

From the Pastor: On Contentment in the Gospel

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

“Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest. And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a little child and set him by Him, and said to them, “Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all will be great.”
(Luke 9:46-48)

Those poor disciples... didn't they know that they were standing in the presence of the sinless Son of God? Hadn't they yet learned from Jesus about the true nature of the ministry – that they have been called *to* serve and not to *be* served? Couldn't they at least pretend to be humble in front of Jesus? There they are with the very Lamb of God who will die for their sins, and all they can think about is themselves in an endless debate of pathetic vainglory. Had they not remembered Solomon's warning in Proverbs 16, *“Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall”*?

Exactly what type of men had our Lord chosen for the supremely important calling of being pastors in His New Testament Church? Fleshly men. Men born dead in their trespasses. Men, who, after being given the Spirit of life, still battle mightily against the flesh. Certainly, all men born of women are prone to godless vanity, but there is surely an extra propensity for accolades by those who hold the Jesus-ordained position of pastor. But it is not just their own fallenness that desires such honor and recognition from the world, it is also often the desire, and even the demand, of the fallen flock they serve. No congregation wants an excessively ordinary pastor. After all, if our congregation is going to be considered as top-notch or “supercalifragilisticexpialidocious” (to use Mary Poppins parlance), we'd better have a Hollywood celebrity-style pastor. Solomon cries out, *“Vanity of vanities! All is vanity”* (Ecclesiastes 1:2), yet we think the Church grows by the will, skill and programs of men. Pastor and parishioner alike have fallen prey to the ways and wisdom of the world.

We count success in all the wrong ways. I recently attended the Synod Convention in Tampa – such settings are unfortunately rife with fleshly pastors comparing their prowess and accomplishments with each other. Pastor so-and-so earned his doctorate degree... Pastor so-and-so is *still* stuck at his first parish... Pastor so-and-so was called to a big, prosperous congregation... Pastor so-and-so had a nervous breakdown... Pastor so-and-so was elected to this or that Synod position... and on it goes, woefully so. *“Vanity of vanities! All is vanity.”*

If nothing else, this painfully reveals that pastors (and laity alike) often don't find their ultimate contentment in the Gospel. We seek satisfaction and happiness in accolades and flattery. Faith calls us to

repent of such folly and, instead, to be enduringly content in the thing most needful – the holy and saving Gospel of our Lord. Pastors must be a living example to their flock of contentment in the Gospel alone. To be content in the Gospel is to be content in Jesus – the center and substance of the Gospel. Pastors must undertake their calling in such a way that ALL glory, laud and honor are rightly given to God alone.

The laity must be very careful not to judge their pastor by worldly standards of success. When this unfortunately happens (and it does a lot), the pastor must speak the words of St. Paul when he says, “*With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you*” (1 Cor. 4:3). That is to say, when the laity (or even fellow clergy) try to judge the pastor by the fleshly standards of the world, he must consider it *nothing* and in *no way* endorse such evil. The faithfulness of the pastor is to be found in his preaching and teaching the Word of God. The faithfulness of a pastor is found in fidelity to his ordination vows. The faithfulness of the pastor is to be found in a consistent devotion to Jesus Christ and the Gospel. Certainly, we must know that the Kingdom does not grow by the cutesiness, charisma, or tactfulness of the pastor, but by the living and powerful Word of God.

Below I offer you a related article written by Pastor Larry Beane of *Salem Lutheran Church* in Gretna, LA. The article originally appeared some years ago in *Gottesdienst* – The Journal of the Lutheran Liturgy. Pastor and laity alike should read Pastor Beane’s article to be reminded of that which matters most. Please read on...

So, Pastor, you lack street cred. (that is, street credibility)

So, Pastor, you aren't an alcoholic, have never been in rehab, and you don't attend AA meetings. You can't cite a litany of drugs, legal and illegal, that you've used, abused, and been addicted to. You've never blacked out, been arrested for DUI, or hit "rock-bottom." You drink in moderation, but don't have a drinking problem. You have stress in your life, but have not been diagnosed with clinical depression or other mental health issues.

