



# The Words and Promises of Christ

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The family was in pain. They had resigned themselves to seeing mom waste away. With mom's fading consciousness and failing health, why come visit? Prayers at church would be enough. They told me there was no reason to come and visit. She wouldn't even know I was there. Their mother sat alone in the living room as we dined in the kitchen. Their mother was dressed and ready to go. She had been unresponsive whether lying down or sitting in her wheelchair. Days, weeks, and even months had passed since she had last been part of any kind of conversation.

With dinner over and the conversation ended, it was time to engage this child of God. Here was an unresponsive person sitting alone in the living room. What was I to say or do for her? Sitting down in front of her, I turned to the Lord:

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). There is life in God's Word (I Peter 1:23). God's Word accomplishes what He purposes (Isaiah 55:11). God's Word is living and active (Hebrews 4:12). Within the rhythm of music God's promises, healing, and hopes are set. The biblical canticles of the Kyrie (Mark 10:47), Gloria in Excelsis (Luke 2:14; John 1:29), This Is the Feast (Rev. 5:12-13; 19:5-9), Sanctus (Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9), Agnus Dei (John 1:29), and Nunc Dimittis (Luke 2:29-32) carry into the ears of His dear children God's life filled prayers and promises.

I began to sing a faithful biblical hymn she would know from childhood. A hymn filled with Christ and His word. Stanza after stanza the hymn laid out who we were and who God was. Promise after promise of a loving Jesus was poured forth in song. Hope was carried by an ancient tune. And mom? Her lips began to move. She was trying to sing along.

Now to Psalm 23 -- As the words spoken by the Holy Spirit, written by David, rolled across my tongue and into her ears, this child of God responded with her eyes opening and her lips softly proclaiming these very same words.

Together we approached the throne of grace praying the prayer the Lord had taught us. Her eyes were fully open. With her head up she found herself not alone but in the presence of the Lord and His people. The Lord's Prayer was prayed to the fullest. Each and every word pronounced clearly, distinctly and loudly.

Each subsequent visit was made in the same manner, going to the Lord who has the words of eternal life. They went on that is, until the day she was called to her eternal heavenly home.



Missouri District

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH — MISSOURI SYNOD

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God  
(Colossians 3:16).

Because hymns and liturgies had filled her life with the words and promises of Christ, the Holy Spirit could draw them up out of memories in the hours she needed them most. May the Lord fill the people of our congregation's lives and memories with His words and promises.