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## Pastor's Page



Zion Lutheran  
Church  
110 East Grand Avenue  
Chippewa Falls, WI  
54729

Website:  
[www.cfzionlutheran.com](http://www.cfzionlutheran.com)

### Theology of Divine Chastening

Heb 12:1-11

*(1) 3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. 4You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. 5And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons:*

*"My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD,  
Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;  
6For whom the LORD loves He chastens,  
And scourges every son whom He receives." [1]*

*7If [2] you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? 8But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. 9Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? 10For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. 11Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

What a great theological point of the Divine Chastening! The parent who does not care where his child is at night nor rebukes him does not care about the child. A good earthly parent sets rules for his child and chastens the child when those rules are broken for the child's protection. i.e. A mother corrects her child when he runs into the street to teach him not to do it again for his temporal benefit. This is done out of love for the child. If a fallen human parent loves her child this much through chastening – how much more does a perfect heavenly Father love His children in this way? This same type of chastening from our Heavenly Father is done out of love. However, the difference is that the love of the heavenly Father is ultimately concerned about our eternal benefit--not to say that God does not care for us in this world--but to say that we might not always understand how He cares for us. The hidden will of God is just that, hidden. While He has revealed to us that He takes care of His children temporally and eternally, the intricate workings of God's will are unknown to our fallen human minds; and thankfully so--because God's Hidden Will would blow our minds. That is why it is hard for us to understand that through suffering, or chastening from God, God is working a gracious good for us His children. It is the same lack of understanding that a teenager has when it comes to a curfew on prom night. While the seemingly evil correction of the parent seems so terrible that life could not go on, a few years later the teenager realizes the love in that decision. Therefore, we children of God are encouraged when we are rebuked because it testifies to our sonship and love from our Heavenly Father. Amen.

In Christ,

Pastor

## **It's not supposed to work like this! Higher Things Conference Observation**

<http://higherthings.org/myht/articles/catechesis/not-supposed-to-work-like-this>

**by Jonathan Kohlmeier**

It's not supposed to work like this! High School aged youth don't get excited about prayer offices and services that were written or compiled 2000 years ago. They get bored with in-depth bible studies that just go through scripture. They need edgy video and skits that can concretely be applied to their lives and that old boring stuff just doesn't do it.

Yet here they are! 1400 youth belting out great Lutheran hymns. They're in the classrooms asking tough questions about the text of scripture and Lutheran doctrine. They're asking their pastors about baptism and private Confession and Absolution! It's completely insane to the world who thinks teens just need and want to be entertained. Yet here we are, in Purdue, witnessing all of it and more!

I guess this shouldn't really be a surprise to us. These Lutheran Youth are at the top of their game academically. During the school year they are learning calculus that even if we did learn it has been mostly forgotten now. They are encouraged to think critically by teachers in class and through homework and exams. They're smart. Intelligent. Thirsting for knowledge. It shows just by talking with them!

The experience of a Higher Things Conference is something all in and of itself. The singing, the learning, the fellowship all leads to great emotion. But it doesn't stop there. This experience is reproducible. That's because it's not about the experience or the emotion but about the unchanging Gospel and the gifts which deliver it. The same gifts given at a conference are given week in and week out in our congregations. Sunday morning our pastors start with the words, "In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," reminding us of our baptism. We confess our sins and we are absolved. We hear the word of God read and preached and Jesus comes to us through it. Christ comes to us in body and blood in the sacrament. That victory over sin, death, and the devil that was won for us at Calvary is delivered to us in, with, and under the bread and the wine.

There are probably more people here at From Above - Purdue than you have in your own congregations. Instead of hearing 1 or 2 pastors preach you'll hear 7 different pastors preach Jesus for you. The singing will be a little louder. You'll see that there are more Lutheran youth than just you and your youth group. It's definitely an experience you'll remember for a little while.

Then you'll get home. The excitement will wear off and the emotions will die down. But those same things that you heard and learned here will continue on in your own congregations. Your own pastor will continue preach Jesus Christ and Him Crucified for you. He will continue deliver Jesus to you week in and week out. You'll be joined with the whole church as you sing, pray, and receive the gifts of The Lord.

That's a gift from above and it's pretty great!

## Send in The Clowns?

Mark 1: 29-39

<http://trinityaustin.com/sermons/768>

In 1975 Judy Collins recorded "Send in the Clowns." The song says send in the clowns, where are the clowns, there ought to be clowns. It's a theater reference. When a show isn't going well the answer is to send in the clowns. What does that have to with a text that highlights Jesus healing people?

Feeling better in sickness, cheering up, looking on the bright side is what most people want. You might have seen that Seinfeld episode where an acquaintance of his is quite sick in the hospital. Seinfeld is asked if he could go see him and make him feel better. You know send in the clowns. He does and despite being a stand up comedian Seinfeld can't get so much as a smile from the guy. Seinfeld feels defeated, a failure. So he goes back, and this time he has the sick man rolling with laughter. The punch line is that the guy literally dies of laughter.

Do you think that Seinfeld episode has an off the wall premise? Not hardly. Over the years, I've been asked by people to go see someone in the hospital to cheer them up as if I'm some sort of stand up comedian. Usually it's a member asking for a family member or friend who is unchurched or as we might say today "under" churched. I've made such visits, and usually I can get them smiling, but I dare not speak of life and death, of sin and grace, of heaven and hell. When I have, I either meet blank stares or, "Look, I don't want any of that blankity, blank, blank stuff!"

When all else fails send in the clowns, but why is a pastor viewed as one of them? You know why. What else can he really do? He has no medical knowledge; he can't *dispense* medicine; has he ever healed anyone? The only thing he might be able to do in the eyes of the world is make the sick person feel better. So send in the clowns; there ought to be clowns. Well no, there ought to be *healing*, but since the pastor can't do that the *least* he can do is cheer them up.

We have to deal with this head on. Increasingly the world is asking, Just what good is the church? Increasingly the church bureaucrats are asking, Where are the numbers? These two questions are answered by the largest Christian congregation in the world. Located in South Korea Yoido Full Gospel Church has over 800,000 members. Over 200,000 worship each Sunday. Joel Osteen: eat your heart out. Their secret to huge numbers is giving people what they want; no they don't send in the clowns. They send in the healers. The congregation is Pentecostal. Healing is their specialty. By the way, Joel Osteen's 30,000 member church is also Pentecostal.

I'm not. Unlike them these hands haven't been God's instrument to heal so much as a pimple. I've never prayed and certainly knew that my prayers would heal. I've never healed on demand either. By the way, not even the apostles did that. While Paul healed some, he didn't heal Epaphroditus but rather waited till God had mercy on him ([Philippians 2: 25-30](#)). So what good am I? Maybe I can at least make someone feel better, more optimistic, put a smile on their face. Where are the clowns? Send in the clowns.

Look carefully at our text. Jesus wasn't about making people feel better or even about healing them. Jesus left Capernaum when everyone was seeking Him. See the pathos here. Jesus had been late into the night healing many of various diseases and casting out demons. The text says that the whole town was gathered at Jesus' door. Last week's text ended where this week's picks up; it ended telling us that Jesus' fame spread *everywhere* throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee. As word of Jesus healing people spread, desperate mothers, heartbroken fathers, aching spouses were bringing their sick to Jesus for healing.

But Jesus left. Though He was told everyone is looking for you, Jesus said He should move on to nearby villages. These were smaller places than Capernaum. The Greek word is market villages; places too small to be called a city. Although Jesus could really "pack them in" with His healing, there was no numbers chasing here, and there seems to be a lack of compassion, doesn't there? Unless, that is, healing wasn't what Jesus was all about.

Look at the text. What does Jesus say His purpose was for going elsewhere? To *heal* people? No, "So literally "in order that" I can *preach* there also." Jesus went elsewhere to do what I'm doing right now. Not healing, not cheering people up, but sermonizing. And note after Jesus says He goes elsewhere to preach He explains, "*That* is why I have come." The text ends by summarizing Jesus' whole Galilean ministry as "preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons." No send in the doctors; no send in the clowns, but send in the preachers.

In a nutshell we can say Jesus doesn't clown around when it comes to law and sin, but He does with sickness and even death. This will take some explaining.

Jesus didn't clown around with the law; He took it on in its real sense and even its exaggerated sense. Did you note how the Holy Spirit emphasized *when* the people started to bring their sick and demonized for help? "That evening *after* sunset." Although Jesus had cast out a demon that Sabbath morning and healed Peter's mother-in-law that noon, they waited. It was only once the sun had set that the Sabbath was officially over. Their exaggerated Sabbath law prohibited them from seeking healing and freedom from demons before then. Several times you'll recall

that Jesus confronted them with the fact that even *God's* law permitted animals to be helped on the Sabbath.

You might not realize it but you do what they did. It's not just the real Law of God that convicts you, but the ones you exaggerate. Some people feel morally guilty because they can't make everyone around them happy. Some people feel culpable before God because they don't have the talents others do. Some people are convicted for not being happy enough, optimistic enough, smart enough, outgoing enough.

