



## DP Vantage Point

---

*For Christ and for His world SWD magnifies partnerships,  
multiplies ministries, and maximizes resources.*

Thursday, June 2, 2016

Dear Brothers in the Office of the Holy Ministry:

The following was delivered by Rev. Randy Golter during Sunday morning Matins at the International Center, Floor Committee weekend. I share it with you with his permission. It is a good message for floor committees and the whole church to consider. We are no more than Lazarus, beggars dependent on the grace of our Lord Jesus.

Trinity 1 – Floor Committee meetings

International Center, Saint Louis

May 29, 2016

“The Hidden Life of Faith” Luke 16:19-31

Pastor Randall Golter

The devil angles to get to your heart through the other commandments. And, therefore, he attempts to destroy your marriage (6<sup>th</sup> C) or cause hostility and hatred (5<sup>th</sup> C) in order to undermine or overturn the First Commandment. This text preached into your ear this morning by Jesus is not about the misuse or the proper use of material goods ultimately.

Rather, Jesus’ angle too—and His angle was first and the devil only mimicked it—is to use the other commandments to get to and reveal the First. Jesus’ stewardship from the Father of bearing all sinners’ sins drove Him, and still does. Jesus can’t help Himself but to be Himself, and cleanse your heart, which is the First Commandment’s gift of divine life, letting God be God to you.

But to be a bit reflective this morning, to have a poignant pause before you get into your necessary work, sobering it is how your Savior portrays the life of faith (First Commandment life) versus the life of unbelief, a “certain rich man” as example.

Obviously, obviously, *real* life does not consist in the abundance of things (7<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>), as believed by this “certain rich man” who feasted “sumptuously”, defending and debating Abraham all the way to and from hell. Here Jesus surely shows you the depth of your own depraved thinking apart from your real life given “birth from above.” Unbelief tenaciously holds onto to things as life, security and treasure and will *debate* God in defiant defense to the nth degree. Unbelievers—including your old sinful nature—know not silence, a clean confession or a slowness to speak before God or the neighbor.

I’ve done that, so have you, before God and with likely some of you. There is no escape to get out of this arrogant skin except clean separation through repentance, baptismal crucifixion and then finally

God's execution of your body in death, following the way of your Savior, your sin-sacrifice. God's way of life is remarkably surprising, hidden, puzzling, and paradoxical!

What you and I need most is what Jesus gives—not only of Himself freely—which was the heart of the Reformation—oh, what joy, unbelievable joy that is—but a portrayal of what the life of faith looks like! Like a beggar it is, full of sores, like Lazarus. No words to say to defend but a life of faith and trust, masked by a feeble, frail life. To the world, such a life is wretched and despicable. Even in hell, the rich man still saw Lazarus as merely his servant to do his bidding!

Even though not spoken or taught by Jesus here explicitly, Lazarus had been given faith, faith in the One who is speaking these words. You see, in reality, if you have Jesus or, better said, Jesus has you, AS HE DOES, there's no grounding for complaint, as some of you do. And, material things are simply material things, not even comparable to the riches of the forgiveness of sins in Christ Jesus—which is yours.

This is the Church's life, your life, a beggarly Lazarus-type of splendid care by the Savior, totally dependent upon God's help (First Commandment talk). But the world will not recognize your life or care. They'll simply step over or on you or ignore you, letting the dogs tend to your wounds. "Here, have a few crumbs from my table!" Realize that, fight with prayer, don't complain. For there is One who is watching—in whom is your trust and confidence; He is your Rock.

His splendid care is His constant, enfleshed and ongoing Presence nourishing you by His Word—Moses and the Prophets—along with His effective signs through material means loaded with inexhaustible treasure through water, bread and wine. There is Jesus for you. He will bring you to Abraham's side, your spiritual ancestor. Rejoice!

So you debate, argue, discern what's best for His outwardly tattered and forlorn church, and making decisions so that others—those certain rich men, whoever they are—might hear and believe. And, even if they defiantly defend and debate you all the way to grave, well, like Jesus you keep pointing them to Jesus, that is, to "hear Moses and the Prophets."

