

THOUGHTS

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By the father/son team
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SPEAKERS ON THE WORD TODAY

Update on the 36th Anniversary Offering

As an update on the anniversary report for our offering from the radio audience—the first week of June we received 7 additional gifts for a total increase of \$6,210.00 which brought the total offering to \$17,932.00. This is a record high for one years anniversary offerings from the radio audience. Praise God!!!

At the conclusion of June we are able to report the comparison between 2013's first six months offerings which totaled \$36,427.00, and the first six months of 2014 which totaled \$41,985.00. So, this years offering for the first 6 months exceeded last years by \$5,558.00. This is an upward increase of 15%. Praise God!!! It is so wonderful to see God's people progressing so beautifully. Surely God is pleased. Praise be His Holy Name!!!

Harmony

May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me...John 17: 23

Every person was singing a different note—and, not in harmony. Quite a disconcerting noise, yet in the ears of God, I am sure it was a beautiful sound.

On the occasion of my first chapel service at Bethesda Lutheran Home in Watertown Wisconsin (for those who are mentally disabled), I heard this glorious worship to God. They sang heartily. Nobody knew or cared about the pitch or tune. God was pleased!

But, God also enjoys harmony. He invites us to work together, pray together, fellowship together, and give together, in order to bring glory to his name.

The one thing we ought to be solidly together on is the desire to reach the world for Christ. All our efforts, words, plans, and giving have worth only if they are directed toward that goal.

Unify us, Lord, for your glory.

Fishing

...From now on you will catch men. Luke 5:10

Jesus has called us to fish for people. I grew up in Iowa where it was common to fish for bullheads, carp and other fish that wallowed on the muddy bottoms.

Jesus was not afraid to identify with the poor, the wretched, and the worldly. He didn't join them, he rescued them. The tax collectors (thieves), the outcasts found Him ready to administer His merciful forgiveness.

After a mighty battle, I finally landed a sailfish which was over 9 feet long, weighing 170 pounds.

Some people today fight ferociously against the Gospel. While "boating" a sailfish—a helper with a gaff is needed. Witnessing to the aggressively defendant person usually also requires assistance from other Christians.

Evaluate the type of person you are witnessing to. A few are tough—it could be a pike, large mouth bass or even a shark! Christ loves them all. Go after them in His Name.

Father, let me catch people for you.

Sincerely,
Paul R. Schroeder



*The Bible is God's Word . . . Jesus is God's "Word" made flesh . . .
His death and resurrection, the message needed Today.*

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As a pastor who loves educating people in regards to God's Word and its impact on the world it seems I, "have egg on my face," as some statistics I have used publicly seem to be horribly wrong. I have, as many other clergy, cited the "fact" that 50% of marriages in America fail, and that Christian relationships fare no better than secular ones.

It was a lie; I learned from CBN news online article published through the Associated Free Press, "Church Divorce Rate Way Lower than Anyone Thought," that when Shaunti Feldhahn, a Harvard-trained researcher, who was investigating the commonly held perception regarding marriage *she could find no data to back up the claim!* Indeed, in her 8 years of research on the topic she concluded that not only was the 50% claim and supposed poverty of Christian marriage longevity unsupported by reality, but in fact Christian marriages are faring much better than secular marriages!

Shaunti puts the figure for divorce for all marriages at 31%, a far cry from 50%! Most gratifying for believers is her ball-park estimate of 15-20% divorce rate for Christians. Wow, what a radically different fact than the discouraging "fact" of Christian marriages divorcing at a similar rate to unbelievers!

So, just where did the erroneous information regarding marriage come from? I would like to know! I have a very strong suspicion it was concocted to do precisely what it did, discourage Christians. For decades now believers have had frustration over the supposed failure to distinguish ourselves when it comes to fidelity and moral distinction in marriage. The secular world has beat the church on the head with those supposed statistics, and believers have born the brunt of the derision. It has been a damaging "fact" which has cause some to turn away from the faith.

And it was a lie. Bad information is often worse than no information, and this was a perfect example of it. I believe it arose from a source which wanted to see Christ and the church denigrated. How many countless references were there to the lie; secular sources gleefully promoted it. The Scriptures teach us that truth will prevail, "There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known (Matthew 10:26)." While directly a reference to Jesus' Kingdom and its spread, the verse holds universal truth in that such misleading knowledge will ultimately be reversed.

This big lie which has been exposed reminds me an even larger one, that of Neo-Darwinian Evolutionary Theory, and *I can't wait for the day when people will say, "I can't imagine how people believed that garbage!"* For now, let's celebrate the Truth of Jesus' Gospel, and the truth that Christian marriage is far healthier and moral than secular marriage! Tell everyone you know! As a Christian, I am reminded to guard myself against "facts" which "everyone knows," but have no support!

Blessings!
Douglas W. Schroeder