



The Evangelical Protestant

The Magazine of the Lutheran Evangelical Protestant Church
"His message, His ministry, to His world"

BREAKING NEWS!

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QUESTIONS

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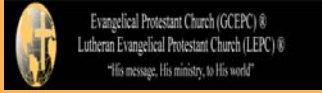
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Evangelical Protestant Church (GCEPC)® Inc.,

Lutheran Evangelical Protestant Church (LEPC)®,

We Believe

1. The Holy Scriptures, in the original tongues, is the inspired and inerrant word of God. (Matthew 4:4, 2 Timothy 3:16,17)

2. There is one God, eternal and self-existent, Creator and Ruler of the universe, and manifested through the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (John 1:18, Matthew 3:16-17) We are Trinitarian.

3. Jesus Christ is truly divine and truly human having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. (Matt.1: 18)

4. Jesus Christ died on the cross and shed His blood as a Sacrifice

for our sins; He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on High. (1 John 2:2)

5. Humankind was created in the image of God, but fell into sin causing separation from God. (Gen. 3:1-24)

6. Salvation has been provided through Jesus Christ for all; and those who repent and believe on Him are born again of the Holy Spirit, receive the gift of eternal life and become the children of God. (John 1:10)

7. Water baptism identifies us with the death and burial of Christ and that we should arise to

walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19-20)

8. We believe in the ministry of the Holy Spirit to glorify Christ, to convict of sin, to enable the believer to live a godly life, and to empower the Church to carry the gospel into all the world. (Matthew 12:31, Acts 1:8.)

9. In the personal and visible return of Jesus Christ for His Church. (Matthew 24:30, Rev 1:7)

10. In the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved and everlasting separation from God of all those who reject Jesus Christ. (John 1:10-13, Rev 20:11-15)

GCEPC "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2: 8

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The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

AMEN.

The Evangelical Protestant Journal "Kirchenbote" (Church Messenger) was established in 1885,

Gustav Schmidt became editor. In 1917, the German Evangelical churches in the Pittsburgh area began publication of a monthly entitled The Evangelical Protestant. (Archives Smithfield UCC)

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Editor Rev. Steve Bacon

Bishop's Desk



Hello Everyone,

Fall is almost here and I will be so glad. We had a mild winter last year. I wondered if that would give us a hot, hot summer here in Carolina this year and it has. The lights and shadows are changing, foretelling fall's soon arrival. We are seeing many harbin-
gers all around us of things to come and the future holds much change for all of us. Scripture tells us to be like the sons of Issachar and come to understand the times

and the seasons. The Lord has been calling us deeper into Him for awhile now in the EPC/LEPC. That deep-
ening faith and relationship requires getting to know the Holy Spirit. becoming aware of and learning how
to enter God's presence and learning to hear God's voice clearly. At first it might seem like nothing is hap-
pening but as we continue we can see the effect of Holy Spirit in our lives and ministries. The Lord put the
following on my heart for today and this season:

*My greatest
desire for all of
our ministers is
that they would
have a close walk
with Our Lord,
learning His
ways, hearing
His voice,
knowing Him.*

*For everything
there is a
season, a time
for every
activity under
heaven.
Ecclesiastes 3:1*

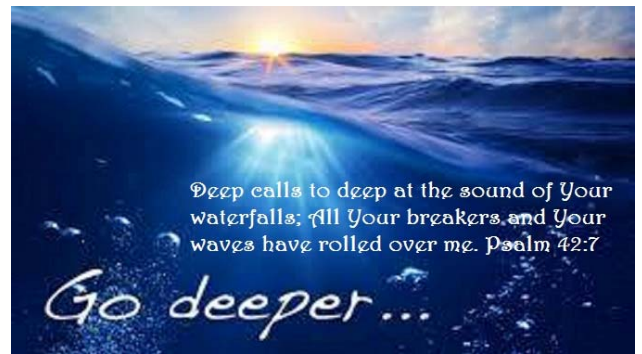
"Give God time. Let the earth be shaken and you, stand still. It is only God reorienting according to plan. All that flies around you in the wind is only a small part of what is taking place in the higher places. Stand while I cover and keep you safe and the week will bring good things out of what looks to be bad but is only re-orientation. Give me time to complete My work. One cannot look at the beginning of a carving and say "it is this" or look at the beginning of a stone and say "it is becoming that" unless you have consulted the one who carves or the one who sculpts OR waits to see what He has done, trusting His knowl-
edge and ability. Wait with anticipation for My finished work. Re-

Beyond The Market Fence

orientation."