So, Pastor, you've never been divorced, you aren't a sexual deviant, you're not confused, transitioning, or bi-curious. In fact, your marital life is pretty boring by today's standards. You've been married to the same woman for decades.

So, Pastor, your ethnic heritage is also very bland, being descended from doughty German Midwestern farmers without so much as a Norwegian in the family tree for diversity. You eat meat and potatoes and have never had a Starbucks latte. Your wife is the same race and ethnicity, and so are your children. You have no adopted children from a third world country. In fact, your family is not big enough for some, and too big for others. Your children are neither geniuses nor afflicted

with mental health issues or otherwise handicapped. And if they are, you don't feel compelled to tell the world about it.

So, Pastor, you don't have a popular blog, a powerful *Facebook* presence, or a happening *Twitter* feed. You don't speak at conferences. You aren't an editor of *Gottesdienst*. You don't appear on *Issues*, Etc. You're not a regular at Higher Things. You don't have an S.T.M. You don't star in a podcast or run your own *YouTube* channel.

So, Pastor, you don't speak any foreign languages, have never been on a mission trip, have never lectured in Addis Ababa or Novosibirsk, and you don't have a degree in church planting. Maybe a drive to the closest *Walmart* is as much travel that you do in your life as a parish pastor where God has placed you.

So, Pastor, you don't play a musical instrument, have never sung in a choir, and feel self-conscious even singing at the altar in church. You hum along with the radio in the car and sing "Happy Birthday" at family celebrations, but karaoke is out of the question.

So, Pastor, you don't ride a motorcycle, drive a BMW, cruise the country in an RV, have a boat, or even own a car that is still under warranty. You're praying your auto insurance doesn't go up when the next bill comes.

So, Pastor, you're not obese and don't post weekly Facebook updates about your latest sojourn to the bathroom scales or tweet every time you can accomplish another chin-up. Nor are you a Krav Maga instructor, paleo practitioner, or member of the trendiest cross-fit club. You don't hold court about supplements and cleansing enemas and organic foods, nor do you brag about the astronomical calorie count of the extra-large chocolate fudge milkshake you just slopped down in defiance of the fitness craze.

So, Pastor, you're not a vicarage supervisor, a circuit visitor, a district president, a seminary prof, or a six-figure bureaucrat. You're not a darling of the establishment that gets invited to speak at conventions. You don't smoke top-shelf cigars or drink expensive scotch. You're not an IPA or port or single-malt aficionado. You don't take selfies in exotic places. You aren't highlighted in the seminary magazines or the *Lutheran Witness*. You are largely anonymous and invisible outside your congregation.

So, Pastor, you don't wear a rose chasuble, or any chasuble for that matter. Your congregation doesn't use incense or do Gregorian chant. In fact, your parish doesn't even have every-Sunday communion, nor will it likely in your lifetime. You're fortunate that they still use the hymnal and have an organist.

So, Pastor, you don't pack the house as the "lead pastor" every Sunday, wear skinny jeans and a little microphone, have a rockin' house band and a "worship leader" who makes faces of ecstasy when he prays with his hands in the air. You don't even sport a tattoo and no parts of your body are pierced. You don't even wear the latest style beard. Your church lacks a stage, has neither drum-kit nor mixing board, and is bereft of cup-holders. You don't baptize dozens of people at a time, block-party style, in a kiddie pool, boast a phenomenally explosive membership growth, all the while taking in thousands of mission dollars from the district coffers. You're actually happy to see a visitor or two every now and then.

So, Pastor, you lack street cred.

As a Christian, trust your baptism. As a pastor, trust your ordination. Christ gives you His cred.

That's all that matters.

Thank you Pastor Beane for helping us refocus ourselves on the thing most needful. Amidst all the jostling, hustle and bustle for prestige, honor and status, the Gospel still remains! That's good news for us! Despite all the wrong motives and self-centeredness, Christ is yet amidst us, offering forgiveness, life and salvation. Often feeling surrounded by the muck and mire of this world and feeling oppressed by the ever-nagging accusation of mediocrity, remember, O Christian, you were bought at a dear price – the very Son of God shed His innocent, precious blood that you might be His prize. Let the world with its folly be laid to waste! You are redeemed, restored and forgiven! You belong to Jesus. You have the true Gospel. Be content and delight in His goodness.

