

## LITURGY MATTERS

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### You Shall Proclaim the Word of God

Have you ever known anyone who has won something – a lotto, a car at the parish fair? It is so fun to share with everyone that I indeed know this lucky person. Sharing the good news is a very joyful experience.

On the other hand, modern people for all the contentment they feel, appear also to have a tremendous sense of brokenness, seemingly more than past generations who did not enjoy the benefits of health and technology which we do today. A large percentage of contemporary folks could sing, without missing a beat, the popular hymn “Amazing Grace.”

*Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me;  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind but now I see.*

These words stand in stark contrast to the optimism of modern tunes like “Don’t worry, be happy!” “Amazing Grace” is probably one of the most frequently sung hymns. Behind today’s “feel-goodism,” there apparently lies a great sense of feeling of lost and blindness, even feeling at times like a wretch.

The “Good News,” another word for Gospel, is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Where is the Gospel of Jesus Christ found in “Amazing Grace,” and furthermore what does it mean to be a twenty-first century Christian?

Christian thought has developed its own way of looking at the “Good News” not primarily from human brokenness, but rather from the experience of human longing or desire. It is not that people are depraved and corrupt; it is that, however much they have, they still know they are incomplete. And, without God, they will remain incomplete. In other words, even apart from sin, depravity, brokenness, and shame, people still need the Good News of God because their very hearts, filled with love, beauty, and joy, experience love, beauty, and joy only as an anticipation of something more, something fuller and greater, which they desperately need to make sense of their lives.

The death and resurrection of Jesus speaks to the utter frustration of our elusive human existence, to the absurdity of so much grandeur going nowhere, to the quest of our eternal spirit, to participate in the very being of God. Early church leaders spoke of this as “divinization” – the marvel of our sharing God’s own life through the person of Jesus. In the Gospel, Jesus dies to expose the frailty and frustration of our lives; he rises to transcend that frailness; and he sends the spirit so that we can partake in the very reality of his risen life, being body in his body and living in his very life. “It is no longer I who live,” says St. Paul, “but it is Christ who lives in me.”

Is this the good news that we want to share with others? Will we proclaim this word of God to our families, neighbors, and friends?

*. . . Let’s walk together as disciples in the footsteps of the Lord.*

