

St. John's Monthly Newsletter

April 2018

“PROOFS I SEE SUFFICIENT OF IT”

Easter Greetings to You All,

This past Good Friday, at the 7:00 PM service, we sang Thomas Kelly's famous hymn, "Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted." The hymn is Kelly's reflections on Isaiah 53 and the passion of our Lord taken from the four Gospels. In it's haunting melody we sing the lines, "Tis the Christ by man rejected; Yes, my soul, 'tis He! 'tis He! 'tis the long-expected Prophet, David's Son, yet David's Lord; **Proofs I see sufficient of it: 'Tis the true and faithful Word.**" (**Emphasis added**). This wonderful confession of faith points to Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, as the long awaited savior. Yet it is the line, "Proofs I see sufficient of it," that should catch our attention this Easter season.

The whole Easter season (50 days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost) focuses on the very proofs of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Time and time again we will hear in our readings how people came in contact with the risen Savior, how they bore witness to the risen Savior, and how they confessed the risen Savior in their words and deeds. On the second Sunday of Easter we will hear of the account of Thomas meeting Jesus eight days after the resurrection. On the third Sunday of Easter we will be reminded of the example that Jesus delivered to us and that is testified of in 1 Peter 2:21-25. On the fourth Sunday of Easter we will hear about the promised coming of the Holy Spirit who will bear witness to Jesus' resurrection, Gospel, and more. Yet today, on the second Sunday of Easter, we want to take a moment to reflect on the great witness of God's Word.

In our Gospel reading today from John 20:19-31 we hear the familiar account of Thomas and Jesus, but we need to pay a bit more attention to the end of this lesson. John writes in 20:30-31, "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." Here in these words lies a key to understanding the Scriptures, "these things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God...". Why should we know this? So that we may have life in His name, that is so that we might have faith.

The "proofs" that Kelly describes in his hymn are the proofs of the Scriptures being fulfilled in Jesus' life and ministry, his trial and crucifixion; his burial and his resurrection. The Bible provides these proofs for us in our daily lives as well, the Scriptures are proofs positive of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. The Scriptures are not some prophetic dream (in fact notice how very few of the prophets receive dreams), they are not some fantasy of some novelist, they are not self-help guidelines by some desert guru, they are the proofs of God's great rescue plan for His people.

Note how different this understanding of the Bible is from the many modern understandings of the Bible today. It is becoming increasingly popular in today's world to pick and choose what you like from the Bible, which lessons you want to learn vs. the lessons the Bible actually teaches. This is especially true in regards to popular topics like money, prosperity, morality, and health. In other words, we have put the Bible up against the subjective test of yourself. Yet when it comes to Jesus you can't pick and choose. To quote the famed Christian scholar C.S. Lewis, "Either Jesus was a liar, a lunatic, or he was exactly who he said he was, namely, the Son of God." In the end, we can't pick and choose the proofs and the lessons we like, we must take them as a whole picture.

So, what are these great proofs of Jesus death and resurrection? First, Jesus was publicly betrayed, tried, mocked, crucified, and buried. That is, Jesus was seen, handled, and heard by real life people recording real life events. Secondly, the Jews themselves had guards set and Pilate's seal in place over the tomb, they were frightened about what might happen and took real preparations to foil any man-made attempt on Jesus' body. Then, multiple women, disciples, Apostles, and regular everyday people saw, touched, and spoke with Jesus over the span of forty days before His ascension into heaven. These testimonies in conjunction with the great prophecies of the Old Testament ("Not a bone in his body shall be broken" Exodus 12:46 ; "He was despised and rejected by men, stricken, smitten, and afflicted" Isaiah 53; the sour wine Psalm 61:21, and the words uttered by Christ from the cross Psalm 22), show the sufficient proofs of Jesus Lordship.

This Easter season I pray that you and your family will be able to delve more into these wonderful proofs of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection as we hear His Holy Word, receive His precious Sacrament, and lift up our voices together in prayer and song. A blessed Easter to you all!

Pastor Jacobsen

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

LCMS Stewardship Ministry

Newsletter Article – April 2018

Our Father in heaven sent His Son, Jesus, to be our savior. His atoning sacrifice is the firstfruits of all the dead, a pleasing aroma to His Father – and ours – so that His perfect life and death count for all who believe in Him.

He claimed us as His own children in Holy Baptism. He sustains and strengthens our faith with His Holy Word and His Body and Blood. As new creatures, who have put on Christ, we bear good fruit. We do the good works prepared for us, which He makes known to us in His Word.

By faith then, trusting in the Word of God, we do what he says because He does not lie and always keeps His promises. For “without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him” (Heb. 11:6).

And so the Lord promises: “Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine” (Prov. 3:9-10).

How do we honor the Lord with the wealth that God has given us in His generosity? By giving it generously to those whom the Lord has called us to love and support: your family, your society, and your church. And His promise is that in so doing, you will never lack.

