

See? **WOW!** News and Encouragement for CID **C**ircuit **W**itness & **O**utreach **W**orkers

Nbr. 54 – October, 2023

Light

St. John wrote of Jesus, “The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world” (John 1:9). We know how important light is from day to day. Without light, we are in darkness.

When you enter a dark room, you can’t see, Things are unknown. “The person who walks in the dark does not know where He is going” (John 12:35). But in Christ God has given us light. As the psalmist said: “Send out your light and your truth; let them lead me, let them bring me to your holy mountain” (Ps. 43:3).

Worse than rendering things unseen and unknown, though, darkness for danger. In the dark, you might trip and fall. But God rescues our feet from stumbling to walk before Him in the light of life (Ps. 56:13).

The worst danger of darkness is death. You can kill yourself in the dark, or get killed. Isaiah said, and Matthew quoted him, “The people sitting in darkness have seen a great Light; for those sitting *in the land of the shadow of death*, a Light has risen.” (Mt. 4:16). Jesus said, “I have come as a Light into the world so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness” (Jn. 12:46).

See? **WOW!** Jesus is the Light of the world. The “God who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness’ . . . has shone in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ” (2 Cor. 4:6). When we tell the Good News about Jesus, we shed this very light on others.

Apologetics 101

This is a one-day workshop to be held at Zion Lutheran Church, Mascoutah on Saturday, Oct.

7 from 9AM to 3PM. (CID teachers attending conference in Collinsville on Friday, Oct. 6 might consider staying in the area overnight and attending this workshop in Mascoutah.)

Topics for the day are:

- Who, What, Where, Why, When of Apologetics
- The Reliability of Scripture
- Literature & Apologetics: Bridge to Conversation
- Reality of the Resurrection

Presenters are

- DCE Faith Spelbring, Belleville
- Rev. Joe Cox, St. Louis
- Rev. Dr. Kirk Clayton, Mascoutah

Register today! \$10 will cover your lunch.

Write to Pastor@ZionMascoutah.org

Annual C-WOW meeting

Usually we hold these on the Saturday before Thanksgiving. But this year I will be at my niece’s wedding on that day, so unable to attend.

Possible alternative Saturdays:

- Dec. 2 (best for me)
- Nov. 11
- Nov. 4

Please let me know which of these you find workable no later than **Monday, Oct. 16.**

Register for Small Church Summit

The next Small Church Summit will meet in southern Illinois at Messiah, Carlyle, on Jan. 6 or (if weather is bad then) Jan. 27 and in central Illinois on Feb. 3 or (if weather is bad then) Feb. 10 at Faith, Lincoln. You can attend either of these free. See the September CID *GatePost* for details.

Register now at

<https://forms.gle/5eEQYVGgAwMdtj4v6>



Circuit Witness and Outreach Workers

Worth Considering: **Good News – Hear It!**

A number of years ago, my wife and I went to dinner with my brother and his family. There we met his college-age son's new girlfriend. We were all seated at a long table in the restaurant, and I ended up sitting right across from her.

After a while, I asked this young lady whether she had been raised in a church. I like using this question as a "starter" for evangelistic conversation. People usually do not take offense at it. After all, it was beyond their control if they were raised in a church. In answering, the young lady did not have to say whether she liked church. Of course, I was hoping she would.

She did. She had attended a church when she was little, but her family had gotten away from it. I raised a couple more questions to find out what she understood about Jesus and what she would say about Jesus. She knew the broad outlines of the Gospel: that Jesus died and rose again to save people. Yet I sensed that she was trying to keep it all at arm's length. Then she said, "Look, you're asking me to stake my whole life on this, but how do I know it's true?"

I told her that Jesus' death and even His resurrection are among the best-attested facts that anyone knows from the ancient world. If you don't recognize these things as true, you will have a hard time accepting as true anything else from that time.

What's more, I went on, we all come face to face with things in our lives – even with respect to very consequential, life-and-death matters – where we do simply not have as much data as we might like. When you cross the street, you look first to see whether it seems safe, but you will never be 100% sure. Still, you venture into the street not just the portion of yourself that seems unconcerned about your chances; you take 100% of yourself across.

But none of this seemed to have much effect. Those last couple of things I said were in an apologetic vein, emphasizing reasons why she should not dismiss the message of Christ out of hand. I also told her that with the Good News about Jesus there was nothing for her to do. The Holy Spirit works through this message. Miraculously, He brings about faith and the certainty of faith.

Jesus said, "If anyone wants to do [the] will [of the One Who sent Me], he will know whether My teaching is from God" (Jn. 7:17). Focusing in on the term *will of God* here, Luther paraphrased what Christ said: "This is God's will, that I teach and that you listen to Me and believe."

Here was a good point for the young lady. Instead of dwelling on reservations about God's Word, how about trying it?

She could have heard the Gospel more if I had spoken it more to her that night. Christian certainty is created by Christ's own testimony in His Word. Technically, we might say that God's Word is an *object* of perception that creates its own *organ* of perception, faith. Through the Gospel God creates faith and certainty of faith (Pieper I, 308).

Well, today let me tell you: also because of all those times when you did not say enough about Christ or listen enough to the Gospel, the Lord died. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin. We fumble around at sticking up for Him, but He stood right up for us, even stood up out of the grave. Although we can be ashamed of Him, He is never ashamed to be our God and Lord.

You may hear great things about some fine food, but nothing quite compares with tasting it. After you have had a taste of it, no one can tell you it's not all that it's cracked up to be. So, taste, and keep tasting. Taste and see that the Lord is good!

– Ken Schurb kschurb@cidlcms.org

