

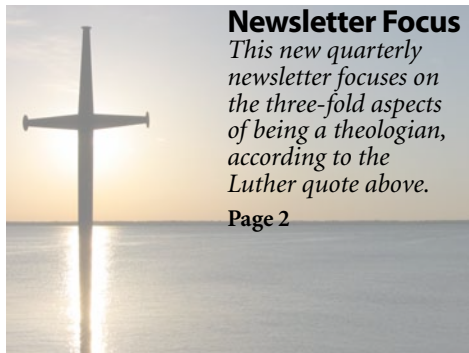
PST Prayer, Study, & Trial

Oratio, meditatio, tentatio faciunt theologum:

“Prayer, study, and trial make a theologian” Martin Luther

A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue No. 1 Summer 2008



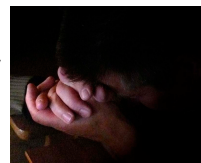
Newsletter Focus
 This new quarterly newsletter focuses on the three-fold aspects of being a theologian, according to the Luther quote above.
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 Pastors need to daily read and study the Bible for themselves. Oral reading of the Bible with your wife offers a change of pace and insights
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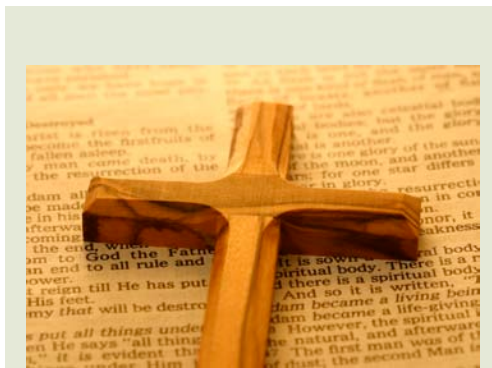


Strengthening Pastors

Presiding Pastor Frank Hays shared his vision for the future of the AALC. What does this mean for each of us?

Our focus this past year has been (and will continue to be) the theme spoken clearly by Rev. Hays: **strengthen pastors to strengthen congregations.**

This may not seem flashy or eye-catching. But the truth is we have much work ahead of us. We cannot lead our people where we have not gone. The challenge for all of us is to be Christ-centered and Bible-based — in all that we say and do.



The Cross and the Bible
 the center, the base, and the message for pastors and congregations!

Those are easy words to say, but difficult to implement in everyday life. Why? Because we are human, 100% saint and 100% sinner (in Latin: *simul iustus et peccator*). That means that our

good intentions are always challenged by our sinful nature. The struggle of Romans 7 continues: “the things I want to do I do not do, but the things I do not want to do, those I keep doing.”

The goal of this newsletter is to help encourage each of us in the walk of faith and the desire to grow in our ministry. This includes the three-fold note on Luther’s statement: “*oratio, meditatio, tentatio faciunt theologum.*” Thus, the articles in this issue reflect the Cross and the Word as experienced by pastors.

May you be strengthened by this newsletter, and may it prove beneficial as you strengthen your congregations.

In Christ’s love and service,
 Rev. Richard Shields



THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

2 Peter 3:14-18

In a critical letter of the end times, Peter focuses our attention on what is important. The framework for end times comes from Matthew 24-25, Mark 13, Luke 21, Romans 9-11, 1 Thessalonians 4, 2 Thessalonians 1-3, 1 Peter 4, 2 Peter, and Jude. Revelation provides the color and dramatic working out of that framework in history.

Problems arise when people try to reverse that, using Revelation (and a selected view of Revelation) as the framework. Peter refers to that in this text when he admits that Paul writes some of these same things (end times), but people distort and twist his writings, even as they do the rest of the Scriptures, thus giving a false hope.

Peter advises the Christians who face the end times to do two things: 1) grow in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and 2) grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Interesting that the focus for Christians in the end times is worship, evangelism, and Biblical study. Thus, we do not have to live in fear because of what we read in the newspapers concerning the end.

Growing in the grace and knowledge gives Christians true and realistic hope. Fear gives way to confident expectation as we wait for Jesus to return (Hebrews 9:28, Luke 21:28). This crucial attitude helps us in witnessing to a dying world.

