

October's Devotional Study: How Sweet the Sound of Proclamation

**“Sing to the LORD, all the earth;
proclaim his salvation day after day.” —1 Chronicles 16:23**

How Sweet the Sound of Proclamation, and how sweet the sound...of those who proclaim His salvation...day after day...after day...

I wonder if you remember some of your early days of learning about Jesus. Perhaps it was at home, around the dinner table reading “Little Visits with God,” or “My Devotions.” Perhaps it was in a Lutheran Day School or Confirmation Class. Maybe your *early learning* about Jesus was actually in an adult study or a recent Bethany 101 class with Pastor K or Pastor M. Or perhaps, like me, some of your earliest memories of Jesus are tied to a favorite Sunday School teacher like the one I had when I was four years old.

My four year-old Sunday School teacher, Mrs. Schilling, was a wonderful lady. She walked with Jesus, and she proclaimed His salvation in word and in deed. While I honestly don't remember any of the actual Bible lessons she taught our class, I do remember our trip to the church one day when she showed us how she changed the candle in the “eternal” flame. It was there in the chancel of First Lutheran Church, Temple City, that Mrs. Schilling proclaimed God's salvation by reminding us of His eternal and abiding presence. Oh to be sure, she didn't use such big words as “abiding” or even “presence” (probably realizing that 4 year olds would think of “presents”=gifts), but somehow, by the power of God's Holy Spirit, she helped to lay a foundation for our life-long understanding of Jesus' words, “Lo, I am with you always.”

As I think back to that event, and many more which followed with other teachers in the faith, I am thankful that God's good news of salvation was proclaimed to me over and over again...day after day. Some days, I enjoyed hearing of His salvific acts. Other days, I may not have been overly zealous or engaged in what I was hearing, but I know now that I needed to hear it, whether I realized it or not. As preparation for things to come, as a lens with which to view the past or anticipate the future, I needed (and still need to hear) God's words of salvation on a regular basis. Every time I hear them, I learn something new. Every hearing provides a new layer of meaning. And every time I am privileged to proclaim them here at Bethany, the Lord engraves them on my heart and mind in yet a new and different way.

I suppose that is why an Old Testament teacher once said that the reason we talk about God's Word so much—the reason we engrave His Word on our own hearts and on the hearts of our children (see *Deuteronomy 6:5-9*), is so that when our hearts are broken, the Word of God might fall in to bring life and hope and health and healing: Day after day...after day...

O Lord, today we thank You for the many dear saints of today and those of yesteryear: teachers, pastors and friends You've placed in our lives. Thank You for using them to engrave Your Word upon our hearts. May we follow in their footsteps and continue to proclaim Your salvation, as we lead others to You.

Day after day...after day...

+ Soli Deo Gloria +

—Dr. Carol McDaniel