

5/15/18

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Christian musicians Keith Getty and Stuart Townend wrote a hymn called *The Power of the Cross*. The cross they are referring to is the most famous one in history, the one on which Jesus of Nazareth was crucified some 2,000 years ago. On this day, Good Friday, Christians around the globe gather to commemorate that event.

Roman crosses and the process of crucifixion are rightly described as powerful. The power to humiliate. The power to punish. The power to wound. The power to make grown men, even the most hardened criminals, cry out in pain. The power to kill, and that in a most horrific way. That power was certainly at work at the cross of Jesus.

However, Getty, Townend, and Christians who commemorate Good Friday understand something far different, far deeper, and far more beautiful when they talk about the power of Jesus' cross. They are talking about the power of God at work in that crucifixion, accomplishing something that nobody else on earth could possibly do. They are talking of the power of Jesus' death to wipe out guilt and sin and condemnation before the holy God.

Ponder the cross of Jesus in that same way. What seems foolish and weak to this world and to our human reason, God tells us is his most wonderful act of gracious wisdom and power. At the cross of Jesus, we see a man, who is also God, carrying the entire load of sinfulness and sin racked up by this world in rebellion against their Creator. At the cross of Jesus, we see the God-man completing his work as Savior of sinners, paying the penalty that sin deserves from the perfectly just Judge. At the cross of Jesus, we hear the powerful cry of Jesus, "It is finished!" He shouts for the world to hear that he accomplished what he was sent to do.

Your sins, my sins, the world's sins are powerful...powerful enough to separate us from God and his love. But the power of Jesus' cross and the forgiveness he earned there is more

powerful by far. In his cross you are saved. In his cross you are forgiven. In his cross you are reunited with your heavenly Father. In his cross you have the ultimate proof that God loves you with an unfailing and unflinching, everlasting love. Find your power for living and your peace in dying just there, at the powerful cross of Jesus.

The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 1 Corinthians 1:18

Prayer: *By your death on the cross, dear Jesus, you suffered the separation from God that I deserve for my sin. My heart is filled with the peace of forgiveness by the power of your cross. Strengthen my faith in you, my Savior, and empower me to live for you. Amen.*

(WELS E-Devotion, adapted)

...See you in worship.

Keep looking up because the Lord is always looking down – Psalm 121

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