Newsletter Focus & Goal

This newsletter re-institutes the ALTS newsletter, previously known as Creed and Deed. The title, PST (Prayer, Study, Trial) comes from Luther's quote:

Oratio, meditatio, tentatio faciunt theologum

“Prayer, study, and trial make a theologian”

Martin Luther

Some of us might feel uncomfortable with the thought of being called a theologian, seeming to prefer “pastor.” Yet, our call as pastors includes the concept that pastors are indeed theologians. Because we are necessarily in the school of theologians, even if we feel unqualified or unprepared, we can help one another in this most important task. Our goal is that this newsletter will help us move in that direction.

We will produce this as a quarterly newsletter rather than monthly or bi-monthly; we will strive for excellence rather than trying to meet a deadline. Each issue will address each of the three areas, sometimes in the form of exegetical or historical studies, sometimes in pastoral articles, and sometimes with personal reflections.

Evolving Newsletter

We would like to see this newsletter evolve, as needs dictate and as resources become available. Thus, while the content will reflect Biblical truth and Lutheran expressions of truth, we may change format, size, etc.

We also would like to see your questions, suggestions, and possibly contributions. Perhaps you have struggled with a Biblical text you would like someone to address, or a topic that

often is overlooked. You can send these to me or Fred Balke.

Seminary Students

Joe Dapelo: graduated in May, was ordained at St. Paul's Lutheran, Napoleon, OH where he served his vicarage. He will be installed as pastor of Faith Lutheran Church, Watseka, IL June 15, 2008.

Dan Dapelo: begins serving his vicarage this summer.

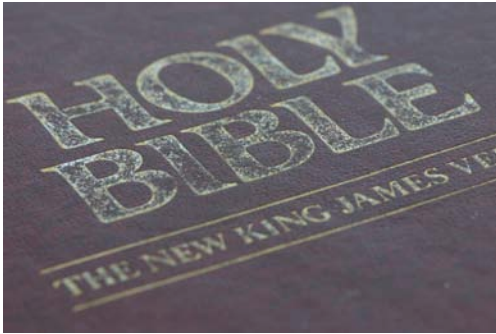
Scott Yount is a student at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and will begin his second year this fall.

Jeremiah Baechler: begins Greek classes this summer. He hails from San Diego, but has lived in several different locations. His primary interest is in missions.

Seminary Support

While costs keep rising, this is especially true for seminary students. As pastors we can help in the following ways:

- **Support:** Encourage our people to regularly support the Seminary; Thrivent will match any gift up to 50% of the total.
- **Adopt-a-student:** Congregations get to know students through this process (tuition, gas money for traveling to activities, etc.)
- **Recruit:** The pipeline for addressing future needs begins today.
- **Pray:** For the students and professors.
- **Encourage:** When students are qualified, invite them to preach at your church, if possible.



Scriptures in the Life of the Pastor

Strengthening pastors begins with the means of Grace, specifically the Word. Peter told his readers that we “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Here are five approaches to the Word which we covered in the Region Conferences this spring.

Personal Bible Study:

By this I do not mean reading and studying in preparation for preaching or teaching. Rather, each person is to read and study daily *for himself* without thought as to its “usefulness for the congregation.” According to Psalm 1:2, the blessed person meditates on the Word day and night, that includes the pastor as well. Thus, pastors are encouraged to daily immerse themselves in God’s Word.

This can be accomplished in many ways, but the key is continual exposure to the entire Bible, not just a few hobby-horse books. One effective method is to read straight through the Bible. Another method takes the reader through the daily readings as provided in some Lutheran hymnals.

Another key aspect is for the pastor to read the Word in the original language texts, as appropriate. If you have been rusty in your Greek, you can begin with one verse each day, looking up words that you may not know. Soon, you will cover two verses.

Reading with My Wife:

While #1 is geared to each person and that person’s pace, abilities, etc., here the pace will necessarily be slower because the Word is read orally. By approaching the Word this way, the couple builds a Biblical basis to share, explore, discuss, and reflect together.



The danger here is that the pastor begins to treat this as pastoral time rather than husband-wife time to grow together in the Word. Shared insights can bring the pastor “back to earth” in terms of willingness to listen, learn, and respect another person specifically related to Bible reading.

Group Bible Study:

The pastor is called to preach/teach the Word and administer the Word and Sacraments. If he is not teaching Bible studies, then he is not fulfilling his call as pastor. Paul writes to Timothy that the one talent/ability for a pastor is “apt to teach” (1 Timothy 3:2).

