

# Make Church a Part of Your Life

## WEEKLY SERMONETTE



### "Listen to the Word"

By Pastor Rick Rostek, Immanuel Lutheran Church

"For 23 years...I have spoken persistently to you, but you have not listened" (Jeremiah 25:13, ESV). It wasn't simply that the people of Israel weren't listening to Jeremiah, they weren't listening to God. It was God who sent Jeremiah to bring His Word to the people. Therefore, they were rejecting God's Word. Instead, they served other gods and worshipped the works of their hands.

Because Jeremiah told the people that God was going to leave Jerusalem in ruins because of their disobedience, the Israelites were ready to put Jeremiah to death. It seems what they say is true: the truth hurts.

The truth of God's Word can hurt. If we examine our lives in light of the Ten Commandments, we can easily see how we fall short of God's desire for our lives. Yet, we will often fight back if confronted about our sinfulness, criticizing

the messenger rather than listening to God's Word. Time and again, however, Scripture shows us our sinfulness and how much we need forgiveness.

Thankfully, God's Word also provides a solution. Jeremiah, even as the

people planned his execution, spoke a word of hope: "Now, therefore, mend your ways and your deeds, and obey the voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will relent of the disaster" (Jeremiah 26:13, ESV). Sadly, the people of

Jeremiah's time did not listen, and Jerusalem fell to Babylon.

From God's Word we find the solution to the problem of sin: Jesus Christ. Listening to God's Word will certainly show our sinfulness. But listening to God's Word also shows us how Jesus has fixed this problem by His death on the cross. The events of that Good Friday so many years ago still stand: Jesus Christ is our forgiveness.

As Good Friday and Easter approach, now is a good time to listen again to God's Word. It might not always be easy to hear, but it prepares us for the Good News of God's Word: Jesus Christ has given His life so that we can have forgiveness and be reconciled to God. We need not suffer as the Israelites of Jeremiah's time did. Listen to the Word. Put your faith in Jesus. He will lead you to the eternal Jerusalem that will never fall.

**Who Should Worship**

On a church bulletin board a sign was posted: "Do come in-trespassers will be forgiven". Has there ever been a time that you felt unworthy of God? If the answer is "yes", it's not surprising; God's Word tells us that we all have sinned. But, through divine grace, we are all loved and welcomed equally. God's house is not a gallery for the display of perfection but a school for the education of the imperfect. Who should worship? All of us...regularly...in our local house of worship.

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Weekly Scripture Reading
John 14:1-14
John 14:15-31
John 15:1-17
Psalms 79
Psalms 88
Psalms 89:1-18
Psalms 89:19-52

Scriptures Selected by the American Bible Society

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