

## **The Sermon: Kindertag 2009**

*30 August.... 10:30 a.m.*

Hello my name is William Crandall and I attend St Catharine's Church and I am the Guest Preacher today.

I believe that before every serious discussion a joke should be told. A man went out to buy wrapping paper for Christmas for his kids. It's late and he grabs some discount paper without looking at it. When it gets home he realizes the paper says Happy Birthday on it. He doesn't want to return it so instead under all the Happy Birthday he wrote Jesus, the perfect Christmas paper.

Well now we get to talk about God.

The story revolves around Jesus as he prepares to eat some food. In the typical Jewish customs you are supposed to wash your hands before you eat. Jesus did not do this and the Pharisees approached him on this. They questioned why Jesus did this, as it was completely out of the ordinary especially for a holy man, they believed if you did not wash your hands before you ate you would defile your body. They asked him if he was worried about contaminating his body by what he ate, that God would be displeased by not washing his hands before a meal. If this was the case God would be happy with only very few people. But Jesus showed them the error of their ways, and rebuked them and told them the truth. It's what you do that determines if God loves you, not what you eat, or how dirty it is.

When I first read this Gospel lesson I thought, WOW, this is pretty easy to explain, it's basically self explanatory on its own. In this lesson Jesus basically outlines exactly what we should and shouldn't do. Nothing to read in between the lines of and no hidden meaning to divulge. It is straight to the point and simple, the best kind of gospel, and sermon. But appearances can be deceiving. In reality this may be one of the harder lessons that a Christian must learn. It's more of a warning than a lesson. So much of what happens today in religion is, do what you want and if you apologize, you will be forgiven with no punishment and no questions asked. But that is not necessarily true. I believe that this passage serves as a warning to us all.

This passage tells us exactly what God DOES NOT want to see. Sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. These are the things all of us are guilty of, and these are also the things that separate us from God. If we commit these transgressions enough, or without repentance then we could easily fall from God's favor. Now in no way am I saying that we all have fallen from God's grace, instead these are the things that COULD result in punishment. But that's never what Christians want to hear, or think about: Eternal punishment, Hell, a place of untold pain and suffering. But it is a thought, a place that must be considered. The idea of falling from God's grace is a scary thought, one that scares even me. But rest assured. We need not worry. Because Jesus gave himself on the cross, we are saved. Without him we are not better than the Pharisees. But because he gave himself for us, we can enjoy eternal life. We will still make it into heaven and that is a warm, comforting, and TRUE thought for us all.

*Will Crandall*