This requires extensive study, awareness of the congregation’s needs, and long term vision for what

constitutes a comprehensive, long term-approach to maturing as disciples. Bible study in the congregation should not be haphazard or reflect the latest mood of the pastor, but is a comprehensive approach to God’s Word.

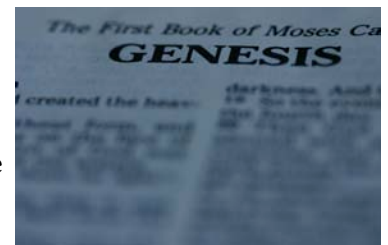
Liturgical Use of the Bible:

One of the great benefits of today’s world is that we have many English translations; one of the great disadvantages of today’s world is that we have many English translations. Three categories of translations: Formal Equivalence, Meaning based, and Paraphrase. Some translations (in the Tyndale/KJV tradition) make for better liturgical translations, namely KJV, NKJV, NAS, RSV, NRSV, ESV. Another factor to consider is whether the translation shows a theological or doctrinal bias, which may change the intent of the original language text.

The oral quality of a translation can significantly affect the liturgical use (and memorization) of the Word. Oral quality relates to rhythm and cadence.

Bible Memorization:

All Christians should regularly memorize Scripture. It helps to use the same translation as used in the worship service. Pastors can include Scripture memory work within the worship services, even as the Reformers did to educate all the people. Choose a text for each month, starting with texts that are critical in terms of central truths of Scripture (say, the Catechism). Then the following year, as you review that text, you can add another text that relates to that same concept.



Pastoral Care Under the Cross: God in the Midst of Suffering

Rev. Richard C. Eyer, CPH, 1994

Book Review by Rich Shields

Twenty-five years ago pastoral care seemed indistinguishable from counseling in seminary training and in much practice. Many pastors felt inadequate in the counseling role; Eyer's book, as a resource during seminary years, would have been invaluable. All Lutheran pastors and congregations would greatly benefit from this book by Richard Eyer. At the time of writing Eyer had served as chaplain for 20 years, and the book reveals both his theological understanding of pastoral care and his practical application of that understanding. By doing so, he avoids writing that has that "dated" feeling, which permeates most "practical" books. Thus, the application of the book is not confined to a decade of his experiences, but spans the experience of the Church, regardless of era. His writing style is fresh and simple, but never simplistic.

The structure of the book is both useful and theologically significant. The first part has four chapters that focus on the context of pastoral care; the second part has seven chapters in which he applies the truths of the first part to specific pastoral situations. He begins each chapter with a poem that he has written at various times during his chaplaincy, poems that are specific to the content of that particular chapter. I have never been a big fan of poetry, but a few of his poems struck me in the heart, not the brain, which I believe is what he intended. His typical pattern is to provide a key insight for the chapter, then mix practical examples and theology into an interlocking pattern for advancing his theme — he is very effective in doing so.

Theology of the Cross

Eyer presents the over-arching theme of "the theology of the cross," not in the sense of a dogmatic treatise, but rather as the foundation which informs and guides both parts of the presentation. Under this umbrella of the theology of the cross, Eyer

offers insightful statements that set apart his book from most "pastor as counselor" writings.

Pastoral care has been understood traditionally to be the uninvited spiritual nurturing of those suffering some kind of helplessness and loss of control over life. It is modeled after God's care of us following Eden... But this Biblical notion of the cure of souls and the spiritual care of others is a far cry from popular ideas of what today can only be called secular spiritual care (page 13).

In this introductory paragraph, Eyer sets forth that which is right and true of pastoral care and the dangers which intrude upon the pastor in fulfilling his responsibilities. In distinguishing pastoral care from psychology, Eyer writes: "Pastoral care is unique. It does not derive its substance from the culture nor its legitimacy from the medical profession" (page 23). In the Epilog, he reaches back to his original definition of pastoral care and amplifies it: "The uninvited aspect emphasizes the pastor's initiative rather than the sufferer's in addressing suffering. The pastor has an invitation from God, if not from the patient" (page 148). He could not have stated more clearly the distinctive calling that the pastor has in the midst of suffering.

