

College is tough. People need Jesus. We're helping!

The Brave Road

(excerpted from O. P. Kretzmann, *The Road Back to God*, Concordia Publishing House, 1935 – that is, 90 years ago! – pages 103-106, paragraphing altered; used by the kind permission of the publisher)

About 600 years before Bethlehem . . . the people of God had turned from the altars of Jehovah. Judah, the plaything of the powerful kings of Egypt, Babylon, and Assyria, was torn by the strife of fanatical parties. . . . There was still enough to eat and to drink, and the clouds of the anger of God gathering on the horizon went unheeded. . . .

Suddenly in the year 627 the Lord raised up the prophet Jeremiah. He was hardly 20 years old when the call came and at first refused the tremendous task which the Lord God placed before him. "O Lord," he said, "I am but a child. I cannot speak." The Lord brushed his objections aside. . . . In [Jeremiah] the world has found its greatest prophet of doom and destruction. For almost 50 years his voice was heard in the streets of Jerusalem. . . . The Lord God had taken hold of him.

The consuming desire to do the Lord's bidding drove him from one end of the kingdom to the other, caused him to wear chains around his neck in prophecy of Judah's doom, and brought him at last, a weary and broken old man, to sit among the ruins of his beloved Jerusalem and to sing there the greatest songs of heartbroken sorrow the world has ever known. . . .

Marked by the hand of God as a prophet of doom and destruction, Jeremiah carried in youth and old age the one thing which Christian men and women need above everything else – an indomitable and invincible faith in the future of the kingdom of God. Five times in . . . Jeremiah we find the striking words: "I will not make a full end."

Jeremiah's world was falling to pieces. His civilization was collapsing. . . . Yet here is a man who in the midst of the thunder and uproar continues to sing. He knows that in the dark and restless tides of time there can be no final defeat for God. The kingdom must go on. Its victory cannot fail. Not until the discords of humanity verge into the choirs of heaven will He make a full end and transform our faith and hope in the future of the Church Militant into the final vision of the Church Triumphant. . . .

Strangely enough, many men and women have come to consider the Christian religion something soft and weak. . . . That idea came from hell. Hands that are placed in the hands of Jesus cannot be soft. They must have touched the pain of the world. They must be hard and brave and true. Into our eyes should come again the vision of the divine power and glory which our faith has brought to us since the dawn of time.

God will not make a full end. . . .

In all our work for the kingdom of God we are so careful, so fearful and so cautious. We walk through life with a safety belt. Two thousand years ago, our Lord said: "He that loseth his life for My sake shall find it." The courage to lose life for the sake of Christ is our need today.

Can we not get some of that back? We are still close to the eternal fountain of power. Jesus the crucified and risen is ever near. . . .

We can have again the light of eternity on our faces. When we realize that the Road Back to God is the road of an indomitable courage, life will become rich and full and brave with a power which will give all our days meaning and purpose in the Kingdom of God.

Please save us future stamps! Send your e-mail address to amyholmes@cidlcms.org

To donate to endowments for Central Illinois District campus ministry:

<https://www.lutheranlegacyfoundation.org/fund/central-illinois-district-campus-ministry/>

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Campus Ministry Stories

Two from Pastor Chris Hull, Immanuel, Macomb:

The first story I have is meeting Josh . . . this past fall. At our student association fair table, he expressed interest in the word on our sign, "Fellowship." What was that? I explained what it means to have fellowship with our Father in Christ and then have fellowship with one another as those forgiven by Jesus. Josh came to our hotdog roast the next day and asked more questions. He then started meeting with me on Saturday mornings and studying the Bible and Small Catechism for at least two hours a week. He attended church services each Sunday, always asking more questions. At the end of the semester, he was confirmed and now continues to come faithfully to hear the Word and receive the Sacrament of the Altar. He is a great young man in his freshman year studying Law Enforcement.

The second story is of Michael . . . who grew up Christian but wasn't zealously attached to one denomination. He met Lily, an LCMS girl who attended worship and study at the Student Center. I met them both when I started here. After the summer of '24, Michael came back to Western to finish his master's work. He and I began meeting and walking through the Small Catechism. He was confirmed along with Josh at the end of the semester. What is awesome about this is that Michael next went forth into the world with the Light of Christ guiding him. He didn't begin dating Lily because she was Lutheran; they met because they were studying the same thing. It is amazing how the Holy Spirit works and brings it about that the Word can enter in and bring assurance of salvation. Michael now works in Michigan and faithfully attends an LCMS church.

Campus Ministry Future

This summer's Central Illinois District convention, July 13-15, will have important decisions to make affecting the future of District campus ministries. A funding campaign will likely be proposed to delegates for approval. This campaign is envisioned to provide for repairs and upgrades at CID's campus centers in Champaign, Macomb, and Normal over the next 10 years. It should also further build the Lutheran Legacy endowments whose earnings provide the District money with which to support campus ministry at University of Illinois, Illinois State, EIU, and WIU.

The campaign figures to be crucial to the District's ability to maintain its three campus churches in good repair over the long haul. Without such a campaign, it is difficult to envision how CID can keep up with the repairs and upgrades that will be needed for these facilities.

The Mission Commission's convention report is filled with information on CID's campus ministries and other missions. It is now online at <https://www.cidlcms.org/resources/missioneducationtoolkit/2025MissionCommissionConventionReport.pdf>

It would be wonderful if every reader of this newsletter would:

- Read the Mission Commission report, particularly its portions on campus ministry
- Urge others to examine the same report
- Ask your [CID] congregation to conduct a public discussion about present missions and the prospects for a campaign, so convention delegates will know what the "folks back home" think when they vote on a proposal
- Pray for our efforts, together as a District, to keep Christ on campus!

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