What is the world to me, with all its vaunted pleasure
When You and You alone, Lord Jesus are my pleasure!
You only dearest Lord, My soul's delight shall be;
You are my peace, my rest. What is the world to me!

The world seeks to be praised, and honored by the mighty
Yet never once reflects that they are frail and flighty.
But what I truly prize, above all things is He,
My Jesus, He alone. What is the world to me!

The world seeks after wealth, and all that mammon offers
Yet never is content, though gold should fill its coffers.
I have a higher good, content with it I'll be:
My Jesus is my wealth. What is the world to me!

(LSB #730 stanzas 1-3)

In the bond of faith,
Pastor Menet



**Grace Alone, Faith Alone, Christ Alone,
Scripture Alone, and to God Alone be the
Glory!**

OUR WEEK AT A GLANCE:

Sunday: Divine Service with Communion at 9:00 a.m.

Sunday School and Adult Bible Study 10:20-11:30

Thursday: Adult Bible Study 10-11:30 a.m.

<p>Pastor Menet's email address: pdm52@mchsi.com Church Office: faithluth@aol.com</p>

Do you have information that you would like to share with the congregation? Please bring it or e-mail it to the office by **September 20, faithluth@aol.com**, to be included in the October newsletter.

Cancellations due to bad weather can be found on www.KWWL.com. Click on weather, then cancellations. Wednesday night classes are cancelled if schools close.

Pastor Menet does make hospital visits a priority. However, the hospital will not call us to let us know when one of our members is admitted. If you know ahead of time that you are going to be hospitalized, please let Pastor know. If you are admitted suddenly, call or have a friend or relative call Pastor or the church office, 236-1771.

No new addresses this month

Please email faithluth@aol.com or call 236-1771 with any changes in your phone or address.

Remember our shut-ins:

Steve Boyken and Kathy Boyken,

Sunset Nursing, 235 N Mill St., P.O. Box 383, Denver, IA 50622,
Kathy: 984-5092

Mary Jo Elbert, 7517 University Ave #33, Cedar Falls 50613

Flo Fitz, 202 N. Magnolia Dr. #102, Cedar Falls 50613

Ardie Holmes, 2104 Parrish, Cedar Falls 50613

Dixie Krieger, 3415 Destin Dr., Waterloo 50702

Mark Mohr, Neuro Rehab Care, Rm 10, 35 Rachel St, Waterloo 50701

Eddie Swaim, Friendship Village Pavilion, Park Ln #3 Waterloo 50702

Official Acts in July & August

- **Baptism:** Josephine Nicole Negus (August 4)
- **Release:** Kelby (Brayden) Hinz
- **Release:** Scott Wiechert

- **Transfer Out:** Susan Clark to Zion LCMS, Ottawa, IL
- **Transfer Out:** Nick Grundmeyer to Zion LCMS, Winter Garden, FL
- **Transfer Out:** Dennis & Toni Hilmer, Audrey Hilmer (Izabell, Annabell), & Amanda Gantois (Brynlee) to Ascension, Waterloo

A special thank you to Jim Dalluge, Bobby, Merle, Carmen and Herman Hinz and Darren Brackin for cutting down the dead pine trees and trimming the other pine trees; Kevin and Carrie Frost, Julie Frey and Sue Lund for trimming bushes, pulling weeds in front of the church, and spraying weeds around the sign.

Thank you to everyone who works behind the scenes to keep up the church! You are truly appreciated!

thank you

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints...

