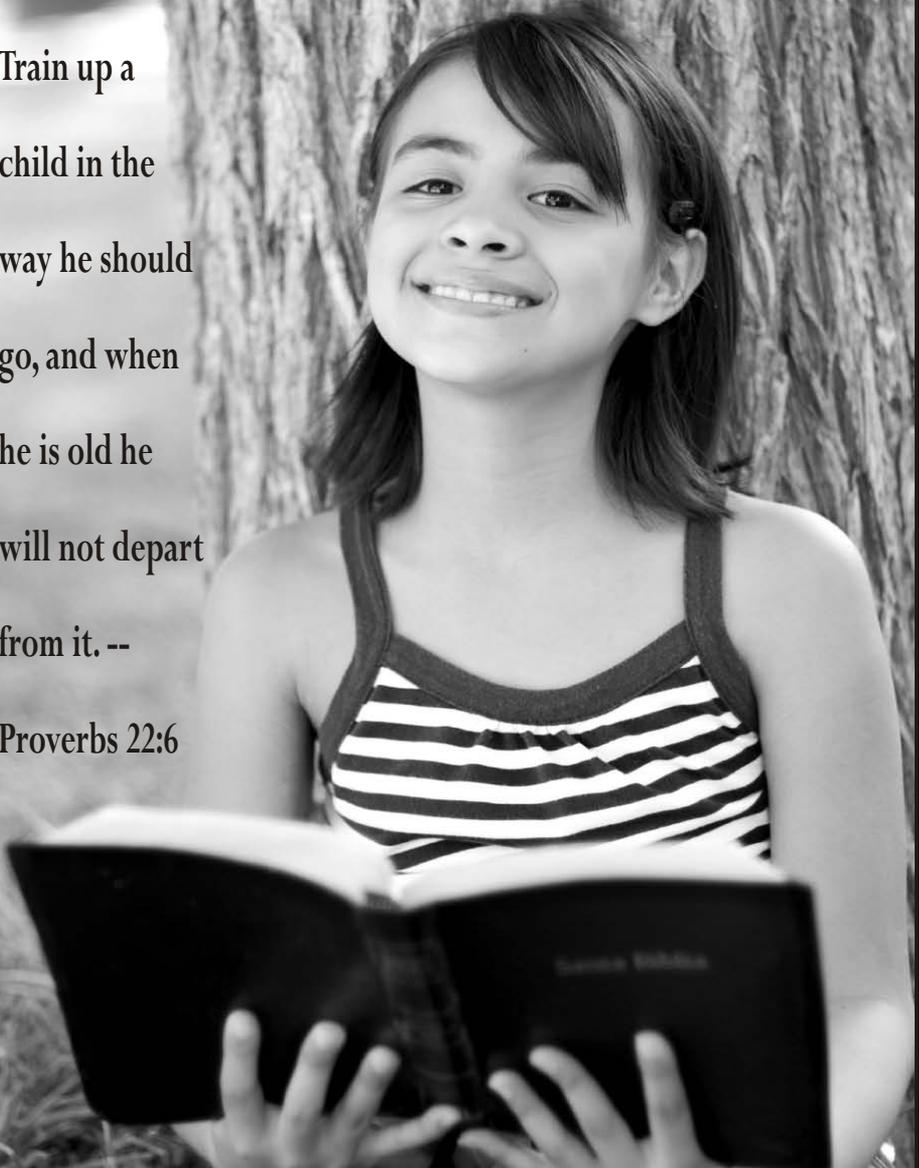


Lutheran Spokesman

Train up a
child in the
way he should
go, and when
he is old he
will not depart
from it. --

Proverbs 22:6



EDUCATION FOR LIFE!

Why do we educate our children? Why does our government spend billions of dollars on education? Why do many adults go back to school?

The answer is quite simple. It is because education can improve our lives. From a basic understanding of hygiene (which can keep us safe from many diseases) to a higher education (which can help land us a high paying job), education helps to make life better.

The better the education, the more opportunities one has in life. So we might say that education is for life.

Education for REAL Life

There is a limit to what worldly education can do. Perhaps it can help us get a high paying job, but money can't buy happiness. Money can't gain security or relationships or comfort or peace or anything that makes life worth living. Jesus said, "One's life does not consist in the abundance of the things

he possesses" (Lk. 12:15).

Jesus alone is able to give us the "abundant life." Such life is a life truly worth living—a life full of meaning and purpose, of contentment and confidence, of comfort and joy. Most of all, it is a life with God which enjoys His presence and fulfillment always, now and forever.

The truly abundant life can be achieved only through Christ's education. Throughout His ministry Jesus taught the people so that they could have that abundant life in and through and with Him.

Still today Jesus teaches us in His Word. That is real education for real life. That is a knowledge we can't LIVE without, as Jesus said, "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ

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whom You have sent” (Jn. 17:3). That is Christian Education!

Education for Our WHOLE Life

Such education needs to continue ALL our life.

God entrusts parents with the education of their children. He commands, “These words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up” (Deut. 6:6-7).

God’s Word applies to every area of life. It is able to make us “wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 3:15), and it is able to teach us all we need to know about God and ourselves, about life and relationships. It is able to teach us to know right from wrong.

When they finish high school, many go on to higher education in various secular colleges or universities. But only God’s Word is TRUTH. Non-Christian places of higher education are full of the lies and deceptions of human philosophies.

Christ’s education alone can teach us to know the truth, to recognize and be discerning of the errors of the world.

A HIGHER Education

Talk about a HIGHER education! God’s Word transcends all human wisdom.

When we have completed a course of formal, worldly education, it is done; our Christian education, however, continues to teach and equip us. For example, a Christian education guides us to recognize and avoid falling into the dishonest ways of the business world; it teaches us how to choose a spouse who will truly complement our life, working at our side in God’s kingdom.

There is no end to the benefit and blessing of Christ’s education. Even as we grow old and physical strength declines, it teaches us to grow old gracefully, finding our strength in Him; it gives us wisdom to pass on to future generations; it gives us comfort and strength in our dying day; it enables us to face the end of this life with the joy and anticipation of a whole new, wonderful beginning.

Truly nothing is more valuable for our lives on this Earth than an on-going Christian Education. May we treasure such an education and make it a priority for our children and ourselves in our homes and churches. It is the only true education for Life!

—*Pastor David Reim*
Vernon BC (Canada)



“For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the LORD made the heavens.” —Psalm 96:4-5

The LORD Jehovah is to be feared!

If we set our Bible on its spine and open it to the middle, chances are we

will find ourselves reading from the Psalms. The book of Psalms is the

hymnal of the Bible, and this 96th hymn begins with an invitation. In the first three verses God invites all the Earth to 1) sing to the LORD; 2) bless His Name; and 3) proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.

This is not an invitation to sing, praise, and proclaim just any God or some nebulous god of many names and faces. Far from it! All are called upon to sing (to bless and proclaim the salvation) of the LORD (Jehovah or Yahwe)—the God of mercy, the God of the covenant. While many today use the name ‘Lord’ to refer to many different gods, here the name is not general, but specific; it is capitalized because it is the personal name of the God of mercy.

Why should all the Earth sing to the LORD? Why isn’t this a general invitation for people to worship the god of their choice? “For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods.”

This is surely politically incorrect in our day. “Enlightened” people say that it is the height of arrogance and folly to claim that one person’s God is better and more worthy of praise than another’s. Yet that is exactly what is said of the LORD our God!

The world around us says it doesn’t matter in whom we trust; all that’s important is that we trust in something or someone. The Word asserts that the LORD is unique and is to be held in esteem above all others—and this is not an admission or indication that other gods even exist!

Fixed On Jesus!

In fact, this psalm actually says something completely different: “For all the gods of the peoples are idols,



But the LORD made the heavens.”

Once more, this is surely politically incorrect today. It is considered intolerant to suggest to someone that “Your god is a nothing, a figment of your imagination.” Despite this, the Word declares that all the ‘so-called’ gods of the nations are idols—literally ‘nothings’!

Since these gods are ‘nothings,’ they can do nothing! It matters not what people think their gods can do. The prophets of Baal believed fervently that their ‘god’ could consume the sacrificial bull on Mount Carmel (1 Kgs. 18:20ff). From morning to noon they called upon Baal to hear them...but there was no answer. They continued to pray until the evening—even going so far as to cut themselves with their weapons...there was no answer...because Baal is imaginary.

“BUT...the LORD made the heavens.” He distinguished himself from all other ‘so-called gods’ by revealing His name and His glory in His Word. He is to be distinguished from all other ‘so-called gods,’ because He made the heavens and the Earth and all that is in them. He is deserving of praise because He is our Creator.

Yes, the LORD created humankind ...but, sad to say, sinful humankind responds by creating its own gods.

Even more, the LORD Himself has done what was necessary to rescue us

all. He sent His Son Jesus Christ to rescue us. Jesus accomplished our rescue by living for us and by taking our sin and guilt on Himself. While the gods of the peoples have done NOTHING, Jesus Christ has done EVERYTHING to redeem us.

The LORD, the Creator of the Universe, loves us and in granting us

faith in His Son has rescued us from the darkness and ignorance of unbelief.

Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus and your ears attentive to His Word. Let your lives be a daily song of praise to Him who has created and redeemed you!

—*Pastor Andrew Schaller*
Watertown, South Dakota



On the subject of Marriage...

DON'T BE AFRAID TO SPEAK THE TRUTH

The local newspaper carried a picture of two people cutting a wedding cake. Nothing unusual about that—except that this “couple” consisted of two women. They were celebrating the ruling of the California Supreme Court legalizing same sex marriages in that state.

How bold and brazen the children of this world have become in their assaults on God’s institution of marriage!

For many of us the scene in that newspaper photo may seem like something from another world; we may not know anyone who would do something like that.

But assaults on marriage are not something from another world; they are close to home. It has become common for men and women to live together without being married and to do so openly and often without a trace of shame. The practice has become so widespread that most of us know at least one such couple. Many of them are young people who want the bene-



fits of marriage without the responsibilities. But these days many are middle-aged or older couples who, for one reason or another, find it convenient to simply move in together rather than make a formal and legally binding commitment to one another.

Sad to say, the live-in situation that we know of may involve a son, daughter, or other close relative. It may involve a member of our congregation, a man or woman who once stood before the altar, professed faith in the Holy Trinity, and promised to conform his or her life to the rule of His Word. When this happens, people are taking direction from the world rather than from the Word of God. They are basing their choices on what is acceptable to

their worldly friends and neighbors rather than on what is pleasing to God.

Scripture Speaks Plainly

Nor is the problem only with those who flagrantly violate the Word of God which says, “Flee sexual immorality” (1 Cor. 10:8). It is also with the weakness of parents and others who are unwilling to say clearly that sex outside of marriage is offensive to God.

We who know what God says about marriage ought not be afraid to speak the truth. Scripture speaks plainly on the subject, warning that the sexually immoral will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9,10; Rev. 21:8; 22:15). We should not keep quiet for fear of angering or alienating a family member or friend who has strayed into a sinful way of life. We should speak the truth confidently, humbly, in love.

No one has reason to be self-righteous when speaking against sexual

sins. The temptation to impurity in thought, word, or deed is a universal one. And Jesus teaches us that adultery committed in thought is as much a sin as is the deed (Mt. 5:28). Here as with all other sins, the difference between the godly and ungodly is repentance.

God’s Word gives us a wonderful antidote to the despising of marriage that is at the root of so many sexual sins. Marriage in our day is derided as a ball and chain for men and slavery for women, lightly dismissed as “just a piece of paper” by those who would dispense with it. But the Scriptures teach that marriage is God’s good plan for His creatures. To believers it is a picture of Christ’s love and faithfulness to His church (see Ephesians 5:22-29). Marriage is still a great blessing to those who enter into it and stay with it.

—Pastor John Klatt
Rapid City, South Dakota



The Discourses of Christ

Confessing Christ—Luke 12:8-12

Confess Christ Before Men

Jesus has spoken of the risks that are inherent with discipleship. All things kept secret will be revealed (12:3), so there is little to be gained by practicing a secretive type of religion.

Also, persecutions will come, so there is little use in worrying about what people might do, when what matters is, what is God capable of

doing? (12:5) Our worth to the Lord, Jesus states—in a masterful stroke of understatement—is “more than many sparrows.” So there is no need to fear.

But now He continues with encouragement and warning. There is a wonderful promise for the person who acts by faith and stands up for Christ: “Whoever confesses Me before men,

him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God.”

There was a time, friend, when the angels of heaven rejoiced to see you turn from sin and death. They saw you repent and believe the good news that we are accepted by God for the sake of Jesus Christ.

Now we who believe look forward to the day when Christ will introduce us to these same heavenly beings as one of His friends, one of His faithful, one of those who “came out of the great tribulation and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (Rev. 7:14).

What a great and marvelous day that will be! How the angels will cheer the kindness of God in bringing this about—that you and I were delivered to see that day!

But that can only happen if we are faithful to Christ, and faithfulness requires confession—speaking up when necessary to make our faith and hope known. I believe that the eternal, glorious Son of God became flesh and atoned for my sins on the cross, suffering inconceivable horrors to spare me from them, and then freely giving this to me through Spirit-worked faith. Now, let me confess Christ before the world—because I love Him and because I love my neighbor and would want him to know what I know.

Ashamed of Christ?

Faith alone saves, but a sincere readiness to confess that faith cannot be far behind!

There is a warning here for those who claim to be disciples of Christ but are unwilling to acknowledge and hold forth that faith. If we are ashamed to tell of Christ, then, tragically, He will

be ashamed to speak of us. The one who denies Christ in this life denies for himself those promised joys in heaven.

These are sobering words, for how often is our faith challenged and tested, and we come up short? We could have spoken of Christ to that stranger, but hesitated; we wanted to take a moral stand at work; we wanted to hold to a scriptural, confessional position in our church but caved in under pressure.

How often are we weak, and our weakness threatens to do us in?

Confessing Christ—that’s not a duty but the solution! Confess our sins to Him and learn again the timeless value of His grace and love. He is telling us, in our weakness, “anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man it will be forgiven him.”

Yes, even when we have miserably failed to stand our ground of faith, we will find forgiveness at the foot of the cross. And with forgiveness, faith is strengthened, love toward Jesus is perfected, and yes, confessional zeal is inflamed.

But it is a different matter when, in stubborn, self-righteous resistance, we refuse the Holy Spirit who appeals to us to repent of our errors and return in repentance. The refusal to repent and obey the Holy Spirit’s invitation to believe the gospel is, effectively, the only sin that damns.

But listen to the Holy Spirit. He will lead you into the truth. Often He will bring to mind scripture that we have previously studied and embraced, or He will engage our understanding of the doctrine.

In any case, when a confessional moment arises—a challenge before leaders, an awkward moment among friends, or a ‘teaching’ opportunity

with our youth—pray for the Holy Spirit to lead us and give us the words for the moment.

For the Spirit will bring forth words

that will glorify our blessed Lord and Savior.

—Pastor Peter Reim
Loveland, Colorado



The Person of Christ

Jesus is unique in His person. He is the only one in history who could be defined as true God and true Man.

The Scriptures show clearly that Jesus has the attributes of God. God has certain features that no one else possesses. He is eternal (John 1:1). He is holy (2 Corinthians 5:21). He is all powerful (Luke 8:25), all knowing (John 21:17), and present everywhere at once (Matthew 28:20). He does not change (Hebrews 13:8). Every human being has a beginning. Humans are sinners. We have limitations in strength and knowledge and location. We as humans age every day. Jesus also showed His divinity in His involvement in the creation of world (John 1:3) and the many miracles that He did while He walked this Earth.

At the same time Jesus showed all the attributes of a human being—except for sin. Jesus was born (Luke 2:12), He had a human body (Luke 24:39), He grew up (Luke 2:52), He was thirsty (John 19:29), He cried (John 11:35), and He died (Matthew 27:50).

We then have to say that Jesus was both God and Man. However, we will not say that He was part God and part Man (like some gods in false religions). That is human thinking. We are used to doing that when we talk about races. A child might be half Indian and half English. But the Person of Christ is

special. It is accurate to say that He is 100% God and 100% Man. This is God's math, not our own. We call the fact that Jesus is true God and true Man in one Person the "personal union" of Christ.

In this personal union, whatever Jesus did, He did as both God and Man. This is called the communication of attributes. This means that it would be accurate to say that—in the case of Jesus—God was born, God wept, God was thirsty, and God died.

Both Natures

It had to be this way if we are to be saved. Jesus had to have both natures fully to solve our problem of sin.

Sinners have two problems that need to be solved. The first one involved having a debt of sin removed. We have disobeyed our holy God's commands. Those sins need to be taken away and removed from our record. Think of a fine that needed to be paid. There is a penalty for sin (Romans 6:23).

On the other hand, God requires us to do what is right. Besides avoiding the wrong and piling up negatives, there is a positive column that needs to be filled. For example, in the Fifth Commandment, not only are we required to not murder and hurt and

hate, but also we are supposed to love our neighbor and help and be a friend to him in every bodily need. If somehow we would be able to avoid hating, we would still have to actively love in order to keep that commandment.

As true God and true Man Jesus was able to solve both problems. As God, He is above the Law. He then became Man in order to put Himself under the Law (Gal. 4:4-5). As God and Man He was able to keep the entire Law perfectly in our place, doing all the right, positive things that we could never do. This is His “active obedience.” He was fulfilling all righteousness in our place, and so He gave us what was lacking.

Jesus became Man in order that He

might have a body to be sacrificed. We know that God cannot die. Yet with the attributes of God and Man, it is accurate to say that God died, and thus Jesus was the perfect sacrifice able to pay for sin. This is called His “passive obedience.” He was receiving the punishment for sin that we deserved and removing what would cause our eternal death.

Without Jesus being true God and true Man, it would be impossible for us to be saved. We guard this teaching very carefully as well as everything that surrounds it (such as the virgin birth).

—*Pastor Michael Schierenbeck*
Markesan, Wisconsin



FROM CRADLE TO GRAVE

In this psalm the Spirit led an aging David to write an entire life review that started from the moment the Lord took David from his mother’s womb. It is recorded for our instruction that we might see our lives in the Spirit perspective with which the Lord has blessed us even as He blessed David.

So much of what we see as “our lives” is not about us. It is not about our desires, our dreams and ambitions, our accomplishments, our strength, our glory, and certainly not about our righteousness. It is about the Lord and the continual presence of His grace and power in our lives!

