***The Mission Central Meyer Minute***

“Exhausted.” That was the word one commentator used to describe American voters after the midterm elections. Speaking for myself, the political ads and punditry not only tired me, they made me angry. And the polls “smart people” worship were wrong! So many political prognosticators who fill TV and social media screens are, let’s be honest, simply obsessed about political power, and the business people who own the media outlets are ultimately about money. There, I got it off my chest, but I suspect I’m not alone.

“Exhausted” isn’t bad if… Whether from the political carpet bombing of the last months, burn out from work, fear that we can’t resolve our financial problems or improve our marriage… troubles aren’t bad if we say, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life” (John 6:68). You and I have to continually keep coming back to this truth: Whatever I am and have is totally the gift of God to me. Without Jesus I am nothing. Martin Luther: “It is certain that one must despair utterly of oneself in order to be made fit to receive the grace of Christ” (Heidelberg Disputation, Thesis 18).

Doesn’t so much in the world illustrate self-righteousness? Politics is supposed to be a way of working out our differences, not feeding off of and fueling self-righteousness, “I’m right and you’re wrong.” And what has that gotten us? Lovelessness. “The righteousness of the righteous ones is hard and self-assured. They, too, want forgiveness, but they believe that they do not need much of it. And so their righteous actions are warmed by very little love” (Paul Tillich, “The New Being,” in “For All the Saints,” IV, 1031).

What a great time to love Jesus more! “My kingdom is not of this world,” He says (John 18:36). He doesn’t send troops to fight or angry people to protest. He’s not a Republican or Democrat. He’s the one and only Jesus! He gave Himself to death. Who can sacrifice so much for you? And now “He lives and grants me daily breath; He lives, and I shall conquer death; He lives my mansion to prepare; He lives to bring me safely there” (Lutheran Service Book 461:7).

Mission Central makes only one appeal a year. With all the self-righteousness we see, with sanctified common sense that the ways of this world are vain, having no merit of our own to boast before God, what great incentives for you and me to fuel Jesus’ mission!