



Grain

“Everything that is done in the world is done by hope. No merchants or tradespeople would set themselves to work if they did not hope to reap benefit thereby.” — Martin Luther (language adapted to be inclusive)

Field

³¹Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” ³³They answered him, “We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, ‘You will be made free?’” ³⁴Jesus answered them, “Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. ³⁶So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. John 8:31:36

Thoughts written by Rev. James Lynch, Town of Dunn, WI

Faith. Service. Justice. Truth. Freedom. And the greatest of these is ... ? That’s a difficult one to be sure.

These words are or at least should be at the heart of the church today. Because they are at the heart of Jesus’ mission to the world. Because they are at the heart of Martin Luther’s call to change and reform in the early 16th century. We hope that they will last forever. Forever and a day.

That may not happen. Each one of these concepts is facing what might seem like insurmountable challenges, even more insurmountable at times than the good Dr. Luther faced half a millennia ago when he endeavored to shed light on and clean up problems within the church. A challenge that included staying alive. The authorities wanted him dead.

Each day we see our faith battered, our call to service questioned, our concept of justice eroded, truth cast aside, freedom undermined by those who would deny that Jesus came for all people in the world, by those who would deny justice and freedom to anyone not like them.

They would say it is in support of the “greater good” claim all they are doing is endorsing “Jesus’ mission to the world.” It’s a “good” that Jesus wouldn’t recognize. It’s a “mission” that Jesus would disavow.

Faith. Service. Justice. Truth. Freedom. And the greatest of these is ... ? We still haven’t answered the question. Perhaps because you can’t have one without the others. Perhaps because when you add them all up, you get one more thing – hope. Without hope, you have nothing. With hope, you have something that no one can take away.

Our hope is in Jesus. Our hope is in faithful service to the freedom of truth in God’s justice in the world, no matter what others may say and try to take away. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Jim