



DP Vantage Point

*For Christ and for His world SWD Magnifies partnerships,
Multiplies ministries, and Maximizes resources.*

25 February 2015

Thoughts on Exodus 20:1-17
Old Testament Lesson for March 8

Brothers in the Office of the Holy Ministry:

We all know what a red light on the highway means: STOP! If you don't stop at a red light, something bad can happen: Either an accident will occur, or a policeman will give you a \$60.00 ticket. But traffic lights don't mean much in other parts of the world. Take for instance, Cairo, Egypt. As I was preparing this sermon, I came across the story of a man who visited Cairo. He found the streets packed with every kind of transportation imaginable. There were expensive cars like Mercedes and also camel drawn wagons. There were old jalopies and people on bicycles. There were people riding donkeys and pedestrians balancing huge bundles on their head. To the tourist bus it appeared that there was only confusion. No one stopped for any reason. When the bus driver ran a red light, one of the tourists cried out in fear, "What about the traffic lights?" The tour guide replied, "In Cairo lights are only a suggestion."

Unfortunately that's the way that we sinners oftentimes look at God's 10 Commandments...as if they were merely 10 suggestions. But nothing is actually farther from the truth. They are more than suggestions that we can take or leave. They are 10 Commandments to which God himself holds us accountable. There is no more frightening passage in Holy Scripture than the one in Second Corinthians where St. Paul says, "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." We are accountable to God for the way that we live our lives. That accountability is defined in these 10 Commandments. But there's not only accountability here in these commandments. There is also blessing. We read in Psalm 1: "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night."

We know that God's will is best for us, yet we want to do what we want. We want to go where we want when we want. We want to say what we want...how we want. Teenagers don't like their parents telling them what to do. Newlyweds don't like their in-laws/out-laws interfering in their marriage. As sinners we resent the fact that God tries to tell us how to live our lives. We like to cuss and swear, if only a little bit when someone gets us mad. But God tells us in the 2nd Commandment, "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name." We like to tell white lies...to protect ourselves and the feelings of others. But God says, "each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor," We like to make all sorts of excuses to stay away from worship. But it's obvious from Scripture that our Lord wants us in

worship not just when we feel like it...not just when it fits into our schedule...but often. He made it the Third Commandment. When a marriage turns sour, many want to bail out...their parachute is called divorce. It's not just forgetting the promise, "till death parts" ...We often forget what God says through the Prophet Malachi: "I hate divorce." We call them jokes...of a sort...But God says, "Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place."

In the laws of our land sinful mankind attempts to legitimize those activities which God condemns as sin like abortion and homosexuality. In some countries it is even called a "hate crime" to call someone a sinner for such things. ...but God calls a sin is sin. God makes that very plain. St. Paul tells the Galatians, "The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God."

Why does God talk so much about sin? Who does he think he is trying to tell us how to live our lives? To begin the answer is easy, he is God. In Psalm 100 it says, "Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture." Apart from God we have no life...no existence. Apart from God we aren't here...we aren't anywhere. As God he has certain standards to which he expects us to conform. He tells us in the Book of Leviticus, "You shall be holy, for I the Lord, your God, am holy." God's standard is holiness. The definition of that standard is the 10 Commandments.

But God's standards are not only about holiness, his expectations are also based upon what he knows is best for us. However, because of sin we don't recognize that. It's more than just ignorance. It's open rebellion. As sinners there's something about God and his ways that we just don't like. St. Paul tells the Romans as much when he writes, "the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so." That's why when God told Jonah to go east to Nineveh, Jonah headed west. He didn't want to listen to God. It was more than merely racial prejudice, it was sin. It's not just Jonah, it's us too. We naturally rebel and chafe against God's Law. That's why we don't like the 10 Commandments. We don't like them because as Paul tells the Romans, "By the law is the knowledge of sin." And we know what that means. "The soul that sins it shall die." Sin kills us inside. Sin kills us physically. Sin kills our relationships on every level.

