

THE EMMANUEL EPISTLE

"Praising, Proclaiming and Practicing Emmanuel—God with us—in daily life!"

Pastor's Keyboard: "Discipleship - "Jesus Said WHAT?"

"Did I hear what I think I heard?" *"He said WHAT?"* Sometimes a person's words are so shocking that we catch ourselves in disbelief, wondering if in fact we heard correctly, wanting a rewind and a replay?

Recently, I viewed John Ortberg's DVD series, "Who Is This Man?" Ortberg is a pastor of Menlo Park Presbyterian Church in Menlo Park, California. Several things jumped off the screen and into my head & heart as I listened to his lectures. A case in point: "Jesus said things that didn't always sit well with his audience. He angered and infuriated his listeners. He confused his followers. He amazed people by what he said & did. *Jesus said WHAT?*"

"Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? They took offense at Him." - Matthew 13:53-58,

This month we are considering some of the hard to hear sayings that Jesus - the Word of God - spoke to His disciples. Remember, Jesus didn't just talk the talk. He



actually walked the walk. Jesus practiced what he preached. And so must we, by the grace of God.

In the Ancient World, it was assumed that one would love their friends and hate their enemies. But Jesus commanded his followers to love their enemies, pray for their persecutors, turn the other cheek, go the extra mile, & to forgive 70 x 7. *Jesus said WHAT?*

Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! - Luke 6:22

Jesus said, "Therefore, I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven." - Mt. 12:31. Jesus is talking about an unpardonable sin. Speaking about family values, Jesus said, "Think not

that I came to bring peace. Not peace, but a sword and fire. I came to set children against their parents and parents against their children. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." - Mt. 10:34-39. Jesus also said, "Leave the dead to bury the dead." - Luke 8:57-62. Jesus doesn't lower the bar to make following him more palatable or easy. Jesus raises the bar.

In Matthew 5:29 Jesus says, "If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away." In Mark 10, Jesus tells a rich man to "go, sell all of his possessions, give to the poor, come and follow." The rich man is told to renounce all of his possessions if he wishes to have treasure in heaven. In John 6, Jesus said, "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood you have no life in

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Food For Thought:

"The Christian faith has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and left untried."

— G. K. Chesterton

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PRAYING FOR OUR SCHOOLS

Each month, on the 15th day of the month, we pray for an area school. During the month of June we are praying for Riverside Elementary School and delivering goodies as an expression of our love & gratitude on June 6. Thanks for keeping students & their families, teachers and administrators, in your prayers! This ministry is supported by an Action Team gift from Thrivent.

SATURDAY SCHOOL

We've ended our second year of Saturday School at Emmanuel Lutheran. Youth have enjoyed Bible lessons, games, crafts, dramas and snacks. Special thanks to our wonderful teacher, Julie Steffenson for all of her faithful service to Christ and the children of the church. Rally Day is tentatively set for Saturday, September 10 (5:10 pm).

SAVE THE DATES!

- Saturday, June 4 (6pm): Gift of Grace Lutheran Church worshipping with us!
- Sunday, August 7 (12:00 Noon): Emmanuel Picnic at Vomhof's place.
- Saturday, August 13 (6pm): Music Celebration Worship Service!
- Saturday, August 27 (3pm): All Church Picnic with Oasis & Iglesia Churches.
- Saturday, September 10 (5:10pm): Saturday School Rally Day.
- Friday, November 4: Men's & Boy's Banquet.

Women's Afternoon Bible Study

The Ladies Afternoon Bible Study reconvened on March 30 at Oasis Church. Currently the women are engaged in an eight week study on inspiring women of the New Testament. We meet at Oasis Church on Wednesdays at 1pm. Remaining Class dates & Women of the Word are:

- June 8 - Dorcas & Lydia (*note change of date*)
- June 15 - Phoebe, Priscilla & Philip's Daughters
- June 29 - Lois & Eunice

In the Eucharist

In the Lord's Supper, the Church unites herself to the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. This teaching should shock us: it means that we mystically share in the sufferings of Christ on the Cross. Consider this prayer from St. Gemma Galgani: "Do grant, oh my God, that when my lips approach Yours to kiss You, I may taste the gall that was given to You; when my shoulders lean against Yours, make me feel Your scourging; when my flesh is united with Yours, in the Holy Eucharist, make me feel Your passion; when my head comes near Yours, make me feel Your thorns; when my heart is close to Yours, make me feel Your spear."

