

BETHEL MATTERS

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The Implications of Our Belief in Original Sin, part 2

When I was a student in Junior College I took a class in Political Science. Early on the professor said in class something like this: "In order to govern people properly we have to understand the nature of humans. How many of you think people are born basically good? How many of you think people are born neutral, neither good nor bad? How many of you think people are born evil?" The professor's view was the neutral one, that we become good or bad by our actions.

Clearly my professor did not believe in original sin. It was an open secret that he was living in an immoral relationship with his boyfriend. He was also a very opinionated, outspoken political activist. He had ample evidence in his own life of the doctrine of original sin. It couldn't have been any clearer had it jumped up and hit him in the face. As the old song goes, "There are none so blind as those who will not see." But one thing my professor did get right is that how we view human nature has enormous implications. In our last article we saw two implications of original sin. (see November 1, 2017 article at <http://pastorsthoughts.bethelmarquette.com/>) Here are three more implications:

1) We should not be discouraged when even believers fail us, for we all have remaining corruption in us until death and can sin grievously. Professor D.A. Carson, in his daily devotional For the Love of God, wrote, "Most of the best in Scripture betray flaws of one sort or another-Abraham, Moses, Peter, Thomas, and (not least) David...Even the finest of our Christian leaders commonly display faults that their closest peers and friends can spot (whether or not the leaders themselves can see them!). This should not surprise us. In this fallen world, it is the way things are... We should therefore not be disillusioned when leaders prove flawed. We should support them wherever we can, seek to correct the faults where possible, & leave the rest to God-all the while recognizing the terrible potential for failures and faults in our own lives."

2) We must be careful about elevating people to positions of leadership or ministry until we see evidence of the new birth and desire for ongoing spiritual maturity. The Bible contains this warning about leadership in the church: He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil (1 Timothy 3:6). This clearly is founded upon the doctrine of remaining corruption in every believer from original sin. Without proper growth and time to mature in the Lord, it is too easy to act in the flesh. Clearly pride and conceit are the devil's trading tools, and he has done much damage to churches and lives thru the unconverted or the immature. We must apply the tests of the new birth, time for growth, and the desire for ongoing growth to those who would lead.

3) We must not set aside spiritual methods for secular methods thinking we can attract seekers to the Lord by appealing to their fleshly minds and desires. 2 Corinthians 10:2-6 warn us against waging war according to the flesh. 1 Corinthians 2:14-16 warn us that people without the mind of Christ will never understand or accept spiritual ministry. Bible teacher John Hoeldtke once advised me, "Whatever we attract people with is what we have to keep giving them to keep them." And Charles Spurgeon warned us that we are called "to feed the sheep, not amuse the goats." Spiritual work countering original sin can only be done by spiritual methods.

Your friend, learning about the danger within,
Pastor Brian (:~).

From the Family Life Pastor:

Various Thoughts:

First of all I want to thank all of the people who wrote cards, sent notes, gave words of encouragement and gifts to me for Pastor Appreciation month. You are such a blessing as a church and Ann & I are immensely grateful to be part of this precious body! THANK YOU!

Next, last night I spoke in AWANA council time and spoke on Thankfulness. This is the “season” for giving thanks. At Thanksgiving we are given a chance to express thanks. I believe that we should be a people who are thankful all of the time. Thankful hearts are filled with thanks regardless of season or reason, but rather is a “habit” or attitude that is all about who we are.

At AWANA the kids wanted to do a “sword drill” and so I did a quick search and found twenty (20) verses on being thankful. Let me share a few of those, and notice the “attitude” and “habit” of thanks in these verses, and these are just verses that deal with thanks to God – we should be thankful to people as well.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 – ***“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”***

Ephesians 5:20 – ***“Giving thanks always for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”***

Psalms 106:1 – ***“Praise the Lord! Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever!”***

Psalms 107:1 – ***“Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever!”***

Colossians 3:17 – ***“And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the father through Him!”***

So, there are many others, but the point is clear, we should have an attitude and spirit full of thanks to a God who is so amazing and so good, and regardless of our circumstances, our attitude should be filled with thankfulness – because He is Good, and His love endures forever!

What is an example of this? The next season that is coming – Christmas. Christmas is a season to remember “how much” God loves us. This love is not because we are so wonderful, but in spite of the fact that we are not loveable and good, it demonstrates that love that is talked about in the two Psalms that are quoted. It is an amazing love!

At Christmas we remember what John 3:16 (ESV) tells us – ***“For God so loved the world, that He gave his***

only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” Of course the “giving of His son” happened when as we read in Luke 1:30-35 – ***“And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end... The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy – the Son of God...and while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths and laid Him in a manger... and at the end of eight days, when He was circumcised, He was called JESUS!”***

I often share that the Christmas story is a great story and it would be just that, a great story unless it came true, and unless there was an Easter. Jesus coming to earth as described in the Bible is not a story, it is the truth. He came while we were sinners (Romans 3:23) – He came to allow us as sinful men to be given a hope and promise of spending eternity with God in heaven. As Romans 5:8 says, God did this while we were “sinners”. That is amazing love that is so worthy of our continue Thanks and giving glory to God for His love for us!

I pray that you will have a wonderful Thanksgiving and that your year will be full of Thanks to God for sending Jesus whose birth we will celebrate on Christmas day!

In Christ’s love
Pastor Hank

Have you visited our Bethel Website?

Check it Out at:

www.bethelmarquette.com

Audio Sermons are posted weekly along with items of interest, Bethel Matters, Calendar, and Happenings.



Prayer Chain & Official Notices
bethelemail@gmail.com

If you have a prayer request or information that you want shared, please send that to the email address above. If you are not receiving email prayer requests or notices, please contact Ann or Ellen in the church office at 228-7589.

Items for the January 2018 Issue
of Bethel Matters
are due in the office
by, Sunday, December 17th

Items for the Happenings
are due in the office
by Wednesday noon.

Happy December Birthday to:

1. Grace Lingle
4. Kaitlyn Millin, Bette Cannon
5. Brian Lingle
7. Dennis Caldwell, Micah Nelson
8. Susan Syria
10. Jacque Nelson
13. Laura Mauser, Caleb Leppanen
14. Kurt Janofski
19. Dave & Sandy Petrovich (A)
Jon & Julie Motta (A)
20. Will & Abbie Tireman (A)
21. Mike Leppanen
23. Dave Thomas, Matt Vissering
24. Will Tireman
28. Sue Britton
29. Sam Salo, Becky Nelson
30. Melissa Brandt

Congratulations To:

Laurie Short on her retirement from UP Health System Marquette.

Kendyl Dahlstrom, Aden Dahlstrom, Anna Thomsen (John & Sandy's granddaughter) on successful performances of Shrek. You all did a wonderful job.

From the Mailbox:

Dear Bethel Family,

Jessy and I would like to thank those who prayed for me during my heart procedure and heart surgery. Your thought and prayers meant a lot to us. Last month I had an echocardiogram that no fluid build-up. We are feeling blessed and a sense of relief. Thank you again!

God Bless,
Kelly (Thomsen) Lundin



Dear Bethel Family,

Once again you opened your hearts to the unborn babies and gave generously to the Care Clinic's Baby Bottle Boomerang fundraiser. The money (\$991.66) you placed in those bottles will be used to bless many babies and change the life of those



Junior High Youth Group
6th - 8th Graders
Sundays 5:30 - 7:00 PM

Senior High Youth Group
9th - 12th Graders
Sundays 5:30 - 7:00 PM

Questions:

Chris Mauser, Director of Youth Ministries
1-330-550-0141
christopher.mauser@gmail.com

around them. The world can be a dark place to live, but you help to fill it with God's Light and Love. What a blessing to belong to a church where God's Love is shared. Thank you for caring and sharing.

God Bless,
Jean Johnson

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Faith Promise Gift for Missions

At the Bethel missions conference on October 15, members and friends were given the opportunity to join two strategic missions efforts Bethel is pursuing. **One** is a church plant on K. I. Sawyer led by the U.P. Churches of our Great Lakes District. **The other** is a short term missions trip to Guatemala from Bethel to do evangelism and build housing units for widows and their children. The costs associated with both are \$10,000.00 for Sawyer for next year (for one year of a 3 year church plant plan) and \$25,000.00 for Guatemala.

As we pray about these Great Commission opportunities, we have the chance to participate by going and/or giving. All pray. Some go. Some give. On October 15th we were given the chance to do two things: (information is at the Welcome Center)

- 1) Express a desire to be involved by going to either of these opportunities.
- 2) Express an amount we would like to give above our normal giving as God blesses us.

As we pray God often calls us to be the answer to our prayers. That certainly happened with Nehemiah as his prayers eventually led him to go and request funding from the king to rebuild the walls. Please continue to pray for the success of God's work and how you will participate in it.