*God
desires his
people the
called out
ones, the
church, to
recover
the lost
art of
hearing
God*

Some of you that I have spoken to have told me of how you are being 're-oriented' personally and in ministry as the Lord adjusts for His purposes to you and through you. This reorienting brings about "labor pains." Some are mild and some are hard and all lead to transition because there are new things being birthed. New things always bring change and produce another season for us. I've heard it said that change is perceived as loss and sometimes loss at first brings anger but then we cycle through and accept what is going on. Even good change feels like loss. One of my daughters recently got her own apartment. It's a good thing and a blessing for her as she shifts into this stage of her life but it is also a hard thing as we get use to the new arrangements. We praise God for this for her and treasure all of the good before this time and the good to come. So, seasons come and go. Changes come and we adjust. As you seek the Lord in your own life do not be afraid to extend yourself in knowing God. It will cause change and sometime challenge but there is much treasure yet to be found in Him. Blessings and a beautiful fall season to All.



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Bishop Nancy Drew

Who Do You Say I Am?

Bishop David Church



Bishop Dr. David A. Church
Director of Missions

To reach the lost and bring them into the Kingdom of God requires that we return to *God's way* of building the Church, discarding man's methods with those given us by Jesus Christ who said "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"

Matthew 16:13-17

"When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, 'Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?'"¹⁴ So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"¹⁶ Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."¹⁷ Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven."

In an interview with Napp Nazworth, a Christian Post Reporter, Dr. Scot McKnight, the professor of religious studies at Northern Seminary states "The fundamental job of the evangelist is not to get people to feel guilty about sins, or to feel terrorized by an angry God. The central question of evangelism is, 'who do you think Jesus is?'" "Evangelical pastors," McKnight explained in his interview, "are more concerned about precipitating decisions than making disciples." Looking at the state of the Church I must agree wholeheartedly, seen in the spectrum ranging from small Fundamental Baptist Churches to the giant mega churches ruled over by Bill Hybels and Rick Warren that are seeking quantity over quality in their flocks. Dr. Jack Hyles used to boast of having the largest Sunday School in the nation. The lack of true discipleship training and teaching the whole counsel of God has resulted in the very weak and biblically illiterate nominal "Christian" filling the pews today. The command of Christ is to make disciples, not just converts. The crusading evangelists of the last hundred years only judge their effectiveness by the number of people answering the altar call and filling out the obligatory contact cards, never again to be seen darkening the door of a church. These are the ones spoken of by Christ in the Parable of the Sower.

"But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles." Matthew 13:20-21

I have sat through many evangelism events and "revivals", and in many I never heard the Gospel, only a heartfelt plea to make a decision to receive Christ as the answer to all the problems in life. People were told to "repeat this prayer after me" which contained no Gospel in itself, only saying "Jesus, I know you loved me and died for my sins. I'm sorry for my sins and I ask you to come into my heart and be my Savior. Amen." The Gospel is Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again on the third day according to Scripture." It is not contained in the drivel of the "the Love Gospel" seen above. Not once is true biblical repentance required of the so called "seeker", nor is required a proper understanding of the Gospel as received by Paul from Christ

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Bishop David Church

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and delivered unto us for our justification.

Dr. McKnight further states "Pastors ... preach revivalist sermons that precipitate decisions, that precipitate experience, and the result is, if I've had the experience, I'm in; if I haven't had the experience, I'm not in. But more importantly, if I've had the experience, I'm in and I know who else is in -- those who've had my experience. So all other people are basically off the map unless they've had the same experience. That's revivalism and that has created what I call a salvation culture."

Unfortunately, we have grown so accustomed to hearing about making a "decision for Christ", especially at the large crusades in which the Gospel itself has suffered, that many don't recognize the true Gospel. Instead of preaching Law and Gospel, a large percentage of fundamentalist pastors have been infected with Charles Finney's "New Measures" preaching without realizing that they are using the methodology of one who denied most of the doctrines considered to be in the pale of orthodoxy. Quotes below are taken from Charles G. Finney's "Finney's Systematic Theology" (Bethany, 1976).