I'm here to tell you that Jesus doesn't clown around with the Law. He kept it all: God's 10 Commandments and the 10,000 more you have made up for Him. All that God *really* required of men; all that men *secretly* require of themselves, and all that the Devil and others *sinfully* require too, Jesus kept; Jesus fulfilled. Don't let your conscience be persecuted, be haunted by a fulfilled Law. As people carried their sick to Jesus and came away with certain healing, you carry your guilty conscience to Jesus with the certainty that your conscience will be healed as their bodies were.

Jesus can heal today when and where it pleases Him, but that is not His greatest work, or His greatest benefit, and healing wasn't the purpose that He came for. But you are to see that what Jesus does physically in the Gospel for some He can do spiritually for all today. Look at the healing of Peter's mother-in-law. The insert translates "The fever left her." But "left" is the usual word for forgiving someone. You could translate, and "He forgave her the fever." I'm not trying to tell you that Jesus thinks feverish people are guilty of something. I am telling you that Jesus forgives sins like He healed fevers. Completely and definitively, restoring people immediately.

So many Christians come out of church like they walk in: with their sins. O they hear the forgiveness in the absolution, hymns, preaching, and Sacrament, but they only take some of it home. They leave church as the walking wounded, still carrying their sins maybe as a shadow, maybe as a smudge, maybe as a stain. Don't do that; that's not how Jesus forgives sins because that's not how Jesus paid for sins. First, He carried all the sins of all the world to the cross. Second, He drained all of the cup of God's wrath against sins and sinners. Third, He was a wrath removing sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

Jesus bought and paid for sins. He owns them. They are His to do with as *He* pleases. Your sins don't belong to you, your conscience, others, or the Devil. They belong to Jesus. As He instantly healed Pete's mother-in-law and she bounced up to serve Him, so He has instantly forgiven you today. As Pete's mom-in-law had no lingering weakness, you are to have no lingering guiltiness. As she counted herself no more among the sickly, you are to count yourself no more among the guilty.

Jesus doesn't clown around with the law and sin, so you don't either. But Jesus *does* clown around with sickness and even death, and when the Christian is face to face with these, he can too. We can clown around with these because Jesus has taken the law away from ruling our conscience. The law in sickness and death shouts and even shrieks, "You deserve this because of your sins. Your suffering, misery, dying is payback for laws broken." But Paul says where there is no law there is no guilt. So we can laugh in the face of sickness and death. The very worst they can do is deliver us to the One who delivered us from the Law of sin and death.

Send in the clowns; their ought to be clowns when the Christian is facing sickness and death. Why? Because Jesus bore our infirmities in His body and died our death, the death a sinner deserves. The Scripture says three times that God laughs. What makes God laugh every time is the plotting of men against Him. Death and Devil say you are theirs and God laughs and you should too. You have been bought with a price. You've been redeemed; your sins have been forever paid for. Death and Devil assert that you have sold your soul to them by sinning. Jesus laughs. You can't sell what He owns; you can't use your sins for money because He bought them from you with His innocent life, suffering, and death.

You know how "Send in the Clowns" ends? After saying they should be sent, after asking where are the clowns, after saying they ought to be here quick so send them in, the song concludes, "Don't bother they're here." The point is *we're* the clowns. Yes, we are. We joke about the threats of a fulfilled law and forgiven sins; we joke about what sickness and death can do to the forgiven sinner. Send in the clowns? Don't bother; we're here. Amen

Rev. Paul R. Harris, Trinity Lutheran Church, Austin, Texas, Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany (20120205); [Mark 1: 29-39](#)

### **6th Grade Pre Catechism Class and 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Catechism Class Starts September 4th**

Sixth, Seventh & Eighth grade classes will resume on Wed. Sept. 4. These are held directly after the school day, so the children can ride the bus to class and be picked up by parents at 5:45 pm when they are dismissed. They will take turns supplying a light snack.

I invite the entire congregation to read the information that is on the bulletin board outside of our Youth Catechism Class Room, # 212. I believe that it is good if the whole congregation is aware of what are 7th and 8th graders are learning, so that we can all encourage them during this important time. - Pastor

### **Optional 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Pre-Catechism Class**

I encourage our 6<sup>th</sup> grade children to take advantage of our *Optional 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Pre-Catechism Class*. While this class, unlike our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Catechism Class, isn't required prior to confirmation, I certainly encourage and recommend it. The curriculum of the class, taught by Carol Gale, is based on the major foundational Bible stories. Having a solid grasp on the basic Bible stories are fundamentally important prior to entering 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Catechism Class. Also, this class will focus heavily on helping your child memorize Martin Luther's *Small Catechism*, which will be required memory work for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Catechism Class. Additionally, it is helpful if your child already has the catechism memorized before Catechism Class, so they can focus on understanding the language of the faith besides just learning the language itself. As to say, we learn how to speak language before we can understand higher thoughts. - Pastor

### **New Adult Catechism Class Starts September 15th**

The purpose of the class is to teach what we believe, teach, and confess here at *Zion Lutheran Church* as part of the *Lutheran Church Missouri Synod*. This class is for new members of Zion and those interested in membership. To accomplish this task I will primarily teach from the Bible and Martin Luther's *Small Catechism*. The class is designed so that you are free to ask questions when they arise. For those not confirmed, this class can lead toward confirmation.

