Pentecost 2 Deuteronomy 11:18-21, 26-28
June 14, 2020 735*-190-312-323
*CW-S – "Speak, O Lord"

So Now What Will YOU Do with God's Word?
I. Consider the options.
II. Consider the consequences.

Dear Christian friends (and especially you, Kade),

Today we have **Kade Christian's** confirmation in the late service. Confirmation is a BIG DAY – a milestone in a person's **Christian education**.

There's an old confirmation tradition of **getting a Bible** for your confirmation. The Bible often has your **name** and **confirmation date** engraved on it. This is my confirmation Bible **May 23, 1971**. The confirmation Bible usually comes in a **nice box** and is SOMETHING SPECIAL. I assume many of you **got a Bible** for your confirmation. MORE IMPORTANTLY what did you do with that Bible? Did you KEEP IT SAFE in its box so it wouldn't get wrecked? OR did you use it – read it – mark it up – WEAR IT OUT?

Today's readings focus on GOD'S WORD IN our **daily lives**. Jesus parable of the ***"wise and foolish builders"*** warns us about PAYING LIP SERVICE to God's Word – about having a Bible but NOT USING – **believing** and **living**– it.

Today as we **see Kade** confirmed and recall **our own** confirmations this reading asks **each one** of us, SO NOW WHAT WILL **YOU** DO with God's Word? BEFORE answering that question consider 1)the options you have and 2)the consequences of your answer.

I. Consider the options.

The **book** of Deuteronomy takes us to a MILESTONE – a TURNING POINT – in Israel's history. The 40 years of wandering in the wilderness were coming to an end. The Israelites were about to cross the **Jordan River** and WITH GOD'S HELP and **blessing** they would take possession of the Promised Land of Canaan. DURING those 40 years in the wilderness a new generation of Israelites had **grown up**. These Israelites had not experienced **slavery** in Egypt or the **ten plagues**. They hadn't lived through the **crossing** of the Red Sea or **camping out** at Mt. Sinai. They had ONLY HEARD about all that from their **parents** and **grandparents**. The ONLY LIFE **they knew** was life in the **wilderness** and that was SOON TO CHANGE as they entered into and settled down in a ***"land flowing with milk and honey."*** In this book of Deuteronomy Moses REVIEWS God's will and law for that **new generation** of Israelites. He repeatedly CHALLENGES them to be faithful to God – to God's Word and **will** for their lives. ***"Put these words of Mine in your hearts and in your soul."***

Did you catch the contrast Jesus made BETWEEN ***"the wise and foolish builders"*** in His parable? Yes, one built his house ***"on bedrock"*** and the other ***"on sand."*** But did you catch Jesus' explanation of that **difference**? ***"Everyone who hears these words of Mine and DOES them will be like a wise man - everyone who hears these words of Mine but does NOT DO them will be like a foolish man."*** BOTH men ***"hear"*** God's Word but only one **actually** ***"does"*** God's Word.

What will YOU NOW DO with God's Word? One option is to IGNORE it. Just like the ***"foolish builder"*** many people hear – they learn - God's Word. They know what God SAYS and WANTS. But that's as far **as it goes**. God's Word goes in one ear and **right out** the other. They have God's Word IN THEIR HEADS but not **in their hearts**. They start seeing church and God's Word as BORING. "I've heard it ALL BEFORE – I'm a **sinner**, Jesus is my **Savior**. YEAH, yeah. TELL me something new – something I haven't heard UMPTEEN TIMES before." **You** might think, "I'd NEVER EVER DO that" but

that does happen and **sadly** MORE OFTEN than not. Look how many **get** a CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – they get confirmed and THEN THEY FALL for the **ways of the world** and fall away from their Savior.

There's the option of IGNORING God's Word OR **the option** of hearing and living God's Word - ***"everyone who HEARS these words of Mine and DOES them."*** So Moses encouraged these Israelites, ***"Put these words of mine in your hearts and in your soul, and tie them on your wrists as signs and as symbols on your forehead. Teach them to your children by talking about them when you sit in your house and when you travel on the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates."***

Some Jews literally do this. They make what are called PHYLACTERIES - little boxes with **Bible passages inside** them that they tie on their hands and heads. They have MEZUZAHS – little boxes with **Bible passages inside** them on their doorframes and they kiss them **every time** they LEAVE OR ENTER their homes. Jesus nailed the Pharisees of His days because it was DONE FOR SHOW – ***"for the people to see."***

