

THOUGHTS

Newsletter for The Word Today

By Douglas W. Schroeder

SPEAKER ON THE WORD TODAY

N
O
V
E
M
B
E
R

2019

Thoughts
Box 77
Greendale
WI
53129

WHEN THE POWER GOES OUT

In a bid to prevent catastrophic fires started by high winds downing power lines California's largest utility simply *shut down the power to 2 million people!* This should give us all pause to consider; if such actions can be taken by a utility, what is to prevent such interruptions in our locale? We certainly have become dependent upon the infrastructure, and it would be a true catastrophe were our electrical grid, sanitation services, or transportation systems to fail. Statistically speaking, at some point there will be a disaster on an epic scