

8/2/18

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Nikita Khrushchev, the leader of the Soviet Union in the earlier 1960's, declared in regard to Yuri Gagarin, the Soviet cosmonaut who was first human to journey into outer space, "Gagarin flew into space, but didn't see any god there."

No matter how high we go, we will not find God. No matter how deeply we delve into the mystery of the human psyche or dig into the wonders of particle physics, we will not find God.

Yet he is not far from any of us. *The word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it. Deuteronomy 30:14*

Where do we find him? He reveals himself in his word. "The word is very near you." It is no farther away than the Bible.

How does his word come into our hearts? As it is spoken and read. Notice how the passage lists the mouth before the heart. We don't find God by delving into our hearts. Rather, he makes himself known as our mouths read his word. That's how the Holy Spirit opens our minds to understand and writes his word on our hearts.

What does the Spirit teach us through the word? First, no matter how good we are, our hearts have failed to obey our God. We have failed to truly love our neighbor as ourselves and to love God above all. You and I have no excuses for failing. We can't plead ignorance.

The word is very near you.

But what good news the word reveals as well! We could not ascend to God, so he came down to us. He did not come to condemn but to save you and me. He came near to us not only in his word but also in person. Jesus is God with us, Immanuel. His mouth always spoke God's truth in love. His heart reached out with unselfish compassion. His perfect record of obedience counts for you. His sinless life covers your failures and mine. Believe this with all your heart, because that's what God's Word promises.

The word is near you. Unbelief rejects what the word says. Then only guilt and hell remain. But faith cherishes the word, for it brings us Jesus, our only Savior.

Prayer: *How precious is your word, O Lord! May I always cherish it, as I read it with my mouth and treasure it in my heart. 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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