First of all, Finney denies the doctrine of original sin, following the doctrine of Pelagius, the heretic of the 4th century. Finney taught that all human beings have the total ability to choose either corruption or redemption by their own volition, and taught original sin was an "anti-scriptural and nonsensical dogma" (p. 179). Finney completely denied the doctrine that all human beings possess a sinful nature. He looked at each person as born with a "blank slate", a "tabula rosa", spiritually neutral. He rejects that which is taught in Scripture in Romans 5:12

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned"

According to Finney we do not inherit Adam's sinful nature, we only follow his example. We are not born corrupt, we learn to be corrupt. To be saved Finney believed we ourselves must remove all sin from our life before we can be justified before God, for he asks "can he be pardoned and accepted, and justified, in the gospel sense, while sin, any degree of sin, remains in him? Certainly not!" (p. 57) His doctrine of justification is built upon this denial of original sin, and he continues to build his theology upon its foundation of sand. It is a salvation by works, justification by our own merit instead of Christ's.

Finney also completely denied the substitutionary Atonement of Christ. "If he [Christ] had obeyed the Law as our substitute, then why should our own return to personal obedience be insisted upon as a sine qua non of our salvation?" (p. 206) In the first place, we never had a "personal obedience" to return to, therefore we needed to be regenerated because "*the wages of sin is death*" according to Romans 3:23. Finney redefined being born again of the Spirit as "Regeneration consists in

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Who Do You Say I Am?

Bishop David Church



Bishop Dr. David A. Church
Director of Missions

To reach the lost and bring them into the Kingdom of God requires that we return to *God's way* of building the Church, discarding man's methods with those given us by Jesus Christ who said "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"

the sinner changing his ultimate choice, intention, preference; or in changing from selfishness to love or benevolence," (p. 224) which was demonstrated by Jesus Christ as the ultimate example of morality. "Original or constitutional sinfulness, physical regeneration, and all their kindred and resulting dogmas, are alike subversive of the gospel, and repulsive to the human intelligence." (p. 236) Finney's "gospel" is not the Gospel of Christ. It is but another gospel which cannot save.

Rejecting the doctrines of original sin, substitutionary atonement, and supernatural regeneration by the Holy Spirit, he next denied the foundational doctrine of the Bible fought for during the Reformation: our justification by grace alone through faith alone, by Christ alone. Finney rejected this as nonsense. "The doctrine of an imputed righteousness, or that Christ's obedience to the law was accounted as our obedience, is founded on a most false and nonsensical assumption." After all, Christ's righteousness "could do no more than justify himself. It can never be imputed to us...It was naturally impossible, then, for him to obey in our behalf." This "representing of the atonement as the ground of the sinner's justification has been a sad occasion of stumbling to many." (pp. 320-322)

"The view that faith is the sole condition of justification is "the antinomian view," Finney asserts. "We shall see that perseverance in obedience to the end of life is also a condition of justification." Furthermore, "present sanctification, in the sense of present full consecration to God, is another condition...of justification. Some theologians have made justification a condition of sanctification, instead of making sanctification a condition of justification. But this we shall see is an erroneous view of the subject" (pp. 326-327). Each act of sin requires "a fresh justification" (p. 331). Referring to "the framers of the Westminster Confession of faith," and their view of an imputed righteousness, Finney writes "If this is not antinomianism, I know not what is" (p. 332). This legal business is unreasonable to Finney, so he concludes, "I regard these dogmas as fabulous, and better befitting a romance than a system of theology" (p. 333). Again, the arch heretic Finney has spit on the Cross and on the Son of God, trampling the True Gospel and denying the Word of God.

Finney's theology when boiled down to its essence is a theology of works which is condemned in Scripture. To quote Michael Horton's article "The Legacy of Charles Finney" (Modern Reformation Magazine, "Life Under the Big Top: When Evangelism Undermines the Evangel" (Jan./Feb. 1995 Vol. 4, No. 1, page numbers 5-9) "His "New Measures," like today's Church growth movement, made human choices and emotions the center of the church's ministry, ridiculed theology, and replaced the preaching of Christ with the preaching of conversion."