As a mature Christian looks back over a life of grace and blessing, it becomes increasingly clear that what may be observed about God’s faithful-

THE PSALMS
THE CHRISTIAN’S
PRAYER BOOK
—Please read Psalm 71—

ness in David’s life is true in each of our lives also. We also confess, “You are my rock and my fortress” (Ps. 71:3).

Late in life David faced fierce attacks from those who should have been near and dear to him. They saw David as infirm. They saw his weakness as an opportunity to attack him. However, God remained David’s strength and protection. Under the righteousness of God, David was as safe and secure as ever. So he con-

fessed, “You are my hope, O Lord GOD. You are my trust from my youth” (v. 5).

This is our confidence too. From cradle to grave we are secure in the Lord. While others may perceive us as weak, vulnerable—in our advancing years, even as infirm—we are still strong in the Lord. God is faithful. His righteousness and His grace endure all the days of our lives.

And that is the testimony of our lives. As God had protected David from the enemies of his youth—the bear, the lion, the giant Goliath, evil King Saul—so also the Lord was with David, protecting and preserving him in his mature years.

Witnessing to God’s Faithfulness

As we have the grace to look back in life, we see how God’s loving hand has shielded us and delivered us from every

evil. The testimony of our own lives confirms the truth that God’s promises are sure, His Word is truth, and His righteousness endures to all generations. So we join our voice with David’s, “I will hope continually, and will praise You yet more and more. My mouth shall tell of Your righteousness And Your salvation all the day” (vv. 14-15).

What David knew by faith as the sure promises of God, we are blessed to know as the fulfilled promises of God. This salvation that David knew has brought us the same deliverance from sin, death, and the power of the devil. Knowing how Christ died for us gives us strength to go forward in life unto the glorious day.

We know that it is not our strength that has been there throughout our lives, but God’s, and that strength shall never diminish. David’s testimony was: “I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD; I will make mention of Your righteous-



St. Stephen of Mountain View, Calif. hosted the Pacific Coast Conference in April.



Opposite (l-r): Pastors Neal Radichel, Paul Krause, Caleb Schaller, Paul Naumann, Terrel Kesterson, Delwyn Maas, Steven Karp, Bertram Naumann, David Reim, Rollin Reim

ness, Yours only” (v. 16).

Yes, there were those who wanted old David “out of the way.” All too often older Christians are tempted to think that they are only a burden, and that it might be better if they were out of the way, for they have a heavenly home waiting for them.

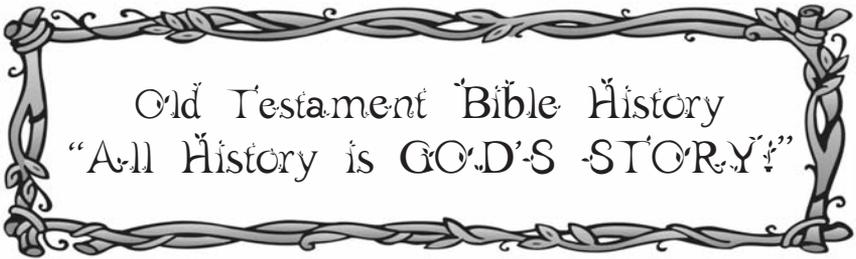
But the Lord who sustains us in life has a purpose for the older Christian to fulfill. The child of God who has become old and gray-headed is here as a witness of God’s faithfulness and power to the next generation (v. 18).

May we never lose sight of the significant purpose which God has given

us in praising His name, joyfully singing of the salvation which He has given us in Christ Jesus. We have been redeemed. We have hope and life in the name of the Lord. The testimony of a Christian from cradle to grave is always, “My tongue also shall talk of Your righteousness all the day long” (v. 24).

May each of us know with the confidence of faith that our trust in the Lord is not misplaced. We are the Lord’s—from cradle to grave, and THEN onward to life everlasting!

—Pastor Theodore Barthels
Austin, Minnesota



Old Testament Bible History
“All History is GOD’S STORY!”

No. 3 in Series: Genesis 3

“Knowing Good and Evil”

Know your enemy!

We are to “resist” our enemy, the devil, who “walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet. 5:8-9).

To resist the devil effectively we need to know him and how he operates. Scripture tell us that our adversary is a “murderer from the beginning” and “does not stand in the truth” (Jn. 8:44).

As Moses opens his account of the fall of man, it should not surprise us then that we find Satan assuming a

form other than his own—that of a serpent—in order to seduce our first parents and steal from them God’s gift of life.

How did the devil seduce Adam and Eve? He began with a question: “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’” (Gen. 3:1) Satan’s goal was to lead Adam and Eve to question God’s love for mankind. “If God truly loved us, why would He deprive us of anything...especially knowledge?” he

wanted them to wonder!

Satan’s arsenal, however, was not limited to questions. When Eve’s answer betrayed an inaccurate understanding of God’s command, Satan continued with a lie: “You will not surely die!” (Gen. 3:4) Satan contradicted God’s Word, attempting to confuse Eve, before casting before her his lure—“In the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (Gen. 3:5).

The possibility of such mental delight combined with fruit “pleasant to the eyes” was all that was needed: “She took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate” (Gen. 3:6).

The devil has not changed his methods of seduction. He has not had to, for his questions, lies, and lures still prove to be effective tools of deception even today.

To resist these temptations, it is

important to know your enemy!

Know yourself!

After the fall Adam and Eve immediately recognized that they were naked—the moral perfection they once possessed was lost!

When they later heard the voice of the LORD God, they were afraid—the spiritual perfection they once possessed was lost!

They then attempted to hide from God in the midst of the garden—the mental perfection they once possessed was also lost!

These consequences of sin—the loss of the perfect image of God—became evident when God confronted Adam and Eve with their sin. Adam did not accept responsibility for his sin. He did what was now natural—blaming others: “*The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate*” (Gen. 3:12).

In his fallen state Adam could only



Trinity, Watertown, S. Dak. hosted the West Central Delegate Conference in May. (Bottom) Pastor Mike Roehl explains plans for the new Academic Center at ILC.

