



April 2013

Pastor's



Zion Lutheran
Church
110 East Grand Avenue
Chippewa Falls, WI
54790

Losing our Vocabulary

Postmodernism and the Church

If I were to ask you if you know who Aaron Rogers is, and you say yes and you point to a picture of Adrian Peterson, you would be wrong. Aaron Rogers refers to a specific man even though you assigned a different meaning. Granted this is a silly example, but it demonstrates the simple point that words have objective meanings that express ideas. This is true of all language. Language in a specific context has a specific meaning. Is means is, sin means sin, and Aaron Rogers means Aaron Rogers. This is what makes language, language. Without this general assumption about language, communication is next to impossible. For example, if I said, “See you next Sunday.” And you didn’t take the literal meaning, but turned Sunday into Monday, we wouldn’t see each other.

This rule of a literal, objective, and set language is being lost in our postmodern North American culture and is also affecting the Church. On this topic, I will share with you some of the insights that I learned from David F. Wells’ book, *Losing our Virtue: Why the Church Must Recover Its Moral Vision*. The overall point is that we, The Church, must insist on an objective theological language even though our culture insists that all truth, including the truth of language, is subjective. As to say, is something true only if you feel like it is true, or is it true because it is true, regardless if you feel it. Does is mean is, or, if you feel like it means isn’t, then it means isn’t. If the Church is to proclaim the Gospel using words, we need to make sure we don’t lose those words.

As stated above, the moral climate of North American culture is postmodern. Postmodern refers to the period after the modern, but it also encompasses a philosophy. Postmodern philosophy, in a nutshell, is the denial of absolute truth. This means the postmodern culture denies the objective truth of the Word of God and makes everything relative. Since truth becomes relative, people look for subjective truth in various places. I’m sure you have heard phrases like, “My truth.” “It may be true for you, but not for me.” In our culture, truth no longer comes from Holy God vertically, because “He is dead,” according to the philosopher, Nietzsche, but from sinful-self horizontally. Theology is replaced with Philosophy. God’s view of the world is replaced with man’s view—and sinful man doesn’t have the correct God’s eye view of reality. In our culture, we no longer see ourselves as God declares, *poor miserable sinners*, but as we declare, decent people defined by our clothes, status, etc.

This relative way of postmodern North America has also corrupted the language. For example, David Wells talks about the word *virtue* and how it used to include many objective moral standards, but has disintegrated into a girl losing her virginity (p.15). Furthermore, he shows how the original true definition of *virtue* has been replaced by *value*. While virtues stood on objective standards from God, values are subjectively up to each individual. He lists several other examples such as replacing *character* with *personality*, *nature* with *self-consciousness*, *guilt before God* with *I let myself down*, and the obliteration of the meaning of *sin*. “That chocolate is sinfully good.” All of these changes are an attempt by the devil and fallen man to subvert the Word of God. And, the Church must not succumb to this rhetoric. The Church cannot effectively engage our culture without an objective language. The absolute objectivity of the Word of God is the means used by the Holy Spirit to create faith *when and where it pleases Him*.

Only the Gospel can create and sustain the Church. The Gospel truth comes to us in language. The Language of Law, sin, Christ’s vicarious satisfaction, Christ crucified, forgiveness, faith, Word and Sacraments, etc. Therefore, boldly defending absolute Biblical language is the essential starting point in talking with our postmodern culture. Once speaking the same language, the Holy Spirit is able to create and sustain faith in the Word.

That’s the truth,
Pastor (You may picture Aaron Rogers)



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL
THE ACTIVE MEMBERS WHO
HAVE APRIL BIRTHDAYS!!**

]	Mandy Schoelzel	4/1
]	Lyn Erdman	4/7
	Pam Rose	4/11
	Rachel Welke	4/15
	Jacob Heisinger	4/16
]	Rosa Blake	4/20
]	Mel Dommer	4/20
	Kaitlyn Heisinger	4/23
	Maxine Nereson	4/23
	Dottie Neumann	4/25
]	Tom Benson	4/28
	Carol Sundell	4/29

♥ HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO: ♥

KENNETH & ROSA BLAKE 4/12/1958
JOHN & GENEVA EMANUEL 4/16/1949
DEAN & SUSAN HAKES 4/17/1999

**† WE ASK YOU TO REMEMBER IN
OUR PRAYERS THE HOMEBOUND
MEMBERS:**

Irene Kvapil
Isabel Lenz
Juanita Lueck
Myrna Mattison



PRAYER REQUEST

If you would like a prayer on Sunday morning, please contact the secretary during the week. If it is last minute, you can also catch pastor before service.

FUNERALS:

Michael Ziebarth - March 8th, 2013

ZION WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS:

Reverend James Norton and Marilyn (Sam) Norton from St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Nokomis, IL.

NEW CHOIR MEMBERS NEEDED!

If you are interested in joining the choir please speak with Lyn Brace.



Dear Friend of **Issues, Etc.**,

Have you ever wanted to listen to the best of **Issues, Etc.** including in-depth series on Reformation Theology, Apologetics, Biblical Interpretation, Christianity & Culture, Church History, Hymn Studies and more? Would you like to listen to teachings from guests like Will Weedon, Arthur Just, John Warwick Montgomery, Mollie Ziegler Hemingway, Paul Maier, Norman Nagel, Scott Klusendorf and others?