As I stated previously, preaching the Gospel needs to ask individuals the ulti-

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Bishop David Church

mate question presented by Christ “Who do YOU say I am?” The incorrect answer to the evangelist’s incorrect question leads the person to another Christ and another gospel that does not result in the new birth. Only recognizing Jesus as “*the Christ, the Son of the Living God,*” as did Peter in Mark 8:29, results in salvation. We do not come to this conclusion by our senses or intellect and logic. To see Jesus as “the Christ, the Son of the Living God” requires us to be first drawn to Jesus by the Father (John 6:44), and Jesus said “*You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you*” John 15:16. So it is not the hype, music and psychological pressure of the evangelist that brings us to a belief in Christ. It is God the Father, and we are already chosen in Christ. In respect to this I reject the Calvinistic doctrines of Limited Atonement and Irresistible Grace which states that God in Eternity Past chose to create us for either Redemption (salvation) or Perdition, and that Jesus *only* bore the sins of the elect (those chosen for salvation by God), and that he *did not* bear the sins of every individual who has ever lived. If you were created for Perdition there is no remedy for you, no salvation whatsoever. This is counter to many Scriptures such as John 3:16 which states “...*that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*” Also, 1John 2:2 “*He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world,*” and Acts 2:21 (ESV) “*And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*” According to Calvin’s teaching we cannot choose because we are dead spiritually, so we must be regenerated before we can have faith. This approach could, in theory, leave an unbelieving yet regenerate man if he died before believing but after being regenerated in order to believe. They convolute the issue by saying this is not a sequential order in time, but rather a necessary order logically because a spiritually dead person cannot believe. But the biblical definition of death *is not* an inherent inability to choose God unless we are first regenerated. Death is defined as a separation, physical death being separated from our physical body, and spiritual death being our soul’s separation from God in both the present and in eternity if found without Christ. The Calvinist must redefine words such as *whoever, all, and everyone* to mean “the chosen, or elect only.” In a sense they are correct, for we are “elect in Christ” from the foundation of the world, but not elect by decree from the eternal and secret counsels of God in Eternity Past. The “Calvinist’s God” doesn’t seem to have the power or ability to create a being with free will, nor is the Calvinist’s God omniscient enough to know how the person will choose when presented with the Gospel, whether he will choose to believe or reject it in unbelief. The “Calvinist’s God” also cannot seem to give us sufficient grace to allow us to believe prior to regeneration, as taught in Scripture by those of the Arminian and Biblicist schools of theology.

What we see then is that the act of being regenerated or “born again” cannot be separated from the act of believing the gospel. When we believe the Gospel we are saved. So where in the Bible is the “Decision for Christ” found that the crusading evangelist asks us to make? If we already have believed the Gospel why would we go forward at the invitation to “Receive Christ” which also is not found in Scripture in the way they interpret it? We are told by the Bible to “*repent and believe the*

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Who Do You Say I Am?

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Bishop David Church



Bishop Dr. David
A. Church
Director of
Missions

To reach the lost and bring them into the Kingdom of God requires that we return to *God's way* of building the Church, discarding man's methods with those given us by Jesus Christ who said "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"

Gospel" by Jesus Christ Himself in Mark 1:5. Peter told the people in Acts 2:38 "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Acts 16:31 says "...believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."

Again, nowhere are we told in Scripture to make an altar call and to go forward to "receive Christ" or to "make a decision for Christ." It is not our decision to make in the first place outside of God's timing! The passage usually used in this type of evangelism is John 1:11-13:

"¹¹ He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. ¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

As shown in an earlier chapter receiving Him gives *the right* to become children of God, it does not make us so. It refers to the fact that Messiah Jesus was sent to the Jews, but His teachings were not accepted or received by the leadership, nor was He seen as the Messiah. This passage also is not a passage directly concerned with justification unto salvation. Only believing the Gospel makes it so. Also, this passage of Scripture crushes the idea of a person making a decision leading unto salvation. This "decision to receive Christ" is made of our own will, but the Scripture specifically states "...nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Our will is has *no* part in the equation leading to our salvation, it is God alone who saves. We hear the Gospel and we either believe it or not. If we believe it we are saved immediately. The theology which is called Decision Theology (or Decisionist Regeneration) says we must make a conscious decision in order to receive Christ. But this is false and is nowhere taught in Scripture. We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, by Christ alone. To believe otherwise is relying on a works salvation as propagated by Charles Finney, the grandfather of this form of evangelism. The very act of having to make a decision is a work. The ultimate problem with "Decision Theology" is that it bestows upon us a power we do not biblically possess, and tells us we are saved *because* "we" made the decision for our salvation, which in turn would give us cause for boasting over those not making the decision for Christ. It clouds the reality of who initiates salvation, which is the Holy Spirit who calls us by the Gospel and regenerates whom He will, which are all that believe in Christ. "Decisionist" evangelists also use emotional manipulation and psychological pressure from friends and relatives in order to elicit the decision, resulting in many a false conversion that they count as a trophy soul, an-

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Who Do You Say I Am?

