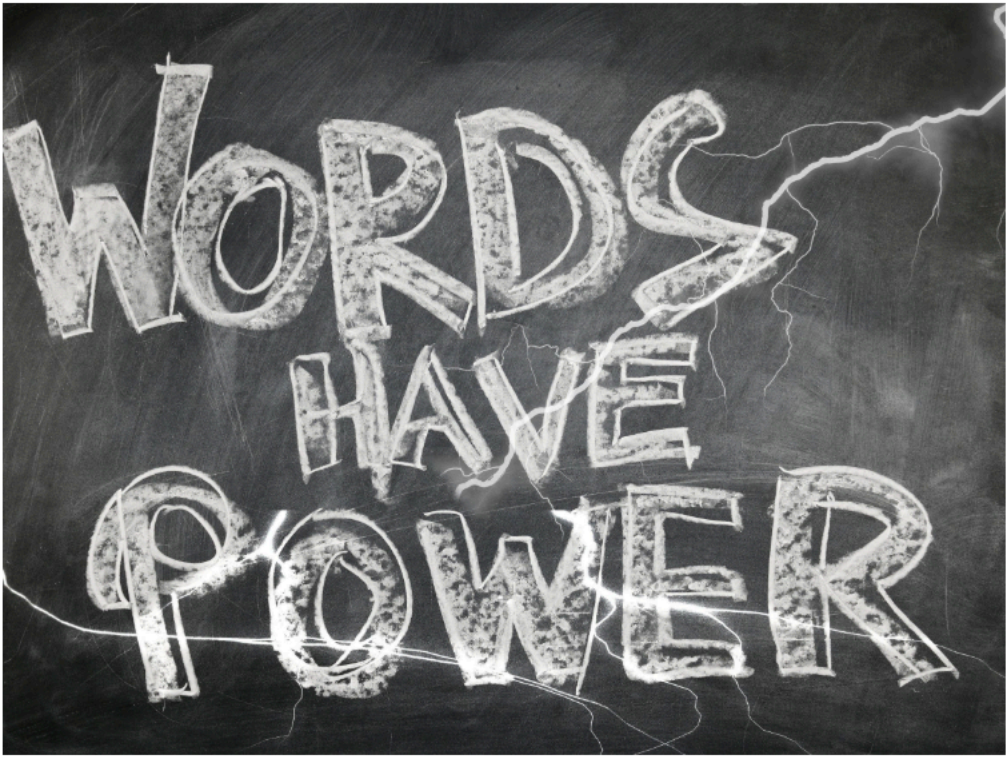


DEVOTION:

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.
Romans 10:17

One of my friends likes the expression "we are saved through our ears." By repeating it, he emphasizes the importance of preaching God's Word. Yesterday we saw that God, in His wisdom, decided to elect us here and now through the preaching of His Word.

Why does preaching have such high value? According to Paul, faith comes through the hearing of the message, and the message is heard through the "Word of Christ".

One meaning of these words is that Christ is the content of the message. When we listen, we hear how God saved us through Christ. The other meaning is that Christ is the author or bearer of this message. When we then listen to the preaching of God's Word, Christ Himself stands before us as the bearer of His message.

What Paul's intention was, is not entirely clear, but it helps us to understand how serious preaching is. Every time we listen to a sermon, we must imagine that Christ Himself is speaking to us. A sermon is an encounter with the living Christ.