

"Dakota Robert and the Word of the Cross" -- 1 Corinthians 1:18

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Emmett, Idaho

Arise, shine; for your Light has come, and the Glory of the Lord has risen on you. Amen.

Dear members of the Family of God as it is manifested here at Our Redeemer,

The Word of the Cross ... when was it first announced? Indeed, dearly beloved, the Word of the Cross was first proclaimed on the other side of the Garden of Eden's gate. The Incarnate Lord would be born of woman and would suffer even as He defeated sin, death and the devil. The Lord covered the first couple with the hides of an innocent victim as they waited for the promised Seed of the woman to be born in the fullness of time. As John Milton wrote in his epic poem, *Paradise Lost*:

*Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, Heav'nly Muse.*

So the people of God waited as the song of the greater Man was sung, as the Story of Immanuel ("God with us") was told ... of He Who would come not to be served, but to serve and to give His Life on the Cross of Calvary. The Word of the Cross ... when did it first seem folly? The Bible does not reveal just when that began, but it must have seemed folly soon after Adam and Eve were escorted outside the Garden.

How soon was it before such thoughts as these crossed the mind of man? "The Lord God wants us to be with Him in Paradise; therefore, we were expelled from the Garden of Eden. He wants us to be with Him; therefore, He sends us away and we no longer walk with Him as we once did!" And the people of the world mock and declare it all to be folly. "God wants us to have Life and eat the delicious fruit from the Tree of Life; therefore, He sends us into a land of death where the Tree of Life is a crude crossbeam which bears one single, shriveled up Fruit, Who declares, 'I thirst.' What folly."

Even the followers of the Lord God, when under the direction of the old sinful nature, declare the folly of the Savior. When Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things and be killed and on the third day be raised, Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke him, "*God forbid, Lord! This shall never happen to You.*" The Incarnate Son of God turned and said to Peter, "*Get thee behind Me, Satan! You are a hindrance to Me; for you are not on the side of God, but of men*" (Matthew 16:21-23).

One Friday, the Incarnate Word became the Word on the Cross, dying for the sins of all people of all time. The Word from the Cross was proclaimed, "*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they*

do" (Luke 23:34). The fulfilled Word of the Cross became objective history of the completed salvation when Jesus declared in the darkness, "*It is finished*" (John 19:30). The Word was taken from the Cross and buried. This is part of the Good News and today the doubters within us and the doubters among us say, "What folly." The risen Lord, leaves behind a tomb that is empty, ... empty except for those burial linens baptized in the Blood of the Lamb.

Then the Word of the Cross went forth, from *Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth* (Acts 1:8). And just as this Word of the Cross came to Corinth where Gaius was baptized; so also has it come today to Our Redeemer where Dakota was baptized. Please listen to our sermon text, 1 Corinthians 1:18 as well as the rest of this sermon under the theme of ...

... *Dakota Robert and the Word of the Cross*

For the Word of the Cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Thus far the Word of the Lord our God given to us by the Holy Spirit through the holy writer, Paul of Tarsus.

Dearly beloved, we gathered here today to join this beautiful baby, Dakota Robert, the son of Kim and Lynn, with his God, the Lord, the beautiful Savior, the Son of God and the Son of Man. In doing so, we walk by faith and not by sight; we follow the Word of the Cross and not the reason of humanity. What has happened here today truly is a message of the truth and an application of the Word of truth that is *a stumbling block to the Jews and folly to the Gentiles*. Permit me to demonstrate the stumbling block and the folly by telling you about Dakota and about Jesus.

First of all, we know from the Scriptures, both in the Jewish language of Hebrew in the Old Testament and in the Gentile language of Greek in the New Testament that Dakota is no different than any of us. Each one of us is, by nature, from the moment of our conception until the day we depart this life, sinful. No matter how pure and innocent a newborn baby is ... no matter how much we may say concerning ourselves to the contrary, this is so.