What's GOD'S POINT here? Learn God's Word WELL – share it with your **children** – let God's Word SHAPE AND CONTROL your **life**. God's Word on our ***"wrists"*** and ***"foreheads"*** – God's Word controls our ACTIONS and THOUGHTS. God's Word on our ***"doorframes"*** – God's Word shapes our FAMILY LIFE **inside**, the shows we watch on TV, etc. AND we don't leave God's Word BEHIND **when we leave** the house. God's Word controls our **work ethic** – our **priorities** in life – the **language** we use – **how we treat** and **talk** about other people, etc. ***"Talking about"*** God's Word AT HOME – ON the road, etc. There's no area or minute of our lives NOT SHAPED by God's Word. DON'T JUST TALK about how the corn is **shooting up** but HOW GOD is causing the corn to grow so well. When you hear evolution pushed in some NATURE SHOW – "look how these birds/animals, etc. evolved into this" – TALK about how wonderfully God created those animals. When you see our society SO SCREWED UP and **messed up** TALK about God's will for **marriage** – for **justice** – loving people, etc. IN OTHER WORDS learn God's Word **well** and THEN LIVE it – apply God's Word to your own personal life and your relationships with other people.

SO NOW WHAT will you do with God's Word? Before answering that…

II. Consider the consequences.

"I am placing before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God …or the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of the LORD your God and you turn away …by walking after other gods."

The history of the OT Israelites ILLUSTRATES these verses – SADLY and especially ***"the curse."*** Their OT history is a SOLEMN WARNING that ***"God will not be mocked; a man reaps what he sows. The one who (lives) to please his sinful nature from that nature will reap destruction."*** That OT lesson DESPERATELY NEEDS to **be learned today**.

The OT Israelites didn't want to STOP BEING God's **chosen people** they just didn't want GOD CONTROLLING their lives. They wanted to be able to LIVE LIKE **everybody** else – just like their unbelieving neighbors and friends. They HAD God's Word but they wouldn't listen to it or TAKE IT TO HEART. ***"They rejected the law of the LORD Almighty and spurned the word of the Holy One of Israel,"*** Isaiah wrote. God repeatedly called His STUBBORN people to repent of their sins and return to Him but they JUST WOULDN'T LISTEN. **Rather** than give up their SINFUL WAYS they gave up their **special relationship** with God. They loved their sin MORE THAN their Savior. ***"The LORD persistently sent warnings to them through His messengers, because He had compassion on His people. But the people kept mocking God's messengers, despising His words, and scoffing at His prophets, until the anger of the LORD rose up against His people, until there was no remedy."*** What didn't work BACK THEN for the Israelites still won't work today for those who THINK

THEY CAN safely ignore and defy God and still be His people. Jesus said in the gospel reading, ***"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven."***

We hear today's readings and **how** can we NOT SEE our **sins against** the 3rd Commandment? Just look what we HAVE DONE with God's Word. ALWAYS "gladly heard and learned it"? I don't think so! Or we've heard it – we KNOW EXACTLY what God says and wants – and we IGNORE God instead – we MAKE EXCEPTIONS and have our excuses that God will just "HAVE TO UNDERSTAND." Who are we **kidding**?!

As we honestly face up to our **sin** and the **hell** we deserve we'll REALLY TREASURE God's Word for its revelation of the **gospel**. In PURE, AMAZING GRACE God gave us His **own eternal Son** to be our perfect Savior. IN OUR PLACE Jesus perfectly obeyed every commandment **His whole life** through – including also **gladly hearing** and **doing** God's Word. BEARING the sins of the **whole world** Jesus went to His cross and was punished in our place. Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross has FULLY PAID for **every single one** of our sins. FOR JESUS' SAKE God has forgiven all our sins. Jesus shares with us His **Easter victory** over death and the grave. TRUSTING in Jesus we can be absolutely sure that we are **now going straight** to heaven when we die. WHAT GRACE – forgiveness **full** and free – peace with God – eternal life in heaven – ALL GOD'S GIFT to us in Jesus!

We can't hear those **familiar gospel facts** OFTEN ENOUGH. God keep us from ever GETTING BORED with them! God loves ME! God forgives **me**! God calls me **His child**! God is with me **every step** of the way! LIFE NOW is **far from perfect** but God has promised me eternal life in heaven!

"Fix – put" those gospel truths DEEP ***"in your heart and soul"*** and let them shape and **control** your life now. Read God's Word praying with the psalmist, ***"Show me Your ways, O LORD, teach me Your paths."*** Like the ***"wise builder"*** build your faith and personal relationship with God on the ***"bedrock"*** of God's Word. Build your life now and your hope of heaven on the ***"bedrock"*** of God's Word and NOT the shifting sand of what FEELS RIGHT to you or EVERYBODY ELSE is doing. God gave us His Word to ***"bless"*** us – not to take ALL THE FUN out of our lives.

At confirmation WE PROMISE to be faithful to God's Word – to FAITHFULLY hear and live it. We'd rather die than FALL AWAY from God and His Word. SO, NOW what will **YOU** do with God's Word? Amen.

APOSTLES' CREED