Eyer declares that the cross is the paradigm for pastoral care. "The premise ... is that pastoral care consists not in removing someone's suffering but in helping the sufferer learn to interpret his or her sufferings in the light of the cross" (p. 24). Not only is that a crucial insight for his thesis, but it relieves a burden for the pastor, a burden that is sometimes placed

by congregational expectations or even by his own conscience. This also helps the pastor move away from being "just another care giver" like the doctor, nurse, or psychiatrist. By doing so, Eyer shifts the focus of pastoral care to the theology of the cross rather than the theology of glory.

The tremendous societal pressure to "heal the disease" causes even Christians to succumb to the temptation to get healing wherever — if not from the doctor or psychiatrist or pills, then at least from the pastor. Eyer writes, "If pastoral care consists not in doing something to remove suffering but in interpreting suffering in the light of the cross, then we must begin with what God chooses to reveal, not with what people want God to reveal." If not reconsidered this way, many end up with this amusing, yet tragic state in which they do not try to justify themselves but demand that God justify himself concerning this suffering. As he shows, the question has to shift from "Why is God doing this?" to "Where is God in my suffering?" This provides the link between the suffering of this one person, to the suffering of The One, namely Christ.

Care for the Pastoral Care Giver

Eyer then moves to a critical, often neglected or ignored topic, the pastor who gives pastoral care. That is, the spiritual state of the pastoral care giver is critical and must be addressed honestly in light of the theology of the cross. This is not a matter of baring our pastoral souls, which is really self-centered, but a matter of self awareness of our own needs, dependencies, vulnerabilities, and blind spots. The sense of helplessness that we as pastors experience in our pastoral practice is not something to be avoided, but recognized, even though "feeling helpless never feels good" (p. 36). Note the contrast in theologies: "To take charge is to succumb to the temptation to espouse the theology of glory, whereas a willingness to feel helpless in the face of suffering may be called faithful" (p. 36). Eyer urges Christians to examine their psychological makeup. But he warns, "Christians look inwardly, with the aim of repentance over what they may find there; whereas pop psychology invites us to look inwardly only to indulge and accept whatever is found there" (p. 37).



The key according to Eyer is for us to understand where we are weak and what motivates us. Then as the theology of the cross applies to us in our weaknesses, we can model for our parishioners how to care for themselves spiritually, characterized by grace and faithfulness. That can seem monumental, but only if we are looking to ourselves for the answers, strength, and encouragement. And finally pastors are challenged to set the priorities of life: wife first, children next, and then parishioners. An emergency can rightly alter the priority, but we need to return to the above priorities as soon as possible. Behind all this looms the concern for the pastor's spiritual growth. How often have pastors fallen into the "professional" trap of reading the Bible for a sermon, a Bible study, a visitation rather than for personal growth? Truly 2 Peter 3:17-18 applies to all Christians, including or especially pastors.

On the basis of this personal, pastoral evaluation and assessment, Eyer explores the reality of suffering and sickness in light of the cross. He makes two critical distinctions. First, for understanding pastoral care, pain and suffering are not the same thing. "Pain can be defined as a greater or lesser degree of physical comfort.... Suffering can be defined as the existential anxiety, fear, worry, or hopelessness that may or may not accompany pain. Suffering is a reaction to pain" (p. 44). In an age that is dominated by the need to control pain, we also live in a world that cannot seem to deal with suffering. Eyer notes, "opportunity to provide spiritual care to those who are suffering is greater than ever, and for pastors it can be an important aspect of pastoral care" (p. 44). For contemporary Christians the shift is evident in the question asked in the midst of pain; today the question is "Why am I suffering?" whereas in ages past the question was "What shall my response be to God in the midst of suffering?" Because the world encourages a fragmented view of the physical and spiritual, leading to life without meaning or coherence, the key for pastoral care consists in reuniting the physical and spiritual, not by forcing this upon the person, but by allowing the

person to discover this unity for himself or herself.

Theology of the Cross, not Theodicy

Second, theodicy and theology of the cross are distinct. "Theodicy is the attempt to justify the ways of God to a suffering world" (p. 46). This theme exploited by Harold Kushner (*Why Bad Things Happen to Good People*) obscures the real need, namely for the suffering person to be justified before God, by God. Kushner's view influenced Christian theodicy, which reasons:

- "God is just testing you to see if you will remain faithful."
- "God is punishing you for what you have done."
- "God is trying to teach you something."
- "God has a plan for you, and this is part of it."