May our Lord have mercy upon us!

### **A Word from Luther:**

Not long ago I came across a couple of interesting comments from Martin Luther, and I was reminded of them with the events of today.

- 1) If Christians are to be merciful even to their enemies, as Christ teaches here [Luke 6: 35], it is even more necessary that they show all love and friendship toward their brothers and Christian people. If they are not to curse their enemies, they are much less to curse their friends. Likewise, if they are not to take revenge on unbelievers, but to give to them and do them good, they are much more to show this kindness to their fellow believers. [Luther's Works, Volume 78 (Church Postil IV) page 182. Concordia Publishing House.]

- 2) Divisions and sects cannot be lacking but must prevail, and by them pure teaching and faith are corrupted, and the devil will sow his seed, which afterward can be rooted out only with difficulty. When self-conceit gains the upper hand, so that someone wants to be more learned, wiser, better, and holier than another, he then begins to despise the others. Thus he draws people to himself away from the united understanding and mind which makes us all equal in Christ, so that they are supposed to praise and exalt his teaching, preaching, and doing over others. Then harm has already been done, faith has been abolished, and the Church has been torn. [Luther's Works, Volume 78 (Church Postil IV) page 189. Concordia Publishing House.]
- 3) However, a Christian should not and cannot (if he remains a Christian) be an unmerciful or vindictive man, because he has become God's child, and from Him he has obtained mercy, in which he lives without ceasing. He should not have desire for or joy in his neighbor's harm and misfortune or have a bitter, harsh, and stubborn heart toward him. Rather, he is much more disposed to show mercy to his neighbor, even to one who is hostile to him, and to take pity on his blindness and misery, because he sees him lying in God's wrath and leading himself into eternal ruin and damnation, so that he is already all too highly avenged on him. Just for that reason he should be kind to him and show him all charity (provided that he will tolerate and accept it), so that in this way he may win him and bring him to repentance. [Luther's Works, Volume 78 (Church Postil IV) page 192 Concordia Publishing House.]

#### **SWD News and Tidbits:**

1. **Please Vote!! By now you should have all received information on how to vote for the Synod President. That election is 9 days away at this writing.**
  - a. Both pastors and lay delegates who attended the 2015 SWD convention should have received information regarding how to record your vote for the election of our Synod President. Please urge your lay delegate to vote!
  - b. The three nominees for president, in the order of nominations received, are:
    - Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison**, the incumbent Synod president, with 755 nominations.
    - Rev. Dr. Dale A. Meyer**, president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 442 nominations.
    - Rev. Dr. David P.E. Maier**, president of the LCMS Michigan District, 358.
  - c. ***My encouragement to you is that you look past any last minute politicking you might see and simply vote on the basis of what you believe and know to be true.***
2. **2016 LCMS National Convention:** A couple of items by way of reminder.
  - a. SWD Delegate Orientation is scheduled for Saturday, June 11 at the SWD office starting at 9am. Please alert your circuit lay delegate about that date. There will be a continental breakfast at 830am with a lunch provided. We should be done in the early afternoon.
  - b. The first issue of *Today's Business* with resolutions is up online, as of last evening: 204 pages of everything you need to know about what will be discussed and decided at the July Convention.
  - c. By now everyone has received their convention assessment for this summer's National LCMS Convention in Milwaukee. If your treasurer hasn't already done so, please make sure

that a check has been cut and sent to the SWD office. These monies help fund both the convention as well as the attendance of our delegates.

**3. Congregational Visitation:**

1. As you have heard in the recent past, part of my responsibilities as an ecclesiastical supervisor (DP) involve visitation of congregations. If you follow my calendar you know, that is well underway. This year I am prioritizing the congregations served by circuit visitors and SWD board members for visitation.
2. However, if you would like to schedule such a visitation, give Karen a call. My calendar has some openings this summer. A normal visitation more often than not involves a conversation with the pastor(s), preaching, Bible Class, and always a visit with congregational leadership.