“...To resist these temptations, it is important to know your enemy!...To know yourself is rightfully to walk humbly before your God!... May the Spirit lead you to know your enemy, yourself, and above all your God!”

blame Eve as Satan’s secondary instrument and God Himself for giving him what was obviously in his mind a defective bride! Eve did no better. When confronted with Adam’s accusation, she deflected the blame: “The serpent deceived me, and I ate” (Gen. 3:13). God’s creation was at fault—and God Himself by virtue of His close connection to it.

We are no different today! By nature we all suffer from moral, spiritual, and mental imperfection! We too fail to accept responsibility for our sins, and so often find ourselves blaming others as well as questioning God!

To know yourself is rightfully to walk humbly before your God!

Know your God!

How patient was our LORD God as He dealt with our first parents! He did not angrily command them to show themselves, nor did He immediately condemn them. He asked questions—not to tempt Adam and Eve to sin, but

rather to confront them with their sin and lead them to understand that they were helpless in the face of its consequences. Only then would they be prepared to receive the blessed assurance of God’s abiding love.

Notice that God did not dismiss Adam and Eve as they bickered. He rather turned His attention to Satan and announced His judgment upon Satan’s chosen vehicle—the serpent—and upon Satan himself.

God Himself would intervene: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed” (Gen. 3:15). God would reclaim His created beings, sending His Spirit to bring them to faith and so to create within their hearts a hatred of Satan and all things evil.

That “Seed” of the woman, God said, would take up mankind’s cause and “bruise” Satan’s head—defeating him eternally, while the Seed’s own “heel” would likewise be bruised on Calvary’s cross (Gen. 3:15).

The battle was thus engaged, good and evil were defined, and the knowledge thereof clearly recorded for all to read, understand, and believe.

May the Spirit lead you to know your enemy, yourself, and above all your God!

*—Pastor Paul D. Nolting
Mankato, Minnesota*



Prince of Peace, Hecla, S. Dak., hosted CLC-East Africa Pastor Jeremiah Issangya in June. Board of Missions member Larry Hansen and Pastor Nathan Pfeiffer are with the guest speaker.

Seventh in a series—

“Savoring the Spirit-fruit” *Gentleness*

As we make our way through the list of fruits of the Spirit found in Galatians 5, near the end is “gentleness.”

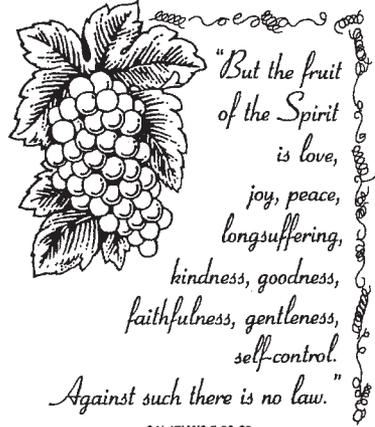
This word conveys a special kind of attitude, temperament, or character and a most desirable manner of behavior toward others. This Spirit-chosen word “gentleness” includes the qualities of being meek and humble in spirit as well as mild in manner, showing gentle friendliness.

While this is one of the last fruits of the Spirit on the list, it is no less important than the other fruits which precede it.

Hearing the world speak about being meek, mild, and gentle, we might be led to think this is a sign of weakness of character which is of no advantage to us, whereas Holy Scripture portrays meekness as a strength of character which is to be pursued (1 Tim. 6:11). Though the world may consider us fools for pursuing this Christian virtue, yet the Bible says, “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom” (Jms. 3:13).

As far as meekness and gentleness being to our advantage, or—as we might prefer to put it—for our blessing, Jesus declares the following in His beatitudes: “Blessed (or happy) are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (Mt. 5:5).

As with the other fruits of the Spirit,



Jesus is the ultimate example of gentleness. Many examples could be cited from Jesus’ life and ministry of how He was meek, humble, mild, and gentle. Concerning Jesus making His way to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the Word of God (quoting an Old Testament prophecy) heralds concerning Him, “Tell the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly [gentle, humble, meek], and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey’” (Mt. 21:5). In Jesus’ wonderful invitation for sin-burdened souls to come to Him to receive spiritual rest, He invites, “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle [mild, meek] and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Mt. 11:29).

Many exhortations...

The ways of gentleness are not only a source of blessing to us, but they are also blessings to others both within and outside of the Church. An important key to all this is one’s attitude toward the Word of God, for it is through God’s Word that the Holy Spirit causes the fruit of gentleness to grow and flourish. Concerning this attitude,

James exhorts his readers to “receive with meekness the implanted word...” (Jms. 1:21).

In carrying out the important work of our mission in life as Christians—namely, bearing witness of the saving truths of God—the apostle Peter gives helpful advice as to the spirit and manner that promotes the gospel. He says, “...always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness [gentleness]...” (1 Pet. 3:15).

Our manner of life is also a Christian witness to the world, as we let our light shine through works of love. Christ, of course, is the Light of the world. We serve to reflect His light by walking in His ways. This includes imitating His ways of meekness and gentleness.

Giving pastoral advice to Pastor Titus, the apostle Paul writes: “Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men” (Tit. 3:1,2).

A humble, gentle, and meek spirit is called for also when we are trying to help fellow Christians confess and repent of their sins (cf. Gal. 6:1). When we have been wronged or injured in any way, the natural reaction is to be filled with anger and to respond in

kind. But the word of our Lord exhorts, “Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness [gentleness], longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do” (Col. 3:12-13).

In the pastoral ministry, the servant of the Word wants to draw individuals to Christ and not drive them away. So, by the grace of God, he looks to the Lord to help him deal with individuals in gentleness. The apostle Paul writes to Pastor Timothy, “And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility [meekness, gentleness] correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth” (2 Tim. 2:24,25; also cf. 2 Cor. 10:1; 1 Cor. 4:21).

As the reader can tell from the numerous examples in Holy Scripture concerning this special fruit of the Spirit, the spirit and manner of gentleness is very important and most desirable in the kingdom of God.

May the LORD by His Spirit help us to bear this fruit in our lives and in our work for the kingdom of our Savior.

—Pastor Mark Gullerud
Eau Claire, Wisconsin



At reception for her son
Prof. Mike Sydow
(wife Kathy; see p. 22),
mother Ruth sits with
the siblings: Peter,
Bonnie Chadbourne,
Jane Rutz, Benno,
Patricia Rutz, James.