Pastoral care does not follow the path of theodicy, for "who can know the mind of God?" (1 Cor. 2:16). The pastor can be most effective when realizing that "interpretation of suffering is better made by the sufferer than by another person, and retrospectively rather than prospectively" (p. 47). I think this approach challenges the pastor to focus on faithfulness during suffering. Can we do that? According to the theology of the cross, we can, and must, follow this course.

In light of the popularity of the "health, wealth Gospel" movements of today Eyer provides a Biblical response showing the connection between faith, healing, and the cross. Faith does not deny nor ignore the need for medicine and doctors. At the same time faith cannot not be a "last resort, since everything else has failed," nor "it can't hurt" kind of approach. Nor is faith twisting God's arm to conform to our desires. Such statements ignore the connection between the physical and the spiritual, and the connections that God had established. And yet, as we can all attest, not everyone is healed when we

pray for such healing. Even in Jesus' earthly ministry not all were healed. Eyer sets this perspective in eschatological context: "God sprinkles gracious 'drops of healing' from the heavens that fall on the just and unjust alike. Some are touched and healed, others are not; but all who experience or witness the healing of one's many ills are given a hint of things to come in Christ" (p. 55). Sickness is related to sin and forgiveness of sins, but not as many think. "The connection between sickness, sin, and the need for forgiveness of sins is ultimately deeper than particular sins" (p.57). Finally Eyer connects faith, healing, and the cross: "Faith is always an open receptacle, not the power line to control a heavenly computer" (p. 59).

Practical Application

In part 2 of the book, Eyer applies the key understandings of the first four chapters to specific ministry opportunities. Each of these present the pastor with unique challenges not to shirk from the requirements of pastoral care, despite what the world or even the institutional church proclaims. These circumstances reflect the "valley of the shadow of death" and become the tempering fire in which to apply the theology of the cross.

- The Elderly
- Dying
- Mental Illness
- Medical Ethics
- AIDS
- Mourners
- Depression

Particularly helpful are his insights into the role of the pastor in ethical decision-making. The pastor serves as advocate, clarifier, communicator, and truth-sayer; this allows the pastor to function as pastor and to be a spokesman for God in the midst of circumstances and ethics that are shaped by a God-less world. Thus, the pastor is not just another member of the healing team but a vital voice for the patient, the family, and the team, as well as the voice of God.

continued on page 8

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

Romans 8:18

Prayer: The Inside Story

Rev. Phillip Hofinga

“Lord, teach us to pray.” Would that all of our parishioners were so eager to learn to pray as were those first disciples!

When I began my call, a concern arose that the guy with the collar was always expected to pray. The concern I had was that my parishioners either had the idea or might develop the idea that somehow the pastor’s prayers were more likely to be heard and/or answered by God. Or worse yet, that prayer is what we pay the pastor to do.

True, in times of crisis, when members of our flock are grieving or in shock they often need someone to pray for them, because they find themselves unable to pray, or are unable to find the words to pray. But on a day-to-day basis, I want them to know that God hears their prayers also. So I undertook a curriculum on prayer for our adult Sunday School. I wish I could say, as good as that curriculum was, that it had proved to be the ticket to a praying congregation. But it wasn’t.

Recently, however, I’ve been asking the question, what are we praying for? Very often when I pray for parishioners, I am praying for their healing, health, well being, etc.. We put people on our weekly prayer list who are ill or grieving. When they get better, or when swells of grief begin to subside, we take them off the list. We also include those who are alone — our shut-ins — as well as those who are danger, our soldiers.

Now these are all prayer-worthy concerns, and I would never advocate neglecting them. But I wonder if I am not perpetuating a pattern in the Divine Service that short changes my parishioners with regard to the scope of prayer. Do they take this pattern with them to their personal prayer life? Do they only pray when a personal health crisis comes up or when a loved one is in danger or grieving?

If this is the case, we need a different paradigm for prayer — one that takes account of the greatness of the God to whom we pray as well as the goodness and

generosity of His invitation to pray. Our confession is of God the Father Almighty — here there should be no ambiguity, and the mighty acts of God are told plainly and boldly throughout Holy Scripture. Also, just a quick review of Jesus’ teaching on prayer reminds us that God invites us to ask whatever we wish (John 15:7), bang impudently on His door in the middle of the night (Luke 11:8), even beat his eyes black and blue with our persistent pestering (Luke 18:5). We should not have to look far in Scripture for the paradigm we need.