Bishop David Church

other jewel in their “soul winners” crown. This confirms Dr. McKnight statement “Evangelical pastors are more concerned about precipitating decisions than making disciples.” Obviously, this is a very broad and sweeping statement to make. But as a class a very large percentage of these preachers, especially those in the Fundamentalist camp which include many Baptists and Pentecostals, do preach and believe this “method” or “new measure” is the correct way of enlarging the Kingdom of God. The church growth programs at many major Bible schools and seminaries promote this. Pastors are taught to run a church like a corporation and to use the business model to increase attendance. Find out what the consumer wants and give it to them. It is not evangelism, but marketing that they are taught will bring growth. Church growth relying on converts who make the “decision to receive Christ” and by saying the “sinner’s prayer” is also not taken from Scripture. They are instructed to say “I am sorry for my sins”, which is *not* the same thing as biblical repentance. Judas was “sorry” for betraying the Son of God to the authorities, but he had no real repentance leading to confession and forgiveness by God because of unbelief about who Christ was. Instead, he committed suicide because of the blood-guilt weighing upon his soul. People go forward to “receive Christ” not because they believe the Gospel, but out of their fear of Hell after being told if they will follow the evangelist’s direction to come forward and pray they will be saved forever, and that there is nothing we do that can change that. This is a delusional “fire insurance policy,” not salvation and deliverance from the power of sin and death. Unfortunately, many souls are damned because of this wrong view of biblical salvation and who it is that initiates regeneration. They are instructed to believe a lie, a watered down “gospel” which is no gospel at all. And the lie is reinforced by telling the person that they are saved because they had walked forward at the invitation then prayed the prayer, when the truth is we are saved by grace alone through faith alone without any necessary action by us in order to cause our justification. Ultimately, the whole question of salvation is settled by answering for ourselves “Who do you say I am?” Is He only a man, a great teacher, or a prophet? Or do you believe His claim to be the Christ, the Son of the Living God, who gave His life for us and rose again? If the latter, salvation is ours as we have been justified by our faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. My personal answer is “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God,” because the Father by His Holy Spirit revealed this truth to me. This again is the central question of the Scriptures, “*Who do you say I am?*” Who do YOU say he is?



News from the front...



Chaplain Deborah Mejchar with Sister Prejean who was speaking in Madison WI.

Helen Prejean, C.S.J. is a Roman Catholic nun, a member of the Congregation of St. Joseph and a leading American advocate for the abolition of the death penalty

Next Month YOUR ministry highlighted here!

A fascinating true story of what God is doing among Muslims in the midst of chaos. The resurrection power of Christ is at work.

Muslim father killed daughter and threw her down a well, but Jesus caught her and restored her life. By Mark Ellis

She was born into a strict Muslim family in the Middle East. Because she was born in the Muslim month of Ramzan, her parents named her Ramza. "I was a religious girl from my childhood," she told Bibles for Mideast. "I was always in front of the line for the Islamic practices for reciting the Koran, doing prayers five times a day, and fasting on the month of Ramzan." She also kept the tradition of wearing the "abaya," with full head and face covering. Her family was large, partly due to her father's three wives who bore 13 children. He generated a substantial income from several trading and contracting companies.

After Ramza completed her education, a former schoolmate surprised her one day by sharing



Jesus Christ. "She was the daughter of a pastor, ministering with Bibles for Mideast.

But I never accepted her message and arguments. She gave me a sample gospel (tract)," Ramza said. After her graduation, Ramza's father proposed that she marry an older, wealthy man, who already had three wives and several children. Ramza was sickened by the proposition, especially when she realized she would be younger than his youngest child. One evening she went to meet with her father. "I pleaded with him not to arrange my marriage now, but to send me for further studies. My father denied my request. I argued with him, for I was unable to imagine such a marriage. He did not listen to me at all," she told Bibles for Mideast. Tearful and defiant, Ramza told her father she would run away from home before the marriage could take place.

