

Confirmation 2004

My dear confirmands of 2004,

on this important and festive day of your confirmation I welcome you warmly into God's house. Until today God's love for you has revealed itself in a wonderful manner in your parental home, in your congregation, and in the various classes of instruction. At your confirmation He now provides a special token of His grace and kindness. For this special occasion I dedicate to you a word found in Ephesians 5:16: "**Redeeming the time.**"

There was a time without law. Through Moses, the Eternal One then proclaimed the law under which the people of the old covenant lived thereafter. Eventually when God's Son came in human form the beautiful time of grace began. One day, however, this time will end. We live in the most beautiful period of grace because Jesus Christ's return is approaching. That is why we make the most of this time. Deep within our heart there is the assurance: **Our Lord is coming!**

Our time is marked by the same characteristics as the congregation in Laodicea. That is why God's Son counsels us to buy from Him gold, white garments, and ointment for our eyes. What grieved the Lord Jesus concerning the congregation in Laodicea? Its indecisiveness, its false image of itself, and its rejection of God's offers. None of these are compatible with the Lord Jesus' will. You, however, are informed concerning the principles of our beautiful faith and will therefore strive to make the most of the divine offers. You can recognise the truth in the image of the gold, the sacraments in the white garments, and God's word, which brings about knowledge and understanding, in the ointment for our eyes. In this manner a wonderful development takes place within your souls: You become worthy to participate in the marriage of the Lamb. It pleases God when you increasingly deepen your spiritual knowledge and understanding, and strive to develop more and more into Jesus Christ's nature.

It is also beneficial for you to make use of your precious time to participate and help along in God's work as much as possible. Everyone has received gifts and talents with which they can put much time and energy into the congregation. All of this is part of appropriately "redeeming the time".

There is a very important point: No human being can personally free him- or herself of the indebtedness which comes about through sin. Our heavenly Father, however, has ensured that His own can repeatedly be freed of this through the unique sacrifice and merit of His Son.

It is of special concern to me to encourage you to always come to the table of the Lord, so that there you will come under the forgiveness of sins, and experience fellowship with God's Son by partaking of Holy Communion. When you "redeem the time" in this manner to the best of your ability your faith will be strengthened, you will be blessed, and you thereby can become a blessing yourselves.

Connected with all the apostles of the world, and with heartfelt greetings and good wishes, I remain

Yours,

R. Fehr