We don't like to hear that we are sinners. We don't like to hear that we are accountable for all the sin we commit. We see that from the very beginning of sin. It was in the first confession of Adam and Eve. Adam tells God, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." Adam was afraid of God...we are afraid because we cannot hide from sin. Yet God still demands that we be holy...That we be without sin and that we hate sin. For us it is an impossibility. But for God "all things are possible." God demands perfection and our Lord Jesus provides us with that perfection. God demands that our sin be punished; Jesus was punished on a cross for all of our sins. Our sins demanded death, Jesus died in our place cursed with our sin. That's what St. Paul means in the passage which the confirmation students memorized for this past Wednesday: "you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."

May our Lord bless your Lent!
Rev. John C. Wille - SWD President

A bit from CFW Walther:

In the first place, it is not true that our dogmas come into existence gradually and that hence there are articles of faith “that are still in the process of formation, and others which as yet have either not at all or merely by way of beginning been drawn into the stream of events in which dogmas take shape.” It is not true that some articles of faith have come down to us “as undecided, unfinished questions, incomplete structures, as open questions,” because concerning these things one does not yet find unanimous agreement in the Lutheran Church. This theory, held and advocated with more or less emphasis by almost all modern theologians, though entirely unknown to the old orthodox theologians of our church, we consider the *πρῶτον ψεῦδοζ* of modern theology: as we view it, it is merely a daughter of Rationalism appearing in Christian dress, a sister of Romanism hiding behind a Protestant mask, and a fruitful mother of large families of heresies ¹

When we deny that something else besides the so-called theological problems and such points as are of a problematical character may be counted among the open questions within the Lutheran Church, and hence that there really are open questions in the sense of modern theology, we rather merely want to establish these truths: (1) No error, nothing that is contradictory to the Word of God, may be granted the right of existence in the orthodox Church; (2) no one in the orthodox Church has any permission to depart from the Word of God even in the smallest point, whether he does so negatively or positively, directly or indirectly; (3) every departure from the clear Word of God within the Lutheran Church, even though it should consist in nothing more than denying that Balaam’s ass spoke, demands that steps be taken to correct such departure ; (4) finally, when all instruction, admonition, warning, threatening, and manifested patience are fruitless and ineffective and the respective person or communion refuses to renounce the contradiction of the clear Word of God, expulsion or a schism will have to follow.²

¹ Walther, C.F.W. (2014-01-18). Walther's Works: Church Fellowship (Kindle Locations 2554-2562). Concordia Publishing House.

² Walther, C.F.W. (2014-01-18). Walther's Works: Church Fellowship (Kindle Locations 3070-3078). Concordia Publishing House.

Other SWD News:

1) Spring Pastors’ Conference: Renewal in the Pastoral Office is the theme for the spring conference being held at the Holiday Inn, Manitowoc WI. Our speakers are Rev. Dr. Hal Senkbeil and Dr. Beverly Yahnke from DOXOLOGY. They will speak to the need of pastoral renewal for those entrusted with Word and Sacrament ministry. Online registration is open and a paper copy of the registration form is attached here as well. Call the hotel by March 20th to ensure your lodging at 920-682-6000.

2) Two New CTCR Opinions:

There are two new CTCR opinions that are hot off the presses; actually on the CTCR website.

- The first is titled: “Guidelines for Congregational, District, and Synodical Communion Statements.”
- The second is: “CTCR Review of 2005 Task Force Guidelines for the Service of Women in Congregational Offices.” (Both articles are attachments to this newsletter.)

3) Two important updates from the Dominican Republic Mission in which SWD is a full partner:

Bethlehem Sun Prairie has just returned from a mission trip to the DR, helping to build walls on the Los Americas property. There are other congregations with pending trips. There is much to be done, especially with the new property in Licey, with a vision for a new church and Lutheran Day school in that community. Please take a look at the attachments. You may share them as needed. If you would like to lead a trip or join a trip to the DR, please let us know. This is such a wonderful opportunity to connect a mission project. Those who have been there can give witness to the impact it has had on them.

Attached is a powerpoint with pictures of Pastor Charlie Brandt actually working, doing physical labor. If you want to know more, give Charlie a call. It is a great way to raise mission awareness, plus an awareness of what we do together as church in our SWD.

4) SWD Convention Dates of Importance, Assessment etc.:

On June 7-9, 2015, our South Wisconsin District will hold its 54th triennial convention at Concordia University Wisconsin campus in Mequon under the theme, "Walk humbly with our God."

