**The Greatest Gain from the Biggest Loser** Fifth Sunday in Lent - March 21, 2021

*‘But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.’ (Philippians 3:7)*

LSB 425 – When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

(Verse 1 of this week’s hymn served as inspiration for today’s devotion.)

Throughout human history we have observed that life is a process of reaching and maintaining balance. Yet, within that state of balance is a constant state of tension. Even without our understanding, our bodies are working at all times toward a point of ‘homeostasis’ or an internal equilibrium that is constantly compensating due to changes in the outside environment. Knowing how our bodies work can also influence how we approach life. We want to avoid the extremes while keeping the scales balanced enough in our favor – once things begin to fall out of balance, we begin to panic.

One of the hardest things for any adult to come to terms with is losing the ability to control the balance of their lives; unlike children, who understand they are utterly dependent upon God to provide for them. This helps in our understanding as we ponder the Lord’s instructions when He declares “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” We who have had the ability and opportunity to put our fingers on the scales of life to keep that balance in our favor cannot relinquish control without a struggle!

Not only does God’s Word implore us to take our finger off the scale but also to discard the weight of everything we have piled up in life for our gain or advantage and once again, like little children, become utterly dependent upon God. In this way, faith is able to embrace the wisdom of God by letting go of whatever gain we held in this world to receive God’s perfect balance for life now and life everlasting in Jesus Who became the biggest loser to secure for us the greatest gain!

**Prayer**

Gracious, heavenly Father, it is not in our frail and fallen human nature to give up whatever gains we may have accumulated in this life for any reason. Therefore, open our eyes and our hearts to embrace the mystery of Your wisdom and through faith, give us a clean heart and a clear conscience to turn it all over to You. Grant us the wisdom to use Your gifts to sow the seeds of righteousness that will outweigh the things of this world and reap an abundant harvest of eternal life and joy for all, in Jesus’ name, Amen.

Rev. Robert Briggs – Lutheran Senior Services – Chaplain, Affordable Housing