"Mind your manners, St Paul!"

By Peter Mullens - May 23, 2016

Archbishop Justin Welby, the 105th Archbishop of Canterbury & the most senior bishop in the Church of England, has told Christians firmly that we should not "proselytize" or talk about our faith to non-Christians until they invite us to do so.

It is a pity that St Paul didn't have the benefit of the Archbishop's guidance before he set out -- without being asked -- on his 3 missionary voyages in which he founded churches among the pagans in such cities as Philippi, Ephesus and Corinth. The presence of the finger-wagging, politically-correct Mr. Welby on the quayside before St Paul boarded his ship would have saved the Apostle a great deal of trouble: the thirty-nine lashes he received (5 times), an attempt to stone him & his shipwreck.

How ironic that Welby should choose the season of Pentecost to issue his injunction for, according to chapter two of The Acts of the Apostles, this was the day when the disciples of Jesus experienced the rushing mighty wind of the Holy Ghost and tongues of fire upon their heads and immediately rushed -- all uninvited -- out into the Jerusalem streets to preach to members of every race under the sun: Parthians, Medes, Elamites, dwellers in Mesopotamia, Cretes and Arabians and all the rest. (*continued on page 4*)

"The Church is justified, not because her children do not sin, but because they do."

— G.K. Chesterton

— *Continued from page 1 ...* you.” Many of Jesus’ disciples when they heard these words said, “This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?” After this many of Jesus’ disciples turned back and no longer walked with Him.

Was Jesus exaggerating to make a point; speaking perhaps in hyperbole? Or was He, dare we say it, dead serious? When someone genuinely loves another person, they realize that nothing less than the TRUTH will suffice. In John 8, Jesus was asked to condemn a woman caught in the act of adultery. Jesus says to the accusers, “Whoever is without sin can throw the first stone.” After writing in the dirt, Jesus looks at the woman & says, “Where are your accusers?” She replies, “There are none.” Jesus says, “Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.” *Jesus said WHAT?* You mean I can't sin all the more that grace may abound? “Be a sinner & sin boldly, but believe & rejoice in Christ even more boldly.” Grace isn't a license for sin.

In John 4, Jesus had to go through Samaria. It was a Spirit-driven necessity. After exchanging peasantries with a Samaritan Woman, Jesus offers her Living Water that gushes up to eternal life. It is hers, just for the asking. Then Jesus asks her to bring her husband. Sin cannot be ignored. Forgiveness is only for sinners. The Samaritan Woman perceives that Jesus is a Prophet. She changes the topic from sin to worship. Jesus tells her that Samaritans worship what they do not know & Jews worship what they know, for *THE SALVATION* is from the Jews. *Jesus said WHAT?* He wasn't being politically correct or inter-faith tolerant. He says that not all religions are equal. The Salvation is found only in Christ. The Samaritan Woman says, “When Messiah comes He will reveal the TRUTH. Jesus says, “I AM!” The Samaritan Woman leaves her jar at the well & becomes a preacher, sharing the gusher of Living Water with other Samaritans.

Jesus wasn't trying to be offensive. He didn't enjoy watching His listeners squirm. But He knew that only THE TRUTH can make us free indeed. So here's a thought. Summer is fast approaching. Maybe instead of trying to soft-pedal the hard words of Jesus, we might want to actually “wrestle well” with them. Remember how He told you, “Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.” Bonhoeffer said, “When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die.” There is no escaping the TRUTH. Jesus is THE WAY to the Father. There is salvation in no other name (Acts 4:12)!