The Convention Nomination letter has been sent out to our congregations. Please note that March 2, 2015 is the deadline for nominations for President and Vice-President. In February 2015, District congregations will receive an invoice for their Convention assessment. That assessment has been tentatively set at \$1.60 per communicant member of your congregation.

Deadline for overtures to the SWD Convention is: March 9, 2015. Late overtures will be considered to their merits according the SWD bylaws.

Congregational assessments and information regarding delegate registration will shared in short order. Each parish is entitled to one pastoral delegate and one lay delegate according to the LCMS Bylaws. Each pastoral delegate and each lay delegate who attends the SWD convention then will also be a voter in the election of the Synod President in 2016.

5) Camp LUWISOMO and Resolution 3-03a from the 2012 SWD Convention:

By now most have seen the picture or heard the news: Camp LUWISOMO has fulfilled all the parameters laid out in the 2012 SWD Resolution 3-03a. On January 30 the Camp property with all equipment was signed over to the new Camp Board of Directors. They are now their own 501c3 and an RSO of the LCMS.

The check that James Knoerr is handing to me in the picture is just for effect, just for the picture. Per the convention resolution SWD received no monetary reimbursement for the Camp. Per the resolution the Camp paid off its loan and was given the property. We wish the new Camp Board our Lord's richest blessings as they strike out on their own!



6) PW's Calendar Highlights:

- March 1. Preach at the 125th Anniversary of Immanuel Lutheran Sheboygan
- March 1. Preach/install Rev. Joel Brandt as associate to Bethlehem Sun Prairie and church planter at Bethlehem Waunakee
- March 8. Preach at Our Redeemer Wauwatosa as part of their call process for a senior pastor
- March 8. Ordination/Installation of Tim Sallach (SMP) at Zion Burnett
- March 9 SWD team meeting.

- March 10. Circuit 11/12 Sheboygan
- March 14. Canoeopia Madison...
- March 18-20. Great Lakes Regional COP meeting at the English District HQ in Detroit.
- March 22. Preach and Ordain Benjamin Adetiba at Bethany Lutheran, Milwaukee.

7) Calls and Vacancies:

Calling Congregations, Divine Calls, and Clergy Roster:

- Arlington – St. Peter (sole)
- Beloit – St. John
- Brookfield – Immanuel (Associate)
- Dellwood/Quincy: United in Christ and St. John's
- Hartland – Divine Redeemer (Associate)
- Lebanon – St. Peter
- Menasha – Trinity (associate pastor & principal)
- Milwaukee – Hope
- Necedah – St. James/New Miner – St. Paul
- Pleasant Prairie – Good Shepherd
- Portage – St. John
- Racine – Prince of Peace
- Wales - Bethlehem

Pastors considering a call:

Pastors accepting a call:

- Joel Brandt – Trinity, Wausau to Bethlehem, Sun Prairie
- James McCoid – Community of Life, Spring Grove, IL to Community of Life, Oregon

Pastors declining a call:

- Kurt Klingbeil – Candidate to St. James/St. Paul, Necedah/New Miner
- Michael Salemink – St. James, Lafayette, IN to Prince of Peace, Racine
- Timothy Sims- Oklahoma Ave. to Trinity, Ft. Wayne, IN
- James Thelen – Ascension, Tucson, AZ to Bethlehem, Wales
- Kurt Wenzelburger – Divine Redeemer, Hartland to St. John, Portage

Pastors Resigning:

- Fred Jabs, trinity Town Wilson and St. Thomas Waldo, resigning both divine call and roster, the result of a disciplinary action (1 Timothy 3:2).

8) Prayer considerations:

- Rev. William Roser in hospice care
- Randy Baganz struggling with cancer
- Wally Haas also struggling with cancer
- Rev. Steve Thomas and family at the death of his mother-in-law.

- Rev. Dan Torkelson and family at the death of his mom, Rosalee

09) Board of Directors Meeting Summary for February 19, 2015:

In Board Action, the BOD

- approved minutes of the December 11, 2014 meeting
- approved the amended constitutions and bylaws of Faith, Germantown and Zion, Clyman
- approved Proposed Overture to Call Dr. Matthew Becker to Repentance Implore the Rev. Paul Linnemann to Exercise Ecclesiastical Supervision and Thank and Encourage President Matthew Harrison to be forwarded for consideration by the 2015 SWD Convention
- approve refinance of a loan in the amount of \$1.1 million for Divine Redeemer, Hartland
- approved a request to seek grant for the Retired Pastors Conference from Siebert Lutheran Foundation
- nominated Rev John Berg and Gary Bertels for CUS for interim appointment
- nominated Eric Preus for LCEF member at large

The full summary is attached.