If you are interested in taking advantage of this opportunity to learn more about the Christian faith, or have any questions, please contact me ASAP. Our first class will be Sunday, September 15, from 11:15-12:30. We will meet in the Fireside Room downstairs. The class will meet for about 15 weeks, but may go longer depending on the dynamics of the class. Please contact me, if you plan to attend—Pastor

In Christ,

Pastor T. Clint Stark

[PastorStark@gmail.com](mailto:PastorStark@gmail.com)

715-379-3236 (cell)

# b l b

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL THE MEMBERS WHO HAVE AUGUST BIRTHDAYS!!

Karen Ek	8/1
Roderick Hurt Jr.	8/5
Barbara Berthiaume	8/9
Samuel Hunt	8/9
Kristina Lyberg	8/14
Bradley Sundell	8/14
Dorothy Liddell	8/16
Anita Dommer	8/24
Brooklyn Schwetz	8/25
Matt Milkert	8/28

## ♥ HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO: ♥

Brian & Laurie Schweisthal	8/8/1981
Donald & Anamae Verch	8/8/1959
Jacob & Kristy Heisinger	8/13/2005
Roger & Karen Ewingss	8/15/1964
Rev. Erno & Doreen Szedlak	8/18/1963
Shaun & Sara Hakes	8/27/2005

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

Lila Pahl	Jan Rothbauer
Erna Welke	Gertrude Boettcher

## NEW MEMBER(S) WELCOME:

We welcome Mr. Bill Lindeman to our congregation by way of Transfer from Salem Lutheran Church in Barron, WI. If you haven't already, please introduce yourself to him.

## WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS:

## WOMEN'S SOCIETY NEWS:

On Thursday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, members and guests met at 12:30 p.m. at Flag Hill in Irvine Park for a picnic luncheon. It was a beautiful sunny day. There was plenty of good food to choose from and great conversation too. Pastor Stark was away at the Higher Things Conference, so we invited Rev. Yunghans to join us. After a very brief business meeting, Rev. Yunghans read from selected Bible verses and we recited the Lord's Prayer before adjourning. Our next meeting will be on Thursday, August 8<sup>th</sup>. Members have been invited to Lois Eichinger's new home. We will meet there at 1:00 p.m.

## ANNUAL WORSHIP IN THE PARK SERVICE & PICNIC:

**Date:** Sunday, August 4<sup>th</sup>

**Place:** Main Pavilion at Irvine Park

**Time:** 10:30 a.m.

The picnic will follow the worship service. Members are requested to bring a dish to share. Your choice of a hotdish, salad, dessert, or other picnic food. Beverages, plates, cups, napkins and eating utensils will be provided. Please mark your August calendar to reserve the date to be sure to join us for this special outdoor worship service and picnic. Extended family members and friends are welcome.

## WEDDING CARD SHOWER:

Wedding Card Shower for our adopted seminary student, Jens Jenson who is getting married in Iowa on August 10<sup>th</sup> and returning to Fort Wayne for his second year at the seminary. You are invited to prepare a wedding greeting card and include a monetary gift if you are able. There will be a box at the back of the church on Sundays during August for you to place your card in. After the August 25<sup>th</sup> service the Ladies Society will prepare a package and mail them to the Jensen's in Ft. Wayne.

## AN INVITATION:

Rebecca, Sarah, & Ruth, the daughters of Pastor Erno and Doreen Szedlak, invite you to help us celebrate our parents' 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on August 18<sup>th</sup>. An open house gathering will be held here at Zion from 2-5 p.m. with a program at 3 p.m.

## BOARD OF EDUCATION NEWS:

**Youth Kwik Trip Script** may be purchased most Sunday mornings in the back entrance from Kathy Michels or Tuesday - Friday during office hours from Tricia.

**Youth collection of aluminum beverage cans:** You may bring the aluminum cans to the green plastic can in the church garage.

**All fundraising money** which we get from recycling the cans and the 10%