A Servant of The TRUTH, Pastor Dave

WORSHIP SERVANTS FOR JUNE - Liturgy: Holden Evening Prayer, revised edition

Saturday, June 4 - Pentecost III (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Don Holtan

Ushers: Darald Bothun & Dick Stanley

Acolyte: Emma Matzke

Communion Assistant: Julie Steffenson

Treats: Nancy Stanley

Saturday, June 11 - Pentecost IV (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Larry Vomhof

Ushers: Darald Bothun & Creig Anderson

Acolyte: Elijah Matzke

Communion Assistant: Fred Morek

Treats: Leitha Bothun

Saturday, June 18 - Pentecost V (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers & Communion Assistant: Jenna Serr

Ushers: Matt & Nora & Scarlett Serr

Acolyte: Ava Siebenaler

Treats: Deb Vomhof

Saturday, June 25- Pentecost VI: (6pm)

Scripture Reader, Prayers, and Communion Assistant: Lee Pearce

Ushers: Bob Mulvihill & LeRoy Quam

Acolyte: Cabe Siebenaler

Treats: Judy Pearce

NOTE: Pastor Dave will be our worship leader & preacher each week. MarJean Damerval will be our pianist each week except June 25 (Mandy Lambrecht). Julie Steffenson will take care of set up & Janet Sunde & friends will take care of the take down each week. Peg Holtan will provide the coffee & Don Holtan will be our sound technician each week. **NOTE:** Gift of Grace Lutheran Church, our sister congregation in Holmen, WI, will be with us in worship on June 4, offering gifts of music and sharing fellowship with us.

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CONGRATULATIONS!

Emmanuel is offering thanks to God for the gift of Edison Kirby Konop, born to Amber & Joe Konop on May 19. Edison is also welcomed into the Konop family by his big brother Marek.

(continued from page 2)

If only the wise, admonitory and well-mannered Mr. Welby had been there to say, "Never mind the promptings of the Holy Ghost, St Peter! Mind your P's and Q's! Wait till you're asked!"

And if we go back a little earlier to the life of Our Lord himself, we can imagine -- if only Welby had been there to quieten Jesus' enthusiasm -- his command "Go ye therefore & teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father & of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" would never have been given. Or at the very least Jesus would surely have toned down his command to something more polite such as, "Go & ask those pagans if they'd like to join an Alpha course! Tell them there's red wine and pizza afterwards!" Christian history would have turned out quite differently, if only Jesus had minded his manners.

But Welby's verbal facility is not limited to the occasional sound-bite, such as "Don't proselytize!" He is capable of quite extraordinary prolixity. How's this for an example of what Humpty Dumpty called "Impenetrability"? In his Pentecost speech, he went on to say: "I draw the line in terms of respect for the other; in starting by listening before you speak; in terms of love that is unconditional and not conditional to one iota, to one single element, on how the person responds to your own declaration of faith; and of not speaking about faith unless you are asked about faith."

That is an utterance so syntactically obscure that Welby's predecessor, the Great Obfuscator, Rowan Williams himself, would have been proud of it.

Back Page Stories

Men's Bible Study Breakfast:

Weekly fellowship around God's Word at 8am Tuesdays at Charlie's (1408 2nd. St. SW). Join us in being Evangelical. Invite a friend.

Supermarket Saturday: The next Channel One opportunity is June 18, 2016 (9 am—Noon).

Women's Bible Studies: The Afternoon Study Group is currently studying "Fascinating Women of the New Testament" - meeting twice each month on Wednesdays at 1pm. The Evening Study Group is studying Women of the Old Testament. They continue to meet monthly at the home of Katie Siebenaler. Session Eight

(David's Wives: Michal and Bathsheba) will be on Tuesday, June 14 at 6:30pm.

Council Highlights (May 11):

Giving for the month of April was excellent, positioning us well for YTD budget projections! Electronic Giving is available to those wishing to use it. Offering envelopes are available for Children. Emmanuel Articles of Incorporation were approved, awaiting adoption by the Congregation on May 28. Emmanuel now has "Religious Expressions" and "Officers & Directors" Insurance coverage. A designated gift was received covering the costs for the NALC Convocation in California. Gideon Saturday with Gary Froiland will be October 8. Emmanuel will

celebrate our 5 year anniversary on February 25, 2017! The next Council Meeting is June 1 at 5pm.

Madonna Towers Ministry:

Pastor Dave is leading worship & preaching at the Madonna Towers Skilled Care Chapel on the first Wednesday of each month. Members of Emmanuel are invited to participate in this ministry to seniors of our community. Our next Service will be on Wednesday, June 1 at 1:00 pm. Give Lee Pearce a call if you would like to participate in this wonderful ministry.

Marks of Discipleship: Signposts guide our way—Disciples seek to pray daily, worship weekly, grow spiritually, read & study Scripture on a regular basis, serve others, share the good news, & give generously.