10) Upcoming Congregational Events:

Luke & the Christian Life - on June 15-17, 2015

A continuing education class will be held at Pilgrim Lutheran Church, 462 Meadowbrook Drive, in West Bend, Wisconsin. Dr. Peter Scaer will speak on Luke's particular emphasis of the Christian as a member of home and society. Dr. Scaer's practical exegesis and outspoken witness in regards to the issues of our time will serve well to refresh and energize us for continued work in the Lord's kingdom. Times of fellowship and worship are planned. Registration will be available in March. For more information contact Rev. Christopher Seifferlein at pastor@emmanueladell.org

Save The Date-On July 13-15, 2015 a continuing education class will be held at St.

John's Lutheran Church, 809 S. 6th Ave, in West Bend, Wisconsin. Dr. Jeff Kloha, Concordia Seminary Provost, will present a three day workshop entitled, "Gladly Hearing the Word."

Dr. Kloha has provided the following description: The Word of God comes to us, shapes us, and goes out to others through us. So we "hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it." These sessions will focus on how God's Word comes to us as the Word spoken, written, and incarnate. This living and active Word does its work on us, and we live and speak that word out as the baptized and teach and preach it as pastors. Specific texts will be discussed as to how the Word shapes us in our present-day setting, which is at times hostile to the message of the Word. Contact St. John's at 262-334-4901, or Dave Kellerman at dkellerman@stjohnswestbend.org

Concordia University's First Annual Apologetics Conference

Mr. Craig Parton, attorney and Christian Apologist and Dr. Gary Habermas of Liberty University will be the main presenters on Friday evening, April 24 and all day Saturday, April 25 at the Concordia Apologetics Conference. Breakouts will feature professors from Concordia's Theology/Philosophy department. The conference is the project of UPCO (Undergraduate Pre-professional Church-work Organization), an organization of students preparing for full-time church vocations as commissioned ministers of religion. The Conference is supported by the Concordia Bible Institute, the Concordia Center for Bioethics, and the Lutheran Lay Ministry Association. Details are available at this website: <https://www.cuw.edu/organizations/upco/conference/index.html> . For more information contact john.oberdeck@cuw.edu or call 262-243-4458. [See Poster](#)

Lutherland Tour 2016

What better way to get ready for the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation in 2017 than to visit the sites where so much of the history took place! Pastor Aaron Koch of Mt. Zion Lutheran Church in Greenfield, Wisconsin will be leading a tour of Germany and Salzburg, Austria September 3 - 18, 2016. This customized tour includes almost all of the Luther sites you would want to see, from Wittenberg to Worms to the Wartburg, plus the scenic beauty of the "Romantic Road" and the alpine beauty of southern Germany and Austria. We are traveling in 2016 to avoid the higher costs and the crowds of 2017. Take advantage of this unique opportunity to study and enjoy our Lutheran heritage. For more information, contact pastor.koch@gmail.com or visit mountzion.360unite.com/lutherland-tour-2016 [Flyer](#)

Concordia University Wisconsin hosts a Luther Heritage Sites Germany Tour

Here is your chance to experience the life of Martin Luther during the 500 year anniversary of the Reformation along with seeing the sights of Germany. Travel with Rev. Dr. Timothy Maschke of Concordia University Wisconsin along with a local travel guide as they share their expertise in this once in lifetime experience. This ten-day trip (\$3,095 including airfare) will take place Tuesday, May 17 through Thursday, May 26, 2016, with an option of a three-day extension. Attached you will find a brochure with the detailed itinerary and a registration form. The commitment deadline is December 1, 2015 so airfare can be booked.

If you have any questions, you can email Rev. Dr. Maschke at Timothy.Maschke@cuw.edu or call him at 262-243-4252 or Tempo Travel at 414-774-1080. [Brochure](#) [Registration Form](#)

May our Lord bless!!

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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.*