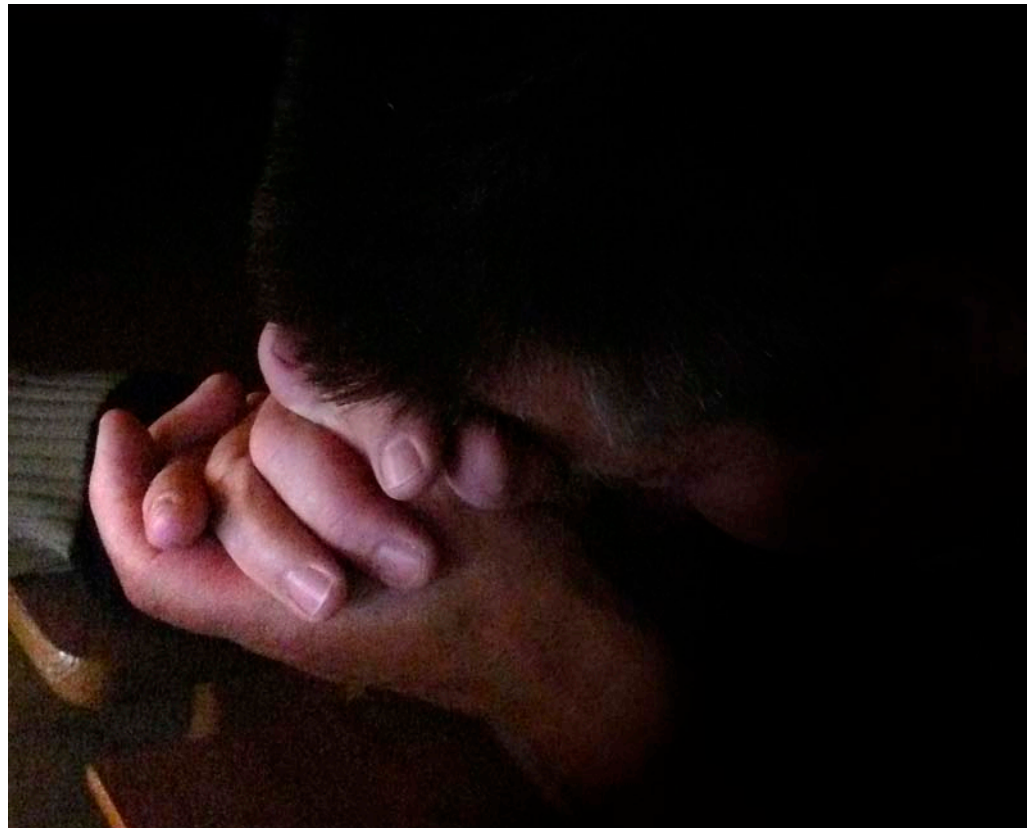
I would suggest James 5:13-18:

“Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.

The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.”

Now I know that this text comes specifically in the context of prayer for healing, which I have already suggested is inadequate as a larger paradigm for prayer. But this there are some important truths here that we overlook if we only concentrate on healing as the petition of prayer.

First is the connection between confession and absolution with prayer. The fifth petition of the prayer that our Lord taught his disciples to prayer is a petition for forgiveness of sins. Sometimes I wonder why we often think of prayer without thinking of confession and repentance and close connection with prayer. The reasoning of the Lord’s brother should be compelling to us: “The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is



working.” This statement would not be useful for us had it not been preceded by the command, “confess your sins to one another.” We stand in a righteousness not our own that is given to us in baptism. In confession we invoke our baptism and claim the righteousness of Christ over against the Devil’s accusation.

This leads to a second important truth: That we who confess our sins and claim the righteousness of Christ wield prayers of great power. What this means really is that God hears the prayers of his children and is powerful to answer those prayers.

Lately I have been hearing from my parishioners about some things that really have them worried. Surprisingly, what tops their lists is rarely the lack of rain. This is surprising because most of my parishioners are farmers in a semi-arid climate. What concerns them most is the state of the country, the dangers that we face because of our national foreign policy, and the likelihood that the U.S. will be reduced to a third world economy in less than 20 years. Some fear worse than this. They fear that we will be attacked at our borders with our defenses so far flung that we have no hope of defending ourselves. For anyone who can set aside their natural denial mechanism, these are very real fears.