For the Outreach/Missions Board,
Pastor Brian

* * * * *

Bible Studies

For Men

Tuesdays, 6:30 AM, Coachlight Restaurant

Questions: contact Pastor Hank 228-7589

College Age Dinner and Study

Sundays at 1 PM

at Songer's (2645 Grove St., MQT)

Alternate Location

at Maier's (1903 Mildred, MQT)

"Through the Bible in 24 Hours"

by Chuck Missler

There will be 24 sessions going through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

Questions; contact Dr. Songer at 906-360-8688

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Operation Christmas Child

Update

Thanks to all who participated in Operation Christmas Child 2017! Bethel folks provided 172 boxes and the total number of boxes for Marquette County was 1,427. That number was up 279 boxes from last year. YEAH GOD! Also a special thank you to those who helped load the Fed Ex truck on Sunday. Your muscles are much appreciated!



Baby Bottle Boomerang

Update

\$991.66 was given through the baby bottle ministry.



* * * * *

AWANA for grades K-6

Monday's at 5:30 PM

Worker's Meal at church

Monday's at 6:30 PM
Grades K-6

Theme Night - December 18th
(Red & White night)



Christmas Break - December 25th and January 1st.

Cubbies (3&4 year olds for workers kids)

Questions: contact Commander Brian Steede at
475-9406 or bsteede10@gmail.com

“How to Lead a Child to Christ”

Cheryl Doan from Child Evangelism Fellowship will be leading a training session for anyone who wants to be trained in the use of CEF materials on Saturday, December 9 from 9 am to 3pm here at Bethel. This would be great information for anyone working in Sunday School, Children’s Church, AWANA, or with your own children or grandchildren. Anyone interested in attending, please call the church office to register by December 1.

Angel Tree Ministry

All gifts are due back at the church no later than Sunday, December 3rd.



Christmas Music Opportunity

Rehearsals for special music this Christmas Season are scheduled for:

- Thursday, December 7th, 6:30 PM
- Wednesday, December 13th, 6:30 PM
- Wednesday, December 20th, 6:30 PM

Mark Your Calendars

December Special Events

*December 2nd - Cross Walkers ABF Christmas Party

6 PM at Bob & Yvonne Leaf’s home
10 Co Rd 480, NEG.

Please bring a white elephant gift.

*December 3rd - Children’s Christmas Program Rehearsal at 12:30 PM (lunch provided)

*December 9th - “How to Lead a Child to Christ”, 9 AM - 3 PM at Bethel.

(RSVP by December 1st)

Led by Cheryl Doan,
Child Evangelism Fellowship

December 9th - Primetimers ABF Christmas Party

5:30 PM at Lost Creek Community Center
Please bring a dish of food to share and a white elephant gift.

*December 10th - Children’s Christmas Program at 10 AM (NO ABFs)

*December 16th - Adult Christmas Party at UP Bible Camp (reservations needed by Dec. 10th)

*December 17th - Caroling at 6 PM, please bring a plate of cookies to share with our seniors

*December 24th - Christmas Eve Service Schedule

- one worship service at 10 AM
- one candlelight service at 6 PM

Recipe Corner:

Russian Tea Cakes (Swedish Heirloom Cookies)

1 c. butter or margarine softened
½ c. powdered sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
2¼ c. all purpose flour
¾ c. finely chopped nuts
¼ tsp. salt
Additional powdered sugar

1. Heat oven to 400°
2. Mix butter, ½ c. powdered sugar and vanilla in large bowl. Stir in flour, nuts and salt until dough holds together.
3. Shape dough into 1-inch balls. Place about 1 inch apart on ungreased cookie sheet.
4. Bake 10-12 minutes or until set but not brown. Remove from cookie sheet. Cool slightly on wire rack.
5. Roll cookies in powdered sugar; cool on wire rack. Roll in powdered sugar again.
6. Enjoy

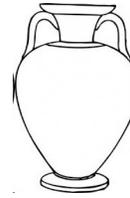
I'm looking for recipes submissions. If you have a favorite, I would love to publish it.

- Ann

Please Help: Some of our utensils from the church kitchen have gone missing (large ladles, cake servers) Please take a look through your utensil drawer at home to see if any of them may have found their way home with you after a pot



luck or ABF snack.



We are also missing some vases of various sizes and shapes from the basement that are used in the sanctuary for decor.

Thank you for checking for items at home.

In Sympathy to:

Jim & Gwen Timmons on the November 16th death of Gwen's father, Earl BeDen. The funeral was held downstate.

Tim & Judy Larson on the November 18th death of Tim's brother-in-law.

The Family of Judy Place following her November 22nd death. The funeral was held at Bethel.

Bruce & Pam Roberts following the recent death of Pam's father.

For Your Information:

There will NOT be a 5th Sunday Hymn Sing in December due to it being New Year's Eve.

Hymn Sing Schedule for 2018:

April 29th at 6 PM

July 29th at 6 PM

September 30th at 6 PM

December 30th at 6 PM