar of our Lord and in this Supper remember that Jesus gave his body and blood for you, taste God's love for you, and hear his Word: Your sins are forgiven. Go in peace and joy, you are a child of God and an heir of heaven. Take God seriously and find great certainty. Amen.