Second, we know from the Scriptures that to remain in this condition, without the pardon that we need from the great Jehovah, is to remain in sin. To die in such a condition is to die eternally and to live forever outside the presence of the Lord. That is true for you, me and Dakota. "Little children, though seemingly innocent, are by birth and nature sinful and without forgiveness would be lost forever." (*Lutheran Agenda*) Having said that, men from the age of reason, both some within and many without the Church, howl and complain. Indeed dear people, we behold that *the Word of the Cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

Third, we know from the Scriptures that a death occurred here this morning among us for Baptism is a participation in the crucifixion of Christ and that this morning, Dakota was baptized into the death of Christ. Baptism is God's gift and not man's work, and is a participation in the crucifixion of Jesus. That sounds strange but it is true. Paul catechized the Romans when he wrote, *Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?* (6:3). Now we may join Dakota in confessing the truth, *I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ Who lives in me and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me* (Galatians 2:20). Having said that, men from the age of reason, some

gifted with the Good News and many without this Gospel, howl and complain. Indeed, when this happens, we behold that *the Word of the Cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

Fourth, we know from the Scriptures that a resurrection occurred here this morning among us for Baptism is a participation in the Resurrection of Christ. Though Dakota was dead, he is now alive by the means of God's grace called Baptism. Dakota was baptized into the Death of Christ and so were you who have been baptized. We were buried therefore with Him by Baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the death by the Glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of Life (Romans 6:4). The Lord Jesus took Dakota to the empty Easter tomb and showed the infant that the grave is empty except for those burial linens baptized in the Blood of Christ. Having said that, Semitic Sadducees of ancient times, as well as Seminex Sadducees of more recent vintage, howl at the Resurrection and snicker. As for us, we gladly confess and are especially thankful that even though *the Word of the Cross is folly to those who are perishing, ... to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

Fifth, please note that verb in the last part ... *to us who are being saved.* Among other things, the verb is a present, passive, plural, participle. The participle part means that there is some action being taken. The present tense indicates that it is taking place right now. The passive means that the object of the verb is receiving, not doing. The plural indicates that it is happening to more than one person. What does this mean? Simply this, that you and I and Dakota, in and as the Church are the recipients of salvation through the Word of the Cross that is the gracious power of God that is ours as we live our lives in this world.

The gift of salvation can be refused and it can be lost. Once saved; always saved is false doctrine. As such, we who are being saved are called to remain faithful unto death and be given the crown of Life. That means we are to be gathered in this holy place to hear the Word of the Cross and to be nurtured on the milk of the Gospel ... and to receive Christ when we come to the Sacrament of the Altar, eating His very Body and drinking His true Blood. Having said that, the misguided magi who have stumbled into the death camp of Moroni, along with the followers of Calvin, howl at the Real Presence of Christ and complain about the inability of man to decide for himself. As for us, we behold that *the Word of the Cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

Sixth, we know from the Scriptures that those baptismal linens are able to cover us to the end and keep us faithful unto life in heaven, however long that is in the distant time, or however soon that might be. In Baptism, Dakota has been given the robe of Christ's righteousness that will last him a lifetime ... however long that may be.

Concerning this, I received word last Friday, that S***, wife of Pastor E*** and mother of four children was killed in a car accident on Thursday night. At such times, as struggling Christians who have questions, we look to the Word of the Cross and read the answer concerning those who have visited the tomb in Baptism and whom we now behold in heaven. *These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:14).*

Having said that, atheists who mock the God Who grants them the strength to do their mocking, as well as agnostics who roll their eyes at the confession that Jesus is Jehovah, hoot and blaspheme. As

for us, we behold that *the Word of the Cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

Indeed, the Lord God wants us to be with Him in Paradise; therefore, though we were expelled from the Garden of Eden and made to wander in the wilderness, still we will cross over to the Promised Land on a day of His choosing. Certainly, the Lord wants us to be with Him; therefore, while He sends us into the land of thorns and thistles, He promises that He will be with us always to the end of the age, leading Dakota, you and me as the Way to the Father. God wants us to have Life and eat the delicious fruit from the Tree of Life; therefore, He sends us into a land of death where the Tree of Life is a crude crossbeam which bears one single, shriveled up Fruit, Who invites, "*Take and eat, this is My Body. Take and drink; this is My Blood;* and Who declares, "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*" (Mark 16:16).

His Word and His Sacraments will sustain His Church until that day when the paradise lost is, for us, paradise regained and we are shown, as the Apostle John describes, *the River of the Water of Life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the City; also, on either side of the river, the Tree of Life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the Tree were for the healing of the nations*" (Revelation 22:2).

Ah, yes dear people, ... *the Word of the Cross. Amen.*

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who conquers I will grant to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the Paradise of God (Revelation 2:7). Amen.