Luther faced some similar fears for Germany in his day. He was convinced that the general corruption and immorality within the provinces of Germany could at any moment bring upon the German people the unbridled wrath of God. There was great honesty in Luther’s willingness to connect the dangers to the German people even in the form of the Turkish threat to the sins of the people in a biblical way. Now Luther certainly had his opinions on foreign policy and how the Princes should do their jobs. But it is interesting that Luther believed that the first line of defense for his nation was not the Princes, but the repentance and prayers of the Christians of the land.

It seems to me that there is no clearer evidence of the disconnect between repentance and prayer than in our prayers (on those occasions) for our nation.

Especially in this country, we have a tendency to pray for our nation with the assumption that God considers our nation righteous by virtue of its national ideology or its founding ideals.

But the truth is that our nation is sick in many, many ways. This is really why the state of our nation really has so many of my parishioners worried. This is why James 5:13-18 is such an appropriate paradigm for prayer. What an opportunity we now have before us in this country not only to teach our parishioners to pray, but to reconnect repentance and prayer view of their real and on-going concerns and worries! It reminds me of God’s promise to Solomon upon the completion of the temple: “if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land,” (2 Chron. 7:14).

The Lord’s Prayer

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household.

Our Father who art in heaven.

What does this mean?

Answer: God would thereby tenderly urge us to believe that He is our true Father, and that we are His true children, so that we may ask Him confidently with all assurance, as dear children ask their dear father.

The First Petition

Hallowed be Thy name.

What does this mean?

Answer: God's name is indeed holy in itself; but we pray in this petition that it may become holy among us also.

How is this done?

Answer: When the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we as the children of God also lead holy lives in accordance with it. To this end help us, dear Father in heaven. But he that

teaches and lives otherwise than God’s Word teaches profanes the name of God among us. From this preserve us, Heavenly Father.

The Second Petition

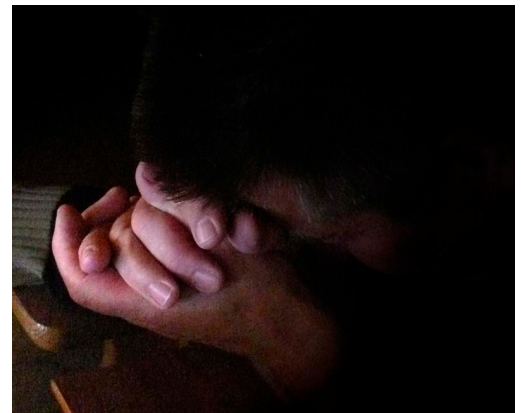
Thy kingdom come.

What does this mean?

Answer: The kingdom of God comes indeed without our prayer, of itself; but we pray in this petition that it may come unto us also.

How is this done?

Answer: When our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead a godly life here in time and yonder in eternity.



The Third Petition

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

What does this mean?

Answer: The good and gracious will of God is done indeed without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also.

How is this done?

Answer: When God breaks and hinders every evil counsel and will which would not let us hallow the name of God nor let His kingdom come, such as the will of the devil, the world, and our flesh; but strengthens and keeps us steadfast in His Word and in faith unto our end. This is His gracious and good will.

Small Catechism, Martin Luther

People, Events, and Notes

Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Hebrews 13:7

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Pastoral Care under the Cross

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Conclusion

In light of this book, I was surprised, illuminated, and challenged by what Eyer wrote. At times pastoral care is given short shrift in pastoral training and continuing education, often being transformed into a cheap form of counseling. Many of the hard knocks I learned about pastoral care could have been avoided, had I had access to a resource such as this book. Eyer clearly and coherently summarizes the key point of this book:

What makes the theology of the cross absolutely essential in pastoral care is the danger each person faces who attempts to take matters of suffering and helplessness into his own hands and out of the hands of God.... Pastoral care... focuses not on the removal of suffering but on bearing one another's burdens and pointing the sufferer to the cross (p. 149).

Am I feeding Jesus' sheep?

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?"

He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you."

[Jesus] said to him, "Feed my lambs."

He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"

He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you."

[Jesus] said to him, "Tend my sheep."

He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"

Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you."

Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep."

John 21:15-17



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