Colossians 1:3-4

Financial Stewardship	As of August 25	YTD
Total Undesignated Received	\$9,305.53	\$78,338.90
Required to Meet Budget	\$15,813.08	\$126,504.67
Status	(\$6,507.55)	(\$48,165.77)

September Anniversaries

- 1 Keller & Rhonda McBride (19)
- 13 Josh & Morgan Crawford (6)
- 16 Jeremy & Paula Hinz (24)
- 17 Tonia & Jeremy* Hansen (3)



September Birthdays

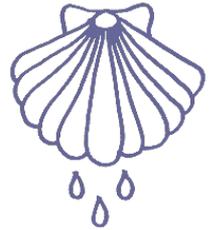
- 2 Brenda Douglass, Pam Woolery
- 6 Jeremy Hinz
- 12 Bev Johnson
- 14 Jill Collins, Larry Dunham

- 18 Rick King
- 20 Laura Collins
- 23 Gracen Klima
- 24 Rachel Wagner
- 25 Bob Wolff
- 28 Ann Wiechert



September Baptismal Birthdays

- 3 Corey Randall
- 5 Austin Deitrick
- 7 Hunter Brackin
- 8 Carmen Hinz
- 11 Charlotte Collins, Laura Collins
- 13 Sean Hewitt, Pastor Menet
- 16 Josh Crawford
- 20 Megan Galle
- 26 Darrin Wireman
- 27 Pam Woolery
- 29 Jennifer Holman



News & Events

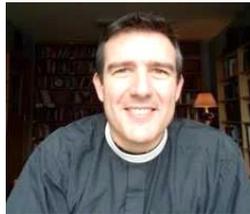


**On
September**

we be hosting a
Lutheran

Davenport, IA titled "Has
Christianity Failed?" Session

The Four Fountains of American Theology; How I Became a Lutheran: Avoiding the Pride/Despair Teeter-Totter; and Comfort and Peace for the Weary. Registration is open online through September 13 at doxology.us/events/2019-sep-ia-wolfmueller-seminar/. The cost is \$15 for adults and \$10 for students. More information is available on the bulletin board in the parish hall.



**Saturday,
21, Pastor Bryan
Wolfmueller of
DOXOLOGY** will
seminar at Trinity
Church in
American
topics will include:

Mike and Vickey Smith have dropped their landline phone. Their cell phone numbers are available in the church directory.

LWML News: Women of Faith met for dinner out August 13 with 8 members present. We enjoyed delicious food and great conversation at Rodney's restaurant in downtown Waterloo. Our next meeting will be Sept. 10, 6:30 p.m. at Faith. Pastor Menet will lead us in a Bible study, and we will also plan for ideas for future meetings. All women are invited to join us.

Calling all ladies: It's that time of year again, ladies! The LWML Fall Rally is coming soon. Please join the ladies of College Hill Lutheran Church as we enjoy fellowship, food, and fun. Put September 28 at 8:30 a.m. on your calendars. There will be a light breakfast served. This year we will hear from two Pastors of LCMS U churches and how Campus Ministry is growing and how it has impacted their life. The Campus Ministries at both churches are looking for several items that students need in order to have a successful school year. Help build their Community Chests with disposable plates, cups, bowls, silverware, individual container of chips or snack foods, cookies like Chips Ahoy or Oreos, various snacks (i.e. trail mix, granola bars, Cheese-Its, etc.), easy to make non-perishable foods such as Easy Mac, microwaveable soup, small jars of peanut butter and jelly, etc., and pop. It will be a great time of fellowship and The Word. Hope to see you all there.

Sunday School Schedule:

- Sept. 1:** Jacob's Family (Genesis 29:1-30:24)
- Sept. 8:** Esau Forgives Jacob (Gen. 31:3, 32-33)
- Sept. 15:** Joseph and His Brothers (Gen. 37)
- Sept 22:** Joseph's Troubles (Gen. 39)
- Sept. 29:** Joseph Feeds Egypt (Gen. 40-41)



Wednesday School: Wednesday School begins on September 4. Class time will be from 6-7 p.m. followed by Vespers from 7-7:30 p.m. The younger pre-confirmation class will have a brief opening and lesson time. Study will begin on the creeds, specifically the Apostles' Creed. We will be using *My First Catechism*, learning vocabulary, having a Bible study and an activity, and keeping a prayer journal.

