

THOUGHTS

By Douglas W. Schroeder

SPEAKER ON THE WORD TODAY

N
O
V
E
M
B
E
R

2018

Thoughts
Box 77
Greendale
WI
53129

GLORIOUS ISRAEL!

What a wonderful pilgrimage/tour we had of the Holy Land! October was a perfect time of the year to visit, with sunny days and temperatures in the mid 80's. We saw the holy sites without horrific lines, had a baptism recommitment at the Jordan River, walked the Via Dolorosa (the Way of Sorrow) that Jesus carried his cross beam to Golgatha, and spent a day seeing the Dead Sea and Herod the Great's mountain top fortress, Masada. We closed the week with a visit to Gordon's Calvary, otherwise known as the Garden Tomb (traditional site). It was a most blessed time!

I always find the Sea of Galilee to be a special event, motoring over the waters where Jesus rode with the Apostles, providing them a miraculous catch of fish, stilling the storm, and walking out to them on the water at night. Being out on the waters of Galilee one feels at home in faith. I hope someday you can join me on this exquisite tour. I already have 11 names on an interest list for a future trip, perhaps in 2020. If you want to be kept up to date on plans, send your email address to Beth, Our Shepherd's secretary; bethb@ourshepherdlutheran.org

THE DEATH OF ESAU (THE DOG)

This month saw the demise of our pet, Esau, a Shi-Tzu. It was gut wrenching having to take him to the Humane Society, then handing him off to be euthanized. I was crying a river for a dog! Why do we sob for pets, yet at times sit dry-eyed at funerals for people? It seems incongruous, as people are made in the image of God, dogs are not.

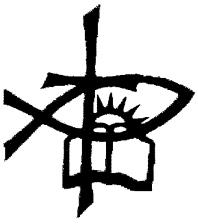
I suspect some of it is due to sheer contact with a being that seems selfless. We largely get only love points from dogs and cats, while humans can be a mixed bag of interaction. We see the furry critters often, while people we see intermittently. We also don't have a hand in the death of our friends and relatives. So, it's not inhumane to sob less for a person than a pet.

I also think that knowing we will again see our brothers and sisters in faith assuages the pain of loss. I *expect* to see them again! It's the promise of Christ to us, and the reason why we do not grieve as those who have no hope (see I Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Pets are disposable, whereas human relationships are not. The trip to Israel was a good break from the trauma of having to put the dog down the week before. Now, three days after returning, Connie is having "doggie depression." It would be suspicious for a husband or wife to be in the market for a new mate two weeks after the death of their spouse. But, a dog? It's dead, it cannot care! How long does the mourning for the old dog last? Until the new dog is brought home, and that's perfectly ok.

DO YOU "MESSAGE" THE LORD REGULARLY?

People and institutions chronically interrupt us. Messages fly to and from continuously. Are you remembering to keep in touch with God? Do you "message" him in prayer throughout the day? It is very easy to become preoccupied with stuff, the matters of daily life, such that we ignore God – and another day is gone. Please do not play the game, "I'm so busy," and treat the Redeemer like he's going to be ok with taking a back seat to everything else!



November

2

0

1

8

"TOLERANCE"

Perhaps you remember at some point in your past hearing your parents say, "We will not tolerate that behavior in our home!"

Tolerance in engineering terms means defining the limits of variance, which is necessary to ensure operability and dependability. Lower tolerance means less acceptance of error and blemishes. *Low tolerance is highly discerning rejection of the imperfect.* When a Christian does not tolerate immoral, ungodly behavior, they are acting in accordance with the standards of the Ten Commandments and the Christian ethos. This is not to suggest that the Christian claims to be perfect, for that would be self-righteousness, the sin for which Jesus condemned the Pharisees.

The World wishes for Christians to accept its definitions and standards, but they lead straight to Hell. Like high tolerance (less precise) manufacturing, the scummy, bottom of the barrel morality of culture leads to disposable relationships, situational ethics, perversity, and consequences including sexually transmitted disease, homicide and suicide. A worldview that tolerates an "anything goes" mentality will open the doors to "anything goes" real world consequences, which can be painful.

We do no favors to ourselves, our family, our church or our country by being silent about the fake "high moral ground" promoted by those who hate God. The pastors who let such things slide stand condemned by Christ as apostate. The supposedly loving LBGTQ community show their true colors in the contempt and hatred of holiness, sexual decency and the traditional family. Do the world a favor and proudly say, "I do NOT tolerate any and everything. I do NOT tolerate wickedness and evil. I support standards that will elevate, not denigrate myself and my country!"

DOG REPLACEMENT WORKS

(2 days following my previous thoughts) The new dog, Moses, is in our home now. Connie's "doggie depression," has vanished; it's smiles all around! Replacement works! It reminds me that we should look forward to our Lord's promise to "replace" our sin-infested, aging bodies with new ones fit for Heaven. Anticipating what glory awaits us in Christ, we are not defeated by death. We are in store for a replacement experience, and it will be glorious!

SECOND TIME AROUND ABLATION

48 hours ago as I write this I was in the recovery room following a second treatment for atrial heart flutter. The first procedure did not eliminate it entirely, so I had a second procedure to eliminate it completely. So far, so good! It's incredible that God has blessed mankind with such knowledge and machinery to "fix" things like heart flutter. Hopefully I'm good to go! It was a beautiful experience to be completely at peace with the procedure due to the comfort of the Holy Spirit. The prayers of the congregation buoyed me up wonderfully! Now, please join me in giving thanks to the Lord for a good surgery.

Blessings!
Douglas W. Schroeder