Enraged that she would argue or question his authority, he suddenly grabbed a chair and hit her on the head with one of its legs. Ramza collapsed to the ground, bleeding profusely from a broken skull. Her father and stepmother were shocked when they realized she was dead. Not wanting anyone to know, they tied up her dead body and stuffed it into a large plastic bag and placed it in the trunk of their car. Ramza's father and stepmother traveled many miles into the desert until they arrived at a secluded date plantation. They found a dry well on the property and threw Ramza's body down the shaft.

Somehow – whether in the body or out of the body – Ramza had the awareness that her soul was going into hell, a place of terrible darkness. She felt a deep thirst, but strangely, it was not for earthly water. Her life flashed through

her consciousness and she remembered her friend giving her the Gospel. She tried to reach out to grab a hold of it, but her hands could not touch it. She had the sense that if she could possess it, her soul would find rest “in an amazing garden.”

As her lifeless body hurtled down the well, something incredible happened. There was “a strong, healthy and beautiful man” standing at the bottom of the well. “He caught the sack of my dead body in His hands,” she recounted. Then he proceeded to untie the sack. He placed his hands on her head and back and breathed life into her physical body. “I opened my eyes like waking up from a dream. I saw the nail marks in His hands,” she says. Immediately she knew it was Jesus, and believed in Him as Savior and Lord. Then Jesus picked the young woman up in His arms and brought her out of the well. He said, “I am the resurrection and the life; he that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live (John 11:25).” Jesus laid her gently on the ground and Ramza prostrated herself before Him. A torrent of tears and words began to stream out: “Jesus, you’re my Lord and Savior. You were crucified and died for me. You are risen indeed. I am yours. I believe in you.” She lifted her head to look at Him, but there was no one there. He disappeared.



Now there was a certain pastor and his wife in a village nearby and the Lord said to the pastor in a vision: Arise and go to a date plantation where you will find a young woman who needs help. Ramza picked herself up, but didn’t know what to do or where to go. “But I was so happy. I was praising and thanking Lord Jesus. Within a few minutes, a husband and wife from Bibles for Mideast came to me. They introduced that they are Christians and the Lord Jesus guided them to me.” She excitedly shared her dramatic experience with them. They gave her a Bible and brought her to a farmhouse where she could live with five other women.

Now Ramza works with the five other women as field laborers.

“They are born again women. They teach me more about the Word of God and we worship Jesus together in our house church.” Ramza works with them at the farm as well as ministering for the Lord. “I don’t want go back to my parents unless they accept the Lord Jesus Christ,” she told Bibles for Mideast. “Pray for my family members, relatives and all the people of Middle East to be saved,” she said. “Now I have been born again by accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior and I have become a citizen of the Kingdom of God.”

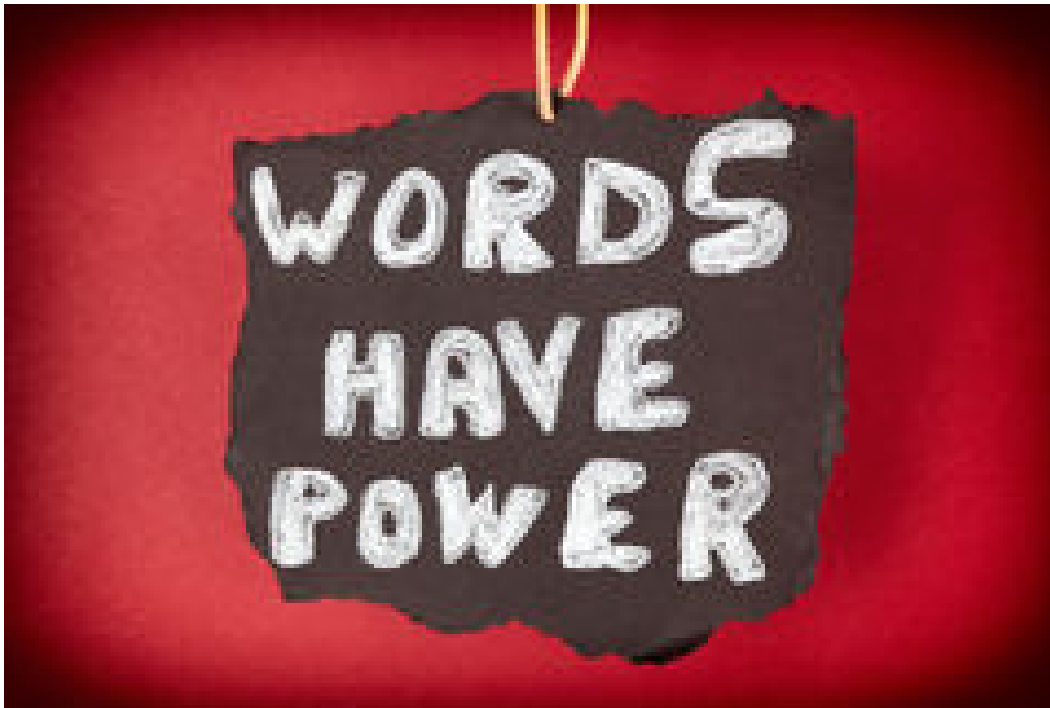
Mark Ellis <http://blog.godreports.com/2016/07/>

Words and Power

By Bishop Nancy Drew



The power of words... 'Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.' Prov. 18:21 The tongue has power and those who love its power will eat its fruits. Nowhere is this more evident than on Facebook and media in general. As Jesus people we have the word of the Lord. When we come in agreement with what someone else says we come in agreement with their words and the power that those words carry. We are partaking of the fruit of those words whether we realize it or not. The day will come when those words will bear fruit for good or for evil. BE CAREFUL what you pass on and share. The media is well aware of the power of words. We have watched them twist words. Lie about words. Lie about people. Words can destroy a life. Be careful of the words you hear and of what you believe and accept as truth in these days. Check out what the media says in these days. We do not have the media that we once had. Do not accept anything at face value. Know for yourself. It takes some time but we are accountable for what we believe. We as Jesus people are to buy truth and then keep that truth. Prov. 23:23.



We can speak life into the world around us or we can speak death. We can speak life about someone or we can speak death. Please remember that the word of God tells us that lies have their own father. Satan is the originator of lies. It is not a light thing to pass on what is not true. But, it is done every day. As Jesus people we are to be people of truth. Whether we like that truth, that person or that situation does not matter. What matters is what is true. Truth will have it's fruit and lies will have their fruit. One is

death. The other is life. While we might not make a habit of lying outright, if we agree with a lie that is spoken or written because it fits our agenda and what we want to say or believe then we have become partakers of it. It is time for the Body of Christ to return to righteousness in living, thought, word and deed. As ministers we must teach what the word of God tells us about life in Christ and the expectations of purity and holiness that come with following Him. Online is media very effective in the spreading of the Gospel message. Be careful of the pitfalls. The temptation to pass on what sounds good but is not good. I encourage you to participate in what the web offers for your ministries. I encourage you to have your own website. Set up your blog and preach the word. Take advantage of being able to have your own ministry Facebook page for your ministry and represent Christ to the nations and to the world through it. This is the technological day that we are living in. This brilliance of the internet came from the mind of God. Use it for His purposes but use it wisely, carefully, and with discretion about what is said and that what is said is truth.

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23

A pastor friend of mine told me about a conversation he had with a lady who was asking about what his church believed.

Everything went fine until he started talking about God's commandments and the penalty for sin. Hearing about hell, the lady blurted: "Pastor, that's impossible! My god would never do such a thing."

Surprised by the lady's reaction, the pastor went on to other topics as he tried to think of a suitable reply.

Before the end of their session, he said, "A little while ago you said your 'god' wouldn't condemn you for disobeying his law. I think a lot of people have that god. Their god doesn't condemn them because he *likes* them just the way they are. Their god wouldn't call them 'sinners' or call them to repentance, and he certainly wouldn't suggest they need a Savior."

"The only problem with your 'god,'" my friend continued, "is that he doesn't exist, and he certainly isn't the God of the Bible."

"And what was the lady's reply?" I asked my pastor friend.

He said, "I don't know. I never saw her again."