Since there are no confirmation age children this year, Pastor Menet will be leading a class on Martin Luther's Large Catechism in the parish hall for those recently confirmed as well as any adults who have interest. Please join us as we teach and share the faith we confess and believe to our younger generations. If you have any questions, contact Vickey Smith (239-4638) or Pastor Menet.

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it. Proverbs 22:6

A BIG thank you to everyone who attended the picnic/fun day on August 25! As the family of Faith, there was plenty of food, help, and fun for all ages. The weather was also a blessing. We give thanks to God for the special fellowship we shared together. Watch for details to come on another fun family event this fall.

Is your child starting band or orchestra, or has your child been begging you to learn the piano or organ? Consider College Hill Music Conservatory for lessons! We are now offering music lessons on a variety of instruments. Lessons at CHMC are in a Christian environment and we encourage raising up future church musicians. Contact Deaconess Faith Swenson at chconservatory@gmail.com or 218-329-8515.



Faith Life Team Updates

The Faith Lutheran Life Team exists to equip our church to be Gospel-motivated voices for every human life.

On Sunday, September 15, Pastor Salemink, executive director of Lutherans For Life, will be hosting a seminar at Faith titled “This Is My Body: Christian Compassion and Courage Concerning Sexuality and Gender”. He will also be preaching that morning and leading Bible study. The Life Team will then be hosting a potluck, and the seminar will begin at 2 p.m. Please consider bringing a dish to share and joining us for this educational day!



Our culture is wrestling with questions about sexuality and gender. Many of our communities, congregations, and families are struggling with these issues as well. How do our bodies reflect and confess the grace of God? For what privileges and responsibilities has He made us male and female? How does He safeguard these gifts? How can we incorporate and care for individuals experiencing suffering and temptation related to sexuality and gender? How may we speak truth and show love in such sensitive situations? We will be motivated by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We will examine instruction from Scripture, engage observations of science, and explore opportunities for servanthood.

Rev. Michael W. Salemink began serving as executive director of Lutherans For Life in January 2016. He received a B.A. in Theology from Concordia University Chicago, River Forest, Ill., in 1999 and a Master of Divinity from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., in 2003. He has served as pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church, Webster, Minn., (2003-2005) and as associate pastor of St. James Lutheran Church and School in Lafayette, Ind. (2005-2015). Pastor Salemink and his wife, Heather, have been married 19 years and reside in St. Louis, Mo., where they attend Immanuel Lutheran Church, Olivette, with their three sons: Christian, Nathan, and Luke. Pastor Salemink writes regularly and speaks nationwide equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices for life.



Here we go again...40 Days for Life starts Wednesday, September 25! We will be holding our kickoff rally on Monday, September 23. At 5 p.m. we will meet at Planned Parenthood for a mini service, and then go to Valley Lutheran for a showing of the movie *Unplanned* at 5:30. (Note: this movie is rated R for some disturbing/bloody images as it portrays both a surgical and a chemical abortion. Parents might consider leaving children at home.) We will have concessions available for purchase and will go over instructions for praying at Planned Parenthood. This worldwide campaign is shaping up to be the largest one yet, so

don't miss out! Come join us and be a part of the beginning of the end of abortion!

If you would like to sign up to pray, visit 40daysforlife.com/local-campaigns/cedar-falls/. If you have questions, talk to Kie Maas or Katie Dalluge.

Speaking of 40 Days for Life...Joyce McBride and Tonia Hansen will be manning the 40 DFL booth at Cattle Congress (September 12-15). Stop by and say hello if you are there!

Lutherans For Life of Iowa State Conference will be in Cedar Rapids this fall! Join us on Saturday, **September 28, 2019** at **Trinity Lutheran Church & School**, 1361 7th Ave SW, Cedar Rapids, IA. Our featured presenter will be Brian Young, Lutheran educator and creator of Semisaurus, an air-conditioned creation museum in a semi-trailer. He will also speak about how the theology of creation relates to life issues today. Registration begins at 9:30 AM. You will then be able to listen to Brian's presentations, enjoy a light lunch (free-will donation), and have time to visit Semisaurus. The

conference will conclude at 2:00 PM with a brief business meeting for LYF members.

