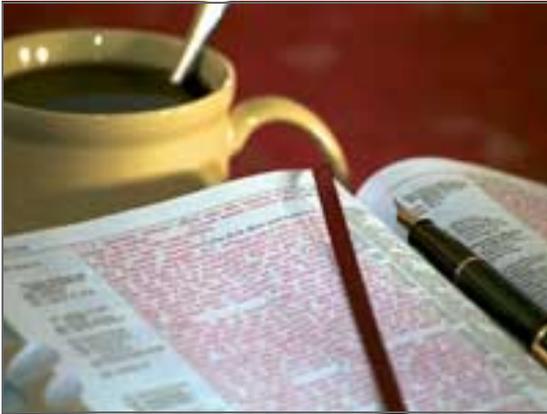


The Shepherd's Staff

to inform and encourage



July 2013



From the Pastor's Desk

**I want to feel better about myself.
Can God help me build up my self-esteem?**

"I'm worthless!"

That's a depressing statement. Yet many people silently admit to themselves that they are worthless.

The single mom who doesn't feel loved; the child or adult who can never seem to do anything right for his parents; the employee who messed up on the job again; they and many others feel that they are not worth very much. Maybe you've felt this way. Is there an area of your life in which you want to feel better about yourself?

Many say you can establish a positive self-image by focusing on your skills, accomplishments, status, financial resources, or appearance. There's "help" out there in the form of self-hypnosis, support groups, affirmation and visualization techniques, plastic surgery, self-help books, CDs, DVDs, and other attempts to build self-esteem. All these efforts only provide a temporary, superficial lift. Ultimately they prove to be feeble efforts to feel worthwhile.

We all want to feel a sense of worth, love, and security in our lives, but we can't provide them for ourselves. But God can. He freely gives them to us through his Son, Jesus. His Word tells us not to focus on ourselves but on him, to look not at what we've done but at what he's done for us through Jesus Christ. Our sense of worth and value – our self-esteem – is found in the Savior who lived and died in our place. We have Christ-esteem to build us up.

A man named Paul realized this when he said, **"Whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord" (Philippians 3:8)**. In Jesus we find a status before God that we could never produce, a love from God that is unending, and the security for life in knowing that our Savior who loves us will be with us each and every day.

God's way of helping us build up our self-esteem is showing us Jesus. Please join us to find out more about your Savior who lived and died for you.

- Pastor Philip Kieselhorst

THE PRAYER OF A CHRISTIAN PATRIOT

Six percent of the world's population, that's all we total. Yet we have 33% of the world's production, 33% of its college students, 50% of its air travel, and 60% of its automobiles. *Still we grumble!*

We are supposed to need 1800 calories a day. Yet our daily consumption is some 3500, more than eight times that of the world's average. TV antennas and faucets with running water are common, even among our poorer people, while millions elsewhere struggle to find food and shelter. *Still we grumble!*

From coast to coast we can travel without once having to produce our papers or pass a checkpoint. Personal income and property are ours to acquire in whatever amount we can. Without threat of reprisal we can criticize those in authority; we can even vote freely for the candidate of our choice. Above all, we can worship the Lord and teach his Word to our children unhindered and unmolested. *Still we grumble!*

Moses' words are good ones for us. "When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God, for the good land which he has given you. Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God" (Deuteronomy 8:10f). "God, be praised for America," the Christian patriot prays.

Forgive America

The Ten Commandments are crumbling into memory's dust. For such a statement no crystal ball is needed, just a candid look at the lives of many Americans. Serious crimes, like robbery, rape and murder, have more than doubled since 1960. Daily 4000 unborn children lose their lives. That's one every two seconds. Employee theft costs business owners some \$10 billion annually while alcoholism causes problems for more than 12% of all Americans. Pornography no longer comes from under the counter in brown wrappers, but is slickly displayed on quick-serve shelves. Nor are we as Christians immune. Those who must swim in such polluted waters run the constant risk of swallowing some.

John's words are good ones for us. "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). "God, forgive America," the Christian patriot prays.