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Jeff Schwarz, General Manager
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WOMEN'S SOCIETY NEWS:

The Women's Society met on Thursday, March 14th. Twelve members and three guests attended. Carol Evenson was hostess and served cake and ice cream. Pastor Stark led us in devotions with the Sacrament of the Altar as the topic. During the business meeting the Women's Society agreed to provide the food for the Easter breakfast on March 31st. We closed with the Lord's Prayer. Our next meeting will be Thursday, April 11th beginning at 1:00 p.m. The hostess will be Mary Gettler.

BOARD OF EVANGELISM:

I am sure you all remember that this past fall Zion's mission speaker was Rev. John Fehrmann from The Confessional Lutheran Foundation. This month we are including in this newsletter the first half of his trip notes (Feb 2013) about the new CLEF project: The International Lutheran Kindle Project.. It is truly exciting to hear of the work being done. Zion voted this year to support CLEF with a hundred dollar a month donation.. Anyone wishing to add to this may put a donation in our offering plate clearly marked for CLEF and it will be sent in addition to the congregation's donation. The second half of his report will be in next month. In other news from the Bd. of Evangelism, we are working on preparing new member packets, and have plans to post pictures of new members on a picture board, and we have cards prepared with the church photo on for writing notes to visitors.

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS:

Each Wednesday at 9:30am 14-17 men and women meet in the Fireside Room to go over the upcoming Sunday's scripture lessons. Lively discussions prevail and there is always room for more participants.

YOUTH NIGHT:

Kids 6th grade through 12th grade join us Wednesday, April 3rd 5:45 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. for a light supper provided by Carol Gale and dice games.

Dogs over Children?

Rev. Phil Hale (LCMS)

"America loves dogs." I heard this said recently and it struck me. It's true. Dogs are protected by law from abuse and killing and are highly valued. And there is nothing wrong with that. Dogs can make wonderful pets. What is odd is that America loves pets, but does not love children as much.

Consider the dog fighting incident with a professional football player a few years ago. This man had a dog fighting ring with executions and dogs fighting to the death. This gruesome behavior and other illegal activities earned him time in prison and many critics who said he was a despicable human being. People were outraged, and deserved to be. But who is outraged at the helpless children being murdered every day through abortion?

In fact, people are praised for not bringing life into this world. It is said children are too much trouble and expense, and there are too many people already. I wonder if abortion for dogs would be treated the same way. We do not love children, as a nation, which is at the root a spiritual problem.

People are considered lower than animals by some who believe in evolution. They say all animals have a right to exist, but people are taking over, they are displacing and ruining the animals' lives and homes with all their activities. There is a great effort to preserve life, but not human life.

How sad it is that children and people are not loved. Life is not a burden, but a gift from God. We don't love children just because they are cute and fun, because sometimes they are not. "A skeptic knows the cost of everything, but the value of nothing." Experts can tell us the cost of children and all the sacrifices of sleep, time, and energy, but not the value. Our value comes from God, for we are made in His image and His likeness.

Without children, there are no adults. My personal theory is that the way people treat children shows what they think of themselves. Conversely, Jesus said how we treat children and teach them is how we treat Him: "*Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me*" (Mark 9:37). Again: "*Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold*" (Matthew 24:12).

What is odd is that we make children very important, but value them too little. By doing so, we minimize God the Father who is the Creator and determiner of value and worth. Children can take the place of God, by being made the center of our lives and the source of all our happiness. So every little activity must be carefully planned and all endeavors must be successful. But the most important task, that of salvation, has already been accomplished. Our children inherited not just our genes, but our sin. They will fail you, just as they fail God. Like us, our children are born into rebellion and death. That is why the second birth of baptism is so important, indeed more important than the first birth.

Having children is not like having a boat or a pet. Those can be chosen for the fun of ownership. Raising Children is a service to God. Redeemed by Christ, they are baptized into Christ's death, safe from their sin and God's wrath. The good Lord gives and takes away. He determines the time birth and the day of death; little ones are not ours. Parents are to feed and clothe, not to make happy in every circumstance.

The cost is great, but the value of a baptized soul is priceless. The value of children is found in relation to Christ, not their soft skin and small size. The real service and sacrifice of training children should be made to God Himself, not the little ones who think that the world revolves around them. This loving task says God's gift granted to every soul in Christ is all-important, not the selfish whims or flighty happiness of the child. This unfortunate reversal has made this Scripture verse incomprehensible today: "*But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety*" (1 Timothy 2:15).

My wife and I are starting to get interesting comments about the size of our family. In the end though, I am too poor a sinner and without any good in myself, so that I cannot turn down God's blessed gifts. We are not that rich, in our own eyes. Our hope is not in this world or its pleasure: "*I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings*" (Luke 16:9).

All of us have not been as welcoming and loving as the Father is toward us. We focus on the cost, but not the value, which is determined in God's eyes. In Christ, we are beloved children, dead to our sin. No act, even the sacrifice of parenting, in this world can do better than what Jesus has done for us. "*See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him*" (1 John 3:1).



NEWS FROM LWML - "MISSION IN MOTION" PLEDGE WALK:

Dianne Schroeder and Carol Gale will be attending the National Convention in Pittsburgh, PA June 27-30. Both ladies are planning to go on the Mission Walk and are accepting donations of money. The money collected will help fund mission grants throughout our nation and the world. They are also hoping to bring with them lots of gifts from the heart. If you would like to contribute diapers or a "kit" they will add it to their luggage for the bus ride. All items need to be New but bargains can be had at the dollar stores.



Gifts from the Heart - Pittsburgh 2013
and
"Mission in Motion" Pledge Walk:

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