I can almost hear it now: “But that’s from the Old Testament!” But our Lord Jesus Himself gives us similar promises in the New Testament. He says, at the conclusion of the parable of the talents, “For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance” (Matt. 25:29).

And then at the end of the parable of the dishonest manager, he says: “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money” (Luke 16:10–13).

And in His sermon on the mount, he says: “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matt. 6:19–21).

We have become conditioned against these promises because of their misuse by the peddlers of the prosperity gospel – the guys on TV who say you get rich by putting God in your debt. And thus, we miss out on the fact that God does reward temporal faithfulness in temporal matters with temporal blessings.

It’s no quid pro quo. It’s all from God’s grace, His fatherly divine goodness and mercy. But those Bible passages just quoted do in fact say what they say! It’s not the Old Testament’s problem. It’s ours. It is almost as if we have become so jaded against this that we think it a virtue to be stingy with our offerings.

But our Father in heaven still loves to bless those who bless others. He loves to give to those who give freely and generously. In fact, he challenges us to challenge Him: “Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need” (Mal. 3:10).

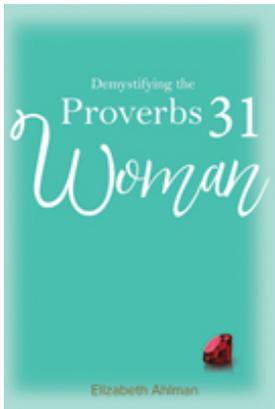
And so, while we don’t give so that we would get, we do receive from the Lord in order to give, and He will bless your giving with more receiving. For “He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things” (Rom. 8:32)?

Serving this April:

Elders: Chuck Miller & Greg Mauck
Ushers: 8:00 am: Collin Richey & Toni Miller
 10:30 am: Alan Severson & Austin Stortzum
Altar Guild: Chris Adair, Jill Deitz & Sandy Meridith
Acolytes:

April	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM
8	MILES HARLIN	KAYLIN RICHEY	JADA COBB	MYA COBB
15	ASHLYNN SMITH	NOAH LANGE	MAISY HUGHES	ALEXANDRIA SAUNDERS
22	GRACE LANGE	NOAH WALKER	CHLOE FULLER	ZACH WETZEL
29	LANEY BRANDENBURG	OLIVIA LAWLER	MARLEY VANHOVELN	BRODY RANKIN

Book of the Month:



Demystifying the Proverbs 31 Woman

Overview

Proverbs 31:10–31 has become a beloved, often quoted passage—yet it is often misunderstood and misapplied.

As today's culture lauds the woman who does and has it all, Christians seek to reconcile what they hear from the secular, feminist world with what God says in His Word.

Demystifying the Proverbs 31 Woman is an authoritative yet inviting discussion of the passage in terms of language, history, purpose, and application. Readers will come away with a sense of renewal and affirmation—and a keener understanding of the biblical example of the Proverbs 31 woman. What shines through is not a prescription

for how to become a better wife, mother, woman, or friend, but a description of our Savior, the Church, and ourselves.

Unfold the riches this proverb offers. You will find Jesus there.

Call or email the church office if you want us to order for you!

Birthdays:

- 2- Michael Martin
- 3- Kallie Harris, Arlyne Jones, Warren Moody , Harrison Wetzel
- 6- Alaina Por
- 7- Katie Thoman, Alex Hagen, John Dixon
- 8- Emily Love, Jill Ferree
- 10- Karen Stoll, Jill Bell
- 11- Amy Sweeney
- 12- Jack Thompson
- 13- Richard Fanelli, Cole DuFrain
- 14- Norma Ferree, Mya Cobb, Emalee Anne Shepard
- 15- Barbara Moran, Brian Packer
- 28- Kyle Packer, Christopher Martin, Tara Stortzum, Peggy Kepp
- 29- Ava Larson
- 16- Ainsley Thompson, Terry Reel
- 17- Cliff Fairchild, Curt Niemeyer, Anna Vadakin
- 18- Toni Miller, Lana Cordes
- 19- John McCain, Polly Quick
- 20- Heather Long, Dorothy Roling
- 22- Kara Salmon, Cason Vadakin, Edwin Cole
- 23- Dale VonBehrens
- 25- Christa Packer, Myron Salmon
- 26- Stephanie Upton
- 30- Michael Schaljo, Susan Love

Anniversaries:

- Toni & Randy Peadro April 2, 1988
- Therese & Charles Miller April 7, 1973
- Rebecca & Stephen Wetzel April 8, 1972
- Shirley & William Donnell April 9, 1994
- Deborah & John Schaljo April 17, 1993
- Charlotte & Arthur ZuHone April 18, 1954
- Penny & H. A. Youngblood April 22, 1988
- Polly & David Quick April 22, 1989
- Kim & Randy Ervin April 25, 1992
- Ronald & Carolyn Phillips April 27, 1962