"A nation on its knees is a more impressive sight than one waving flags," someone said. We agree. We want America on its knees in penitence and prayer. We want more. We want America rising from its knees to walk after the Lord in paths of Christian service. Such concern is not only for those millions of unnamed homes strung across America. It starts right with my home on the street where I live. Christian homes, where the Lord is feared and his Word revered are the pillars of any nation and the source of national strength. Because of them God blesses a nation.

So how goes it with our homes? Do the mats on the porch say Welcome also to the Heavenly Guest? Does his Word get equal--not to say more--time than the daily newspaper?

Is the church bench as important as the workbench? Does the soul of our children receive more attention than the body we clothe, the stomach we fill, the education we provide, and the future we plan? Too many are already only playing at this thing called religion. We dare not. For ourselves, our families, our nation, we need to sweat that God's Word be provided and practiced.

Help America

Jesus' words are good ones for us, "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things (the earthly things we need) will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:33). "God, help America," the Christian patriot prays.

There are so many ways God could use America today. In a world exploding with wars and rumors of wars God can use us as peacemakers. In a world ever worried about a handful of flour and a mouthful of bread God can use us to help feed the less fortunate. In a world washed by a surging Red Tide God can use us to help hold aloft the torch of freedom.

Above all, God can use us to help spread his Word. To a world bitterly locked in battle with Satan and facing defeat in hell, we have a message to bring. As believers, let's shout it out, "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work" (1 John 3:8). To a world where souls starve daily and the Bread of Life is in short supply, we need to broadcast widely the Savior's words, "I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to me will never go hungry" (John 6:33). To a world around which the chains of hell are tightening and in which the light of spiritual liberty shines only weakly, we need to ring his promise from the rooftops, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31,32).

This blessed message America still has and, uniquely, the resources to proclaim it.

Must not the Christian patriot pray, "God, use America"?

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From Our New Principal

Dear Members of Shepherd of the Valley,

It is with great joy that I would like to announce that I have been led to accept the Call you have extended to me as upper grade teacher and principal. I feel that the Lord has given me the gifts to serve the people in Westminster and that, with his help, we will all be able to continue sharing the Gospel through the church and school.

Over the next few weeks, I will be in continued contact with Pastor Kieselhorst and other church and school leaders as my family and I prepare for our transition to Colorado. I ask for your continued prayers that all necessary arrangements go smoothly on both ends of our move. I also ask that you keep your fellow Christian brothers and sisters of my current congregation, Riverview Lutheran, in your prayers as they seek the Lord's guidance to fill the vacancy they now have.

In Christ's service, I am,
Mr. Jeffrey K. Falck



Ashes to Ashes

by Rick Wilking, Congregational Assistant

Most of you know I am a photojournalist and as part of that work often cover tragedies. Recent examples include the Moore, Oklahoma tornado and the Black Forest fire in Colorado Springs.

In both cases I saw people digging through the remains of their homes desperately trying to salvage something of value to recover. In some cases they found what they were looking for but in most they didn't. Particularly in the case of the fire victims there was usually nothing left at all, just very fine ashes.

Looking at scenes like that reminded me of how short life is really. The people digging through the rubble only a day or two before would never dream that just around the corner disaster was lurking.

One of the common threads you might hear from people when you want to talk to them about God and heaven and eternity is "I haven't got time for God right now. I'll do what I can to be good and will get serious later."

Well, later might be tomorrow, or even later today. We have to have a sense of urgency in telling others about Christ. When you get a little window of opportunity to tell someone about the gospel don't put it off until "later."

Later might be too late for that person or even for you!



Shepherd Women News

Thank you Mary Peterson for heading up the Foley's Farewell. It was a great party.

Thank you to all the other ladies for planning, shopping, setting up, bringing food and cleaning up.

Thank you to the men that helped with cooking and setting up.

A special thank you to Jeannie Gotta for taking the quilt idea and making it happen and Rick Willing for taking the photo for Liesse's gift and making it a great gift.

Our next meeting is July 21st. I want to welcome all women of Shepherd of the Valley to join us. Katie Schlomer will be our new president. We have another party to plan for the new principal and vicar and need your help.