CROSS PURPOSES



STUDENTS “WALKING AWAY FROM CHRISTIANITY”

Some months ago an article appeared with the above byline. One young woman was quoted, “I knew in my heart I couldn’t do some of the things [other college students] were doing and still call myself a Christian. So I decided I didn’t want anything to do with God.”

In this case, however, what other college students were doing didn’t give satisfaction. She “rededicated her life to Christ.”

Unfortunately, however, the experience of this student is not unusual (though leaving “Christianity” is a bit extreme; the article, in fact, speaks more of leaving the church than it does of leaving Christianity).

For what it is worth, one study says that more than two-thirds of Protestant young adults ages 18-22 leave the church. Various reasons are given—distance from church, desire for a break, or work schedule. Some return; others don’t.

* Firstly, we will guard against painting with a broad brush. Secondly, it is a fine distinction, but dropping out of church is not necessarily the same as forsaking the Christian faith! In some cases it is not too far fetched to think that some are *better off* dropping out of their church so they can *preserve* their faith from the liberal theology that is as dangerous to the soul as the irreligiousness and plain heathenism to which they are exposed in academia and in the world! While it happens for various rea-

sons that young people whose parents brought them to baptism and faithfully trained them in the Word forsake their confirmation vow, yet not all young people or college students drop out and/or forsake the true Christian faith.

Speaking as a confessional Lutheran within a confessional church—where the Word of God is still respected as the voice of God and where the Word is still the authoritative Word for life and salvation, we thank the Lord for His grace in preserving many young people in the faith, steadfast to their confirmation vow as they trust in and confess their Savior.

Nevertheless, let us suggest some other reasons than those mentioned above for which students (and not only they) leave the church and/or forsake the faith:

* One reason is plain indifference to matters of faith and to the love of God in Christ. For the moment, they love the world more than they love God; their priorities are not heavenly but earthly.

* If the home in which the student has grown up did not give priority to the Word of God and matters of faith, if parents did not set the example, or if religion in the home was more smorgasbord than confessional, it is not surprising that students drop out after being exposed to the culture, political correctness, and anti-Christian philosophy found in many colleges and universities. Susceptible to peer pressure or to rationalism that questions the

Word of God and having no foundation, they succumb.

* They are unable or unwilling to stand against the withering attacks of anti-Christian forces which suggest that Biblical faith and morals are outdated, if not discriminatory.

* The church itself has failed them. As the world invades the church, there is no substance (the Word) that builds faith and no anchor of faith.

* They live under the illusion that there is always tomorrow and, after having enjoyed the pleasures of the world for a time, they can return to the way of faith. They fail to recognize that tomorrow is guaranteed to no one, and that eternity is a long “time” to spend separated from God from whom they have separated themselves while on the earth.

* They have become satisfied with being religious rather than spiritual and are satisfied with whatever makes them feel good. They are of the mind that it makes no difference what they believe as long as they believe something and, if the church does not teach that “something,” who needs it? Fun and games and emotion become the staple of their religious pursuit. They are candidates for religions other than Christianity.

The aforementioned article reports that many evangelicals are concerned and that “numerous campus and youth ministries” are trying to stem the tide. If we believe that the goal is simply to get young people into church and that any “Christian” teaching is better than nothing, the spiritual welfare of the young people will not be met even though they return to church!

As Christian parents, pastors, and as a confessional Lutheran church and church body, it is our responsibility to

remain faithful to Scripture in our teaching—clear in the application of law and gospel; it is also our responsibility to set an example of faithfulness.

Children are a most precious gift as well as our greatest responsibility. We are to train them up in the way of the Lord. Beyond that we can only pray. We pray with all our heart that none of our young people—indeed no one—will walk away from Christianity, from a faithful church, or forsake the faith, thus jeopardizing their eternal welfare.

But if it happens, God forbid that we who were responsible did not give our children an understanding and appreciation of the blessing of “grow[ing] in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 3:18). If, while we still have influence over them, we arm them with the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God and with a love of Christ Who loved them first, we can confidently trust that the Lord will keep them in His care. We will then commit them to the Savior Who Himself prayed to His Father that He would keep them from the evil one (John 17).

“Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, cause Thy face to shine, and we shall be saved” (Ps. 80:19). “Hold fast...” (Rev. 3:11). “To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame...” (Rev. 3:21).

THANK GOD for IMMANUEL LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE, established to share the Word and educate our youth in Christ...Remember its building program with your prayers and offerings.

—Pastor Daniel Fleischer
Corpus Christi, Texas

A Golden Investment Opportunity

“Invest in gold—it’s never been worth zero!” Have you seen and heard the many advertisements for investing in that pretty yellow metal lately?

There is always more interest in gold when the economy takes a downturn or when the threat of war looms in the world. That’s because, unlike paper currency or stocks, gold never loses all its value. For more than 5,000 years people have prized it and accepted it as payment. It is valuable because it is rare and difficult to mine. It is valuable because it is durable; gold does not tarnish or corrode. And it is valuable because it is tangible; you can feel the heft of it and see its obvious beauty.

In times of economic or other disaster, those who have actual gold in their safe deposit boxes will always have something of value. That’s one of the reasons that gold is now selling for more than \$900 an ounce.

Yet, while in human history it has been true that “gold has never been worth zero,” that won’t always be true. The Bible tells us that a day will come for each of us when gold will have no value at all. We came into this world with nothing and we will leave the same way.

When Jesus comes again, the Lord tells us that this entire, created world will melt in fervent heat. There goes all the gold, along with everything else!

There is only one investment that is truly fail-safe, guaranteed to give a high return when it matures. That investment is made when we put our full trust in the fact that Jesus, God’s Son, was willing and able to offer His

own suffering and death to God as a payment for our sins.

That payment is what the Bible calls “redemption,” and it has far more lasting value than all the gold that ever was. “It was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed,” writes Peter in his first epistle, “...but with the precious blood of Christ.”

How Valuable!

How is it that this blood which Jesus shed so long ago can be so valuable?

It is precious because of what it IS. It is not the blood of a mere man but of God the Son!

And it is precious because of what it DOES. While it shows us the awful price that had to be paid so that we could be forgiven, it also shows clearly that Jesus was willing to pay that price. God’s ‘good as gold’ promise to us now is that “...the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 Jn. 1:7).

There are many ways to buy that precious metal that so many people crave. Bars, bullion, and many kinds of coins can be purchased. The value of the dollar has been falling, and there is talk of an economic recession. Do you suppose that now would be a good time to sell stocks and bonds and invest in gold instead?

If we’re looking for financial advice, a pastor is probably not the right person to ask. But if we’re interested in genuine, long-term prosperity and security, I will offer the same advice that the Bible does: “Buy the truth and do not

sell it; get wisdom, discipline and understanding” (Prov. 23:23).

Real truth and wisdom are centered in the gospel of Christ crucified, who fully paid for our forgiveness. He didn’t pay with perishable gold but with the only currency that God would accept—His own blood.

The Lord is, right now, giving away

complete forgiveness and eternal life, free of charge. So, if you have a hankering for gold, think crowns, not coins. Seek the Lord Jesus in His Word, take Him at His Word, and the crown of eternal life is yours.

—Pastor Bruce Naumann
Sleepy Eye, Minnesota



The Word From Immanuel

*Chapel Talks to the student body of Immanuel
Lutheran College, Eau Claire, Wisconsin*

To our young readers - This is for you!

YOU SHOULD NOT BECOME A PASTOR OR TEACHER IF.....

*Lord, graciously lead us to serve
You in heart and life. Amen.*

“This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of an overseer [that is, pastor], he desires a good work” (1 Tim. 3:1).

The professors at ILC have been accused of pushing the teaching and pre-theology programs in our college. We have been told that we make students feel guilty if they enter some occupation other than the preaching or teaching ministries.

Well, I am here to correct that problem. I am here to tell you that you should not enter the ministry. You should not, if you cannot handle it.

If you cannot handle the joy of sprinkling water on a baby’s head and uttering the words, “I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son

and of the Holy Spirit.” — If you cannot handle the joy of looking at that baby and realizing that the Holy Spirit has entered his heart and has taken the first step toward bringing that child to glory in heaven. — If you cannot handle the tears of happiness in the parent’s eyes as they realize that their child is now the child of God.

You should not become a teacher, if you cannot handle the wonder that you see in a child’s eyes as you tell her about the love that Jesus has for her.

You should not become a pastor, if you cannot handle the delight of watching a toddler come down the aisle after church and reach up his little hand to shake yours because you are his pastor.

You shouldn’t become a teacher, if you cannot handle the enjoyment of

watching a child grow in his knowledge of God.

You shouldn't become a teacher or pastor, if you cannot handle the pleasure of watching your eighth grade student stand before the congregation and publicly confess his faith in Jesus.

You should not become a pastor, if you cannot handle the pleasure of sharing with a bride and groom the wonderful guidance that God gives for a happy marriage.

You should not become a pastor, if you cannot handle happiness in bringing the beautiful, life-giving, life-saving, life-sustaining words of God to a congregation of expectant souls.

You should not become a pastor, if you cannot handle the gladness of giving bread and wine to people hungering for reassurance of God's love and forgiveness and knowing that alongside of you is Jesus Christ Himself giving His body and blood.

You should not become a pastor, if you cannot handle the delight of bringing words of comfort to Christians who are suffering because of their sins or because of their sicknesses or because of their grief.

You should not become a pastor, if you cannot handle the wonder of bidding farewell to a Christian departing this life, knowing that she is about to join her Savior in heavenly glory.

You should not become a pastor, if

you cannot handle the privilege of comforting grieving souls at a funeral service, telling them of the life-long care that Jesus gave to the departed, telling them that all his sins were blotted out by Jesus, assuring them that their loved one is in Paradise, holding the hand of Christ and feeling the scars once made by nails on a cross.

You should not become a pastor or teacher, if you cannot handle the thrill of standing at the gates of heaven and seeing one after another of those people to whom you dedicated your ministry...seeing them passing through the gates and into the presence of their loving God.

You should not become a pastor or teacher, if you cannot handle these joys, delights, wonders, pleasures, and privileges.

It is true that not everyone is meant to be a pastor or a teacher. God reserves the joys of the ministry for a precious few. Upon them He bestows the gifts that they need to carry out their service to His people. To them He gives the joys of which I have spoken.

God gives many differing gifts to His people. He wants each of you to serve Him according to your gifts. This means that you all will be serving Him in a variety of ways and in a variety of callings.

You should not feel guilty if you do not enter the preaching or teaching



On graduation day Seminary graduate Michael Gurath poses with his mother Carol and the extended Gurath family, which includes pastors Matthew and Mark Gurath and their families (see p. 21)

ministry. You will find your own joys and pleasures in serving the Lord in your own calling. But you will miss out on the wonders that can be found only in Christ's service as pastors and teachers.

All we want you to do is think about it, not feel guilty. Ask yourself what God wants you to do. Ask your elders where they think your gifts should take you.

If your gifts take you somewhere other than the public ministry, go there and serve the Lord with gladness. And

while you are serving, give your support and encouragement to those who are serving as shepherds for the lambs and sheep of Christ's flock.

"This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of an overseer, he desires a good work."

Lord, lead us into your service, whatever our earthly calling may be and help us to highly regard the public ministry, because You highly regard it.

—Prof. John Pfeiffer



Commencement at Immanuel Lutheran College, Eau Claire, Wis., May 23-24, 2008 (including the closing sacred concert, graduation ceremony, and notes on the retirement of Prof. Michael Sydow)

From the back row —

Psalm 84:3-4 was not included in the agenda of our festivities, but one of God's feathered friends wandered into the ILC Field House and attended the graduation service with us. It struck this reporter as more than a casual intrusion, for the Psalm sparrow ⁽¹⁾ is a testament to God's favor upon the many places where His altars are still functional—which includes the graduation ceremonies, as God's people thanked Him for His grace upon Immanuel Lutheran College during its school year just closing.

The local sparrow was at some disadvantage, for its repertoire did not include the impressive words and thoughts of the Kretzmann hymn "Immanuel, God with us!", but it listened to all four glorious stanzas of



With ILC President Prof. John Pfeiffer are seminarians Aaron Ude, Michael Gurath, Scott Schiermeister

that humble prayer, cheerful boast, battle-cry, and final sigh (sung to the vigorous Ewing melody of #448 [TLH]).

And perhaps it felt instinctively the urge to sing out "Rise up, O Lord!" as Moses did (from Numbers 11:35, Pres. Pfeiffer's commencement text) each morning of Israel's pilgrimage from Sinai. Pres. Pfeiffer reminded us that we too are weak and need to cry out to Jesus victorious (as did Elijah and the Apostles and Luther) to rise up and scatter His enemies. Rise up for whom? For us! For us in our cherished

(1) "Even the sparrow has found a home . . . even Your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; they will still be praising You" (Ps. 84:3-4).

fellowship, in our training courses at ILC, and in our individual lives.

The graduates were encouraged to strike camp in order to join the front ranks and carry the fight forward, calling upon our great God to rise up in our defense and scatter His enemies before us.

How many graduates this year? Three from the seminary department were presented to the Church for service in the pastoral ministry, one graduated from the BA Pre-theological course, one from the BS in Education course, three from the two-year AA degree program, and twenty-six from the high school department. It was also noted that another young man is prepared to enter the seminary department in fall.

Pastor Theodore Barthels presented the Regents' greeting to the assembly and to retiree Prof. Sydow, who accepted a memento plaque and monetary gift with his personal thanks to all, especially to the Lord Jesus for the great blessings He grants us on our homeward pilgrimage. Prof. Sydow was also feted at a reception in the narthex of Messiah Lutheran Church following the Friday evening concert—which was held not in the ILC Field House but in the churchly atmosphere of Messiah's large worship hall.

From the back row (naturally) this setting was a welcome improvement



Prof. Sydow & Kathy at the reception; Pastor Barthels presents a plaque to the retiree.

for the sacred concert entitled “Vicarious, Victorious, and Glorious.” Selections ranged from anthems and marches to plaintive, languid, or recitative folk tune, choral, and spirituals.

We were favored with instrumental accompaniment and solos, too. Nice range of subject, with some lovely melodies and many edifying texts. When this concert becomes available on CD, you might be as uplifted as I was, especially with the selections dedicated to “The Glorious Trinity,” culminating in the roof-raising finale of “This is My beloved Son” by Choplin.

Rise up, O Lord, and we will follow!

—Paul R. Koch, reporter



Graduation at Immanuel Lutheran High School, Mankato, Minnesota—

“Investment Planning”

The 2008 graduating class chose Proverbs 16:9 as its class verse: “In his heart a man plans his course, but the

LORD determines his steps” (NIV). It was fitting, therefore, that on the day of their commencement, thirteen young

Thanking our God for the faithful work of the Coordinating Council

We recall hearing that when a letter from a reader arrives at his desk, an editor can safely assume that many other people feel the same way but don't bother or take the time to write. For that reason, went the contention, editors do well to pay attention to such letters.

That said, a recent letter-to-the-editor has gotten our attention.

The letter expresses considerable dismay over what appeared in the June '08 issue of the *Spokesman* about the April Coordinating Council meeting in Eau Claire. The letter writer states that what was called a "report" was instead a quite subjective account.

"It seems to this observer..." is how our *Spokesman* article began. What appeared was the author's personal assessment and perception of the proceedings at this particular CC meeting. It is surely to be granted that another observer may have described the stated CC meeting differently (and perhaps more objectively).

Let that observation be noted—and at the same time we are confident that the intent of the author of the article was not to impugn the faith, integrity, motives, and conscientious work of those who serve the Lord in our behalf on the CC.

Many matters of a serious and far-reaching nature are carefully weighed and considered at Coordinating Council meetings—not the least of these is careful Christian stewardship of the financial resources available (consider the Savior's words about "counting the cost" [Luke 14:28ff]). Let us all be praying that the Lord through His Spirit grant wise men godly wisdom for the daunting task of "coordinating" His work.

And as we go about praying, let us also thank the Lord for those who faithfully serve Him—and then us through them!—as elected officers in the synod, as well as on the respective synodical boards and committees.

—Editor

Christians gave thanks to the Lord for having brought them to this day, as they also prayed for His guidance in the plotting of their future course.

Devon Libby, the class Valedictorian, addressed his classmates, their parents, and the assembly. In view of the Christian education he and his classmates had received, Devon thanked the Lord and all those who had a role in it through their service, prayers, and financial support.

Mr. Daniel Roehl addressed the class regarding "Investment Planning" (based on the class verse). He reminded



ILHS Mankato Graduation

the graduates that reaching graduation was not simply a product of their own efforts. Rather, many of those in attendance at the worship service had invested time, energy, money, prayer, and the gospel in them and for their future. The shareholders in this investment were

assured that they had invested well, and it was noted that graduation is a time in which the investors begin to “cash out,” while the graduate is left with ever-increasing responsibility.

Immanuel’s history teacher impressed on the graduates to plan with history—that we are able to learn much from history, for it is God’s story.

“God’s providence in the midst of man’s best efforts to mess things up can be seen over and over and over again...my prayer for you is that you never cease in the knowledge and appreciation that God guides the course of your events—no matter how seemingly insignificant or monumental they appear.”

With the God of history determining our steps by His grace, we are what we are because of what Jesus has done for us—namely, redeeming us from sin by His blood. With the God of grace guiding us, we are able to follow our Leader, trusting that—as God directs us and at times redirects us—the change of plans is for our blessing.

In the second half of his address, Mr. Roehl encouraged the graduates to plan to change plans “...because life is not just about investing in yourself. Here at Immanuel, we train servants and leaders in the same person, because a life of service to Christ, no matter what your vocation, leads others to Christ. In that venture, our [Lord] may have plans for you that you never imagined.

“...Planning to change plans is just another way of saying that, as hard as it will be for us to stifle our selfish ambition, we pray that the Lord will guide us to decisions in life that further His Kingdom, not just our own selfish instinct.

“...Dear graduates, invest your-

selves fully in the Lord, as He has invested so fully in you. Seeking to make His plans your plans will bring you greater fulfillment and contentment than you can imagine.”

Guide Me, O Thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land.
I am weak, but Thou art mighty;
Hold me with Thy pow’rful hand.
Bread of Heaven, Feed me till I want no more.
[TLH 54:1]

—*Pastor Wayne Eichstadt, reporter*

[Mr. Roehl’s full graduation address is posted at: <http://www.immanuelmankato.org/school>]



Pastor & Mrs. (Julie) David Reim with their double ILC graduates: Nicole (high school), Ben (College AA) program

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