The next Life Team meeting will be on Monday, September 16 at 6:00 p.m.

Our missionary families:

Rev. David Preus and family in the



Dominican Republic: Rev. David and Jennifer Preus serve the Lord as career missionaries through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) in the Dominican Republic. In this role, David plants new churches in this country. He forms and develops groups of believers into mature, self-sustaining and self-replicating congregations through Word and Sacrament ministry. He also helps with theological education as needed and works with local deaconesses in their mercy care ministries throughout the country. lcms.org/Preus

Rev. Micah Wildauer and family in Togo

Pastor Wildauer teaches at The Lutheran Center for Theological Studies (CLET) which serves as a regional seminary for the French-speaking countries of West and Central Africa. ***For further updates of our family and life in West Africa, check out Robin's blog at www.wildauersgototogo.blogspot.com***



From the Duke University Health Notes:

What You Should Know About Measuring Blood Pressure

There's a good chance that your doctor, nurse, or medical assistant is making mistakes that can result in an incorrect blood pressure reading, according to the American Heart Association. Watch out for these common issues:

- If the cuff has been placed on top of your clothing, it can add 10 to 40 mmHg.
- Chatting with your caregiver can add 10 to 15 mmHg.
- If your back or arm is unsupported or your feet are dangling from the exam table, it can add another 5 to 10 mmHg. Even crossing your legs can add 2 to 8 mmHg.
- A full bladder can add 10 to 15 mmHg.

Whether you monitor your blood pressure at home or in the doctor's office, use the bathroom first, and then sit quietly for at least five minutes. Sit up straight with your back supported and feet on the floor. Make sure the cuff is on bare skin, and don't talk during the measurement.

(Article provided by Gerri Mahnke)

Zoe Prayer Update

Zoe Jones is the granddaughter of Mike & Vickey Smith, daughter to Jamie & Josh Jones, and sister to older brother Noah, all residing in Rapid City, South Dakota.

Zoe's journey began when she arrived three months early at 1.13 oz and 13 inches long on February 27, 2009. She has dealt with many health issues from the start and it continues with each day. She has had partial loss of hearing from infancy and was diagnosed with cerebral palsy with high dystonia and spasticity. All of this affects muscle tightness and stiffness, interfering with normal movement. This requires care for everything: eating, dressing, positioning to sit or lie down, and being strapped in to stay put and stay safe. Medications, physical therapy, and a team of professionals assist her family in caring for her.

As she has grown (she is now 10 years old, a 5th grader), issues have also changed and made it more difficult to care for her and her overall comfort and quality of daily life. On October 7, she will be facing a rhizotomy, a serious neurological procedure that selectively destroys nerve roots in the spinal cord. It is the next step in trying to calm her body and bring more comfort. This has been a difficult decision for Josh and Jamie and our family. Through prayer and medical guidance, God will continue to keep Zoe in His care as He always has.

Your prayers and concerns continue to support Zoe and all of her family. When her surgery rolls around, we will be absent to lend help and support. We appreciate your kind words, love, and care. Bless you.

Papa Mike & Grama Vickey Smith

There is a box in the narthex where you can leave cards, prayers, drawings, or notes of encouragement for Zoe and her family, or you can mail them to:

**Josh & Jamie Jones
4807 Baldwin St.
Rapid City, SD 57702**





Valley Lutheran School

4520 Rownd St., Cedar Falls

www.vlscrusaders.org

Phone: (319)266-4565 Fax (319)266-4054

By the grace of God, Valley Lutheran School strives to inspire students by strengthening faith in Christ, pursuing academic excellence and preparing hearts for service.

2019-20 SCHOOL THEME: **SHINE LIKE STARS**

“that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine like stars in the world”
Philippians 2:15

Keep September 6 open for dinner! The High School Volleyball team is having a fundraiser from 4:30-7 p.m. to help support the volleyball program. Dinner is **all you can eat** hot beef or hot turkey, mashed potatoes & gravy, stuffing, corn, green beans, and many different desserts! Free will donations are gladly accepted.