**4. The following was shared with the SWD Board of Directors yesterday in an email from my office:**

Some of you may have already heard or been notified in different formats, but so that you may all have the same information; Peter Kelm who has served as our SWD Mission Executive for the past three years has accepted the divine call to serve as an associate pastor at First Immanuel Lutheran, Cedarburg. We certainly thank Peter for his service to our Lord and His church during his time as assistant the president, mission executive.

While at this writing I am not sure of the exact transitions plans that Pastor has, normally process means that in short order Peter will be relocating his ministry to First Immanuel.

Regarding the vacancy our SWD Bylaws state:

g. Unless otherwise designated by District resolution, it shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to elect and call executive staff from a list of candidates nominated by the congregations of the District, the District President and the Board of Directors.

The current Policy Manual expands on that saying:

2.5.1.1.1 Rostered Positions: Called Executive Staff: In the case where the District President recommends and the Board agrees there is a vacancy in the office of another called executive staff position, the Governance Board shall appoint a Call Committee. The Committee shall consist of the Vice-Chair, two other non-officer members of the Board, two members from the pertinent Advisory Council who have been appointed by the District President (if such a Council exists), and the District President. In following the guidelines established in the Constitution and By-laws for calling such personnel, the Call Committee shall not fail to:

- Establish a set of criteria for the position, with special attention to the leadership needs under Aligned Governance and Operations,
- Interview the President of the District to determine his insights regarding the need for the position being filled,
- Present to the Governance Board a summary of the interviews of each candidate, Having discussed this process with Bryan Seider, Chairman of the SWD Board, we will begin this process sometime in August.

We wish Peter Kelm our Lord's most gracious blessings as he returns to the parish to serve God's people, carrying on his ministry in before an altar and from the pulpit, Word and Sacrament ministry. May our gracious Lord bless!

**[I am sure that everyone is aware of Peter's journey with cancer. We keep him in our prayers as our Lord watches over Peter and his family!!]**

## **5. Calls and Vacancies:**

### **Pastor Calls & Vacancies:**

- Beloit – Messiah
- Elm Grove – Elm Grove Lutheran (associate)
- Franklin – Risen Savior
- Grafton – St. Paul (associate)
- Mayville – St. John (senior)
- Milwaukee – Mt. Olive (evaluating)
- Milwaukee – St. Peter – Immanuel (evaluating)
- Sheboygan – St. Paul (associate)
- Sheboygan Falls – St. Paul (associate)
- Wauwatosa – Our Redeemer

### **Pastors Considering a call:**

- Daniel Eddy – Christ, Scituate, Massachusetts to Messiah, Beloit
- Allen Kramp – Faith, Flora, Illinois to St. John, Mayville
- Ryan Schroeder – St. Luke, New Richmond, Wisconsin to Risen Savior, Franklin

### **Pastors accepting a call:**

- Peter Kelm – District Mission Executive to First Immanuel, Cedarburg
- James Pemberton – St. John, Mt. Hope, Ohio to Oklahoma Ave. (Installation June 26 @ 2:30pm)

### **Pastors declining a call:**

- Peter Kelm – District Mission Executive to St. Paul, Sheboygan Falls

### **Candidates Placed:**

- Jesse Gullion -Fort Wayne, IN to Christ the King/Holy Cross, Racine (Ordination/Installation June 26 @4:00 pm Holy Cross)

### **Vicars assigned:**

- Andrew Coop to Trinity, Howards Grove
- Jonathan Jennings – Luther Memorial, Shorewood
- Adam Kosberg to Trinity-Freistadt, Mequon
- Ethan Spira – St. Paul, Janesville

Pastors called home to glory

- Willie Little 5/17/16

6. **SWD Prayer List:**

- Peter Kelm as he begins radiation treatments again

May our Lord bless!!

Rev. Dr. John C. Wille  
President, South Wisconsin District-LCMS  
Office: 414.464.8100  
Mobile : 414.839.9162

***Confessing Christ for the Next Generation***

*It is time for us to be distinctly Lutheran, to plant new churches, to honor our vocation,  
and to embrace our communities.*