Prayer Requests:

Those In Need of Comfort, Health, & Recovery: (Recently Added)

- Ken Maleske – Father of Kris Maleske
- Carol McDaniel – Sister of Doug Blume & Nancy Gass
- Rose Weber – Mother of Julie Gass

For those Serving Our Nation:

- John Mauck (Okinawa)
- Jason Wetzel - stationed in Afghanistan

Those Who Need Our Ongoing Prayers:

- Ava Gass
- Howard Diepholz
- Roland Dahnke
- Toni Hesse
- Oliver Countryman
- Paul Welton
- John Kendall
- Auggie Doehring – Brother of Derald Doehring
- Kathy Beaver – Friend of Joyce Zschau
- Dan Johnson Jr. – Son of Dan & Virginia Johnson
- Judy Yott – Aunt of Pastor Jacobsen
- Bob Zschau
- Chuck Cookson
- Pastor Paul Garchow
- Norma Schussler
- William Kroening
- Alan Phelps
- Carolyn Phillips
- Richard Grice
- August Stortzum
- Mae Morris
- Carolyn Phillips
- August Stortzum
- Alan Phelps
- Kevin Shaffer –2nd Grade Teacher’s Husband
- Dan Kruger – Brother of Pat Wetzel
- Bob Pierce – Father of Tina Smith

Church News, Events, and Announcements:

Automatic Giving: St. John's is now accepting automatic withdraws to help you in your life of generous giving. Simply fill out the form found on the ledge outside the church office and turn it back into the church office. If you have any questions, please talk to Pastor Jacobsen or call the church office for more details.

Splash Canyon VBS 2018 is just around the corner and we need volunteers just like you to make it another successful VBS! VBS will be June 4-8 from 8:30-11:45 each morning. Adults and children 6th grade and older are welcome to volunteer. Please contact Kallie Harris at 246-6222 or kharris@stjls-mattoon.com or Meredith Danley at 254-5462 or mdanley@stjls-mattoon.com if you are interested in helping. Thank you!

New Position Available: By decision of the Church Governing Board, St. John's is now seeking church member applicants for a full time business manager for the church and school. This position would oversee all finances of the church and school while managing the school office. Resumes should be submitted to the church office by Thursday, April 19. Please call 234-4923 for more details.

St. Paul's Annual Ham Dinner: This year the ham dinner will benefit our 2nd grade teacher, Mrs. Lynn Shaffer and her family. It will be held on Sunday, April 22, from 11:30 am to 1:30 p.m. at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, in Dorans. Our school will be working along with St. Paul's to help raise money for the Shaffer's. There will be a silent auction as well as a free-will offering. Your support is deeply appreciated. The menu will consist of ham, scalloped potatoes, green beans, rolls, sands, and homemade pies and desserts. If you have any questions, you may contact Brenda Severson @ bseverson@stjls-mattoon.com (217-258-6777) or Heidi Lucier @ (217-508-2047)

LWML Salad Supper: The St. John Champaign Annual Salad Supper will be held Monday, April 16 at 6:30 pm. There is a flyer with more details on the bulletin board outside the conference room.

School News, Events, and Announcements:

Scrip Orders will return this week.

We are in need of Volunteers for our first annual St. John's Archery Tournament on April 21. Please let us know if you can work for an hour, a half day, or even a full day. We have a number of different ways you can help! We are expecting over 400 archers and their families to be at this tournament. If you are interested, please contact Larry Miller or Trent Duckett.

Box Tops: The school is still accepting Box Tops. You can bring to the school or church office or place in the Campbells bins at each entrance. Thank you for your support!

Rev. Adam Jacobsen	Senior Pastor	714-1965	revjacobsen@stjohns-mattoon.org
Miguel Ruiz	Dir. Parish Music	719-849-0120	mruizmusic@gmail.com
Bailey Maldonado	Church Secretary	234-4923	bailey@stjohns-mattoon.org
Trent Duckett	Principal	234-4911	tduckett@stjls-mattoon.com
Joyce Zschau	Parish Nurse	234-8227	joyce_zschau@yahoo.com

Ms. Mary Cox of the Coles County Farm Bureau brought 24 fertilized eggs to the First Graders at St. John's Lutheran School. After twenty-one days of monitoring the 100 degree temperature inside the incubator, the students were amazed to watch how long the chicks took to peck their way through their shells. A couple of days after the baby chicks hatched the students worked with a partner. Each pair of students named and worked with one chick. On three different days, each chick was weighed in grams and measured in inches. The children graphed the results to see how much each chick had grown. The children were very interested to watch how the chicks changed as they grew, especially their feathers. The children enjoyed writing and sharing what interesting facts they had learned during the process of hatching and raising baby chicks.