Get your team ready for the 2019 Crusader Golf Classic! The event is scheduled for Friday, September 20 at the Waverly Golf Course. Join us for lunch at 11:30 a.m. before you head out onto the greens for a shot gun start at 1:00 p.m. The cost for the Crusader Classic is \$60 per player. The cost includes lunch, golf cart and 18 holes of golf. Registration deadline is Monday, September 16. Don't wait; get your team together today! Call Anne Meyer-Schmitz at 319-266-4565 or contact her via email at anne.meyerschmitz@vlscrusaders.org



The new Box Tops for Education program is now underway! If you would like help learning how to use the app, talk to Katie.

From *Christian Citizenship* by Linda Bartlett

House Built on Lies Will Collapse

In his book, *Outlasting the Gay Revolution: Where Homosexual Activism Is Going and How To Turn the Tide*, Michael Brown, Ph.D., issues a wake-up call to the faithful and freedom-loving throughout the country. He spells out eight principles to help Americans with conservative moral values outlast the gay revolution: never compromise your convictions, take the high moral ground, cherish sexual purity, defend natural marriage, celebrate gender distinctions, propagate truth, turn to God, and refuse to throw in the towel.

“What will happen,” Brown asks, “when the public realizes they have supported a cause based on lies more than truth and that they have been conned by the media ... What happens when the lie is exposed? What will happen when people realize that opposition to the normalizing of homosexuality and the redefining of marriage is not based on hate but on concern for what is best for society—and that those who have been branded homophobes and bigots are actually caring and compassionate people? How will they react when they learn that there are often serious differences between homosexual relationships and heterosexual relationships, that gay suffering is not primarily due to homophobia, that homosexuality is not innate or immutable, and that gay is not the new black (let alone transgender being the new black) and therefore the battle for gay rights is not the same as the civil rights struggle?” (From *Outlasting the Gay Revolution* by Michael L. Brown, Ph.D., 2015)

What can we do? “We can be sure,” says Brown, that “a revolution built on lies will ultimately fail, and those who stand on the side of truth will outlast the lies. As John wrote in his Gospel, ‘And the light shines on in the darkness, but the darkness has not mastered it’ (John 1:5 NET).” Therefore, we can “speak the truth and write the truth and proclaim the truth and spread the truth without fear. Propagate the truth with wisdom and love and boldness.” No matter if we are ridiculed on social media or singled out for criticism in the workplace or labeled a “hater” by family members, we can speak the truth in love. “People may *mock* [our] words for the short term, but they will *mark* [our] words over the long term.”

Please pray for faithfulness and that God’s will be done... in Jesus’ name.

God Teaches Nothing New or Different

We have heard it said: The culture has changed. Yes, and what does this mean? For the 21st century churchgoer, it too often means that the

Church must change, too. It means that either God has changed, or we have moved beyond God or St. Paul who wrote what he was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write. For example, “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). Because God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow, His law does not change. Neither does His Gospel. Continuing on, we read, “And such *were* some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

It is a foolish thing for the Christian who is constantly tempted by Satan, the world, and his own sinful nature to despise the weapon of God’s unchanging Word. God’s Word of law warns us and shows us our sin. His Word of Gospel brings hope and newness of life in Jesus Christ. Those who *were* caught up in—but repented of—the sin of sexual immorality, adultery, or homosexuality can tell us that God does not change, but His washed, sanctified, and justified people do.

What can we do? We can daily read and become familiar with God’s Word. We can refrain from quoting Scripture out of context. We should not despise the tool of the *Small Catechism* which is a short and brief summary of all the Holy Scriptures. We can trust that God “always keeps teaching the same thing and does not take up anything new or different . . . Can we finish learning in one hour what God Himself cannot finish teaching?” (Large Catechism, Longer Preface 15-18.)

Please pray that the Church engage society with the unchanging Word of God... in Jesus’ name.

