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Grace Lutheran Church, Wichita Kansas

3-9-14 ~ The First Sunday in Lent

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

It is written is three words in English. It is one word in Greek. Γεγραπται. *It is written* is a legal expression, a formula for introducing quotes. *It is written* means it has been recorded and thus stands as a lasting testimony.

It is written is said three times by Jesus in Matthew's account of the temptation. Not to be outdone, Satan has one of his own. He knows what has been written. No one may accuse the Father Of Only Lies (FOOL) of ignorance.

Jesus goes first. "*It is written, 'Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'*" Then Satan. "*It is written, 'He will give his angels charge of you. On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'*" Jesus counters. "*Again it is written, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'*" Finally our Lord closes with "*It is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.'*"

It is written is what is. It has to be. It cannot be otherwise.

Today we see in the temptation of Our Lord that Jesus is the Satan Crusher, the Deliverer of Adam's kin, the Promised Seed from Eve's womb, the Cursed One bearing God's wrath and the Victor whereby we are justified.

It was so written of Jesus in Hebrews chapter ten--When He came into the world, He said, "Behold, I have come—in the volume of the book it is written of Me—to do Your will, O God." (Hebrews 10:5, 7)

As it was written, Jesus is the preordained, circumcised, anointed, tempted and baptized One ready to do the Lord's will on behalf of fallen mankind. Jesus has not come to challenge Satan to a Bible-quoting Contest, not to best Satan in a debate. He came to fulfill all that the Scripture has said.

Thus Paul writes in Romans what Isaiah had written—The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins. (Romans 11:26, 27)

Again in Romans it is written (Paul from Isaiah)—Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, and whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame. (Romans 9:33)

All Scripture is of Jesus.

--It is Jesus of whom it was written that He would be numbered with transgressors (Luke 22:37).

--It is Jesus of whom it was written that the insults of those insulting God had fallen on Him (Romans 15:3).

--It is Jesus who God His Father strikes down in death (Mt. 26:31) and it was Jesus' resurrection from the dead that Paul preached at Antioch (Acts 13:33) saying, *We bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this, He has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second psalm, "Thou art My Son, today I have begotten Thee."*

It is from the historical record, from the Bible, from the *it is writtens* of each text that we learn who our Savior is. It is through the repeated use of the Word that we come to understand that the Word of God is about Jesus.

So for us, it is useful to have a repeating of the Word. Daily. Weekly. Yearly. That is why the church fathers developed a system of hearing lessons. Year after year we recycle the same lessons.

Lententide—Jesus' temptation and His going up to Jerusalem. Holy Week—passion, death, burial. Easter—the Resurrection and His appearances. Pentecost—the gift of the Holy Ghost who bears witness of Jesus. Trinity—the ministry of our Savior. Advent—the Promises of His Coming. Christmas—Jesus' birth for us and our salvation. Epiphany—His revealing so that man may worship the one true God. Every year the cycle repeats. Lententide-Holy Week-Easter. Pentecost-Trinity. Advent-Christmas-Epiphany.

Weekly do we repeat. We come often to the Holy Supper of Jesus. The church is not to invent, add or subtract from this. What is written? There is bread. There is wine. All other substances are an invention of man. There is only what Jesus says the bread is and what He says the wine is. What is written? Body. Blood. Anything else is of the invention of man. What is written about this eating and drinking? Jesus says that eating and drinking gives the forgiveness of sins. Anything else is

of man's invention. Let the Word of God be the Word of God, for after all, IT IS WRITTEN!

And what is baptism but that once-in-a-lifetime washing with daily benefits! Baptism more than once goes against **what is written**....*one Lord, one faith, one baptism* (Eph. 4:5). Not using your baptism daily also goes against **what is written**. For our Lord says that *if anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross DAILY and follow Me (Luke 9:23)*, from which Luther rightly concluded that the Old Adam in us should by DAILY CONTRITION AND REPENTANCE be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should DAILY EMERGE AND ARISE to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Why the Word? Why Baptism? Why the Supper so often? Why confess our sins and receive the absolution on Wednesday mornings at the foot of this altar? Why pray? Why sing hymns and listen to sermons? All so that you might receive Christ and know Him aright. All so that you might be strengthened by Him. All so that you can fight Satan in your weaknesses.....when tempted by the kiss of a handsome young man, when tempted by the praise of colleagues, when tempted by the attraction of much food and drink.

Jesus fought in the wilderness for you. He overcame the Devil for you. He won salvation for you, dying and rising again. And, He is coming soon, for you, as it is written.

IJN. Amen.