

Nbr. 30 – January, 2021

Proverbs and Telling the Good News about Jesus

Does Proverbs mention evangelism?

This biblical book, renowned for its clear-headed, practical wisdom, does not fail to note the person who tells the Good News. It says: “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and a winner of souls is wise” (Proverbs 11:30).

In effect, Proverbs says: To get smart, get Christ. And, the book adds, give Him to others.

Far too many Old Testament scholars in the 20th century came to the conclusion that Old Testament people showed no concern for what happened to them after they died. Yet even our very practical book of Proverbs says otherwise: “At the death of the wicked person, hope vanishes; moreover, his confidence in strength vanishes. A righteous person is rescued from trouble, and the wicked person takes his place” (Proverbs 11:7-8).

Luther observed that if you do not believe in life after death, you may think you have enough “saviors” in various earthly authorities and benefactors. However, if you know that death does not end existence for you, then you need salvation from God Himself. You will need the God-Man who came at the first Christmas, Christ. With Him, the grace of God appeared for the salvation of all men.

People need to hear about this Savior and this salvation. Again, Proverbs: “The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life, to turn one away from the grasp of death” (Proverbs 13:14).

See? WOW! God’s people get to be conduits of life from Him. “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and a winner of souls is wise.”

Get smart; get Christ. And give Him!

List of E1HW Context Modules presently online:

- Witnessing to people with depression & anxiety
- Witnessing to people who are grieving
- Witnessing to LGBTQ people
- Witnessing to New Veterans
- Responding to Scientism (elevation of science)
- Witnessing to Dechurched Adult Children
- Witnessing to Jewish People
- Witnessing to Muslims
- Witnessing to Mormons

All of the above are available to those who have taken the E1HW Core Module. They can be found at everyonehiswitness.org

Conference on Adult Faith Formation

On January 12-14, Dr. Kent Bureson of Concordia Seminary and Dr. Rhoda Schuler of Concordia University, St. Paul will host an online conference called “Treasures Old and New.” Participants will learn of practices adapted from adult catechumenate materials in Roman Catholic circles. It features pastors from three LCMS churches that have been deeply involved in such approaches. The web address to register is <https://www.forminglutherans.org/>

Distribution of this Newsletter

At the annual C-WOW meeting in November, the question came up: who receives this newsletter? Basically, I noted, it is the C-WOWs themselves, plus the CID Evangelism Commission and a few others.

I did forget to note two things, however.

First, now that CID has a Facebook page, we post each issue on the Facebook page shortly after it is released to you. Second, back issues are archived on the District’s website at

<http://www.cidlcms.org/outreach-cwow.html>



Worth considering:

Reaching out in a Divided Nation

This month, there will be a presidential inauguration after a bitterly fought election campaign. Amid political and cultural divisions, the church must speak so as to keep her witness to God's Good News in Christ both strong and intact.

In the mid-1990s a television program called *Picket Fences* was set in a small town in Wisconsin. Most weeks, whatever trouble occupied that particular episode ended up being addressed in the town's municipal court. Whether or not the problem was basically legal in nature, it got solved in a climactic courtroom scene. From a dramatic point of view, those courtroom scenes provided the show's writers with opportunities to elaborate on pros and cons, and even rights and wrongs. But in real life not everything can get solved in municipal court. It is important to remember this especially today, when civil law itself becomes politicized.

The law is not alone. With shared cultural values coming in shorter and shorter supply, virtually everything public has become politicized in America, including entertainment and sports. Many people look to politics to provide the cornerstone and the configuration for the solidarity of society. Yet our political process is not basically built to offer content. It is more like a referee sorting out various contenders. If not careful, the church can be swept up into the melee as just one more contestant. When politics becomes the church's dominant witness, Christ's true mission is compromised.

Now, it is true that the church should insist, to all and sundry, that same-sex marriage is not really marriage, that abortion is murder, and that homosexual acts are sinful. God's Word is clear

about all these matters. And the church has a legitimate interest in the protection of religious freedom under the laws of our country. Yet none of these points are the Good News of the Christ Who died for sinners and rose again. None of them will save anyone eternally.

Perhaps this will surprise you, but as 21st century Missouri Synod Lutherans in America we have an advantage proclaiming the Good News to various sectors of society, including many people who have been victims of racism. Careful adherence to our theology kept our forefathers from getting swept up into several popular and political causes that would have compromised their witness. In his doctoral dissertation, former Lutheran Hour Speaker Gregory Seltz observed: "Notions of white supremacy and America's millenarian, manifest destiny were aberrations of God's salvific work in Christ, often clothing modernist notions of progressive humanity in Christian garb. The LCMS rejection of modernism and secular humanism was an affirmation of biblical anthropology and the uniqueness of salvation by grace alone through Jesus Christ." We always have the best foundation for mission when we keep to our theology, for it is drawn from the Scriptures and centers on Christ.

Let's not give up on that! Let's re-double our efforts to teach the distinction between God's two forms of governance – sometimes rather inaptly called the "two kingdoms" – which is rooted in the massively important distinction between Law and Gospel.

It's important for evangelism.

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Circuit Witness and Outreach Workers