You see, that lady, like many others, thought she was the master, and God was a beggar, who should be glad to glean any crumbs that fall from her table. She thought of God as a cuddly-wuddly teddy bear, who might make her feel warm and secure when she needed Him, but would -- the rest of the time -- sit patiently on her bed, or wherever she put Him.

She thought of God as being a spiritual Santa, who waited anxiously for her to pass on the list of things she wanted, but who could be ignored the rest of the time. She thought of God as a nice grandpa, who gave gentle suggestions, but would never give orders.

Although she might never have said it out loud, this lady was among the hundreds of millions who wonder

- * who does God think He is that He can tell me what I'm supposed to do?
- * who does God think He is that I have to keep Him first all of the time?
- * who does God think He is that He can push me around?
- * who does God think He is that I'm not allowed to have anything before Him, alongside Him, over, under, or next to Him?

Who does God think He is?

I'm going to tell you.

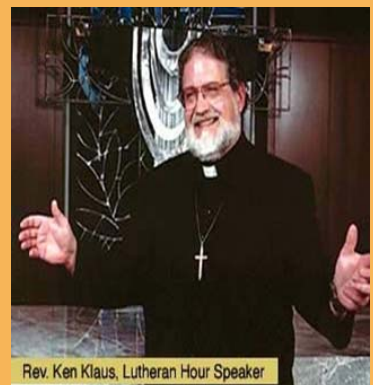
God thinks He's God, and we're not. He's the God whose justice compels Him to condemn the sinner and the God whose grace sent His Son into the world to save those same sinners. He is the God who says, "The wages of sin is death, but *My* free gift is eternal life in Christ Jesus the Lord."

THE PRAYER: Dear Lord, may I always remember that You are the loving Lord, and I am the sinful soul. May I always remember the sacrifice made by the Savior, who has given me life through His death and resurrection. In His Name I ask it. Amen.

In Christ I remain His servant and yours,



Pastor Ken Klaus
Speaker Emeritus of [The Lutheran Hour](#)®



The "Back Page" More Musings....

We seem to have two pathological liars running for president. Neither seems qualified to be president.

God however uses the most unlikely to do His work.

These are my personal comments and do not reflect the opinions/views of the EPC, GCEPC/LEPC.

A summary of Biblical 'candidates'...

1. Adam - Good man but has wife trouble. 2. Noah - former pastorate of 120 years with no converts, problem with the bottle, and a wayward son morals problem. 3. Abraham - Scandal ridden, offered wife to another man, child abuse 4. Joseph - dreamer, prison record 5. Moses - poor communicator, stutters, unanswered murder charge 6. David - affair with neighbor's wife, hired a hit man to kill husband 7. Solomon - husband of more than one wife, in fact parsonage too small 8. Elijah - prone to depression and nervous break downs 9. Elisha - reported to have live with a single widow at former church 10. Hosea - our congregation could not handle his wife's occupation 11. Jeremiah - emotionally unstable, alarmist, negative, lamenter, reported to have buried underwear on a foreign river bank, claims to have a set of recreated originals 12. Isaiah - language problems, on the fringe, claims to see angels 13. Jonah - refuses to preach to the lost unless forced to by God 14. Amos - backward and unpolished, does not like the rich 15. John - does not dress like a Baptist, weird diet, provokes higher powers 16. Peter - bad temper, curses, hypocrite in racial matters, loose cannon 17. Paul - uses racial epithets, preaches all night 18. Timothy - too young and single 19. Jesus - dwindled church of 5,000 down to 12 or 120, offends folks 20. Judas - His references are solid. Good connections. Knows how to handle money, has compassion for poor. He is preaching for us Sunday. Possibilities here.

I leave you with this prayer written by an unknown Confederate soldier

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve:

I was made weak that I might obey.

I asked for health that I might do greater things:

I was given infirmity that I might do better things.

I asked for riches that I might be happy:

I was given poverty that I might be wise.

I asked for power that I might have the praise of men:

I was given weakness that I might feel the need of God.

I asked for all things that I might enjoy life:

I was given life that I might enjoy all things.

I received nothing that I asked for, but all I had hoped for.

My prayer was answered, I am most richly blessed.



Steve & Teddy 9/28/1951

From the Editor

Deadline for Winter magazine is November 15, 2016. I want to hear about YOUR ministries. Send info and pictures, links to your websites if any.

May the blessings of Christ be with you all. ED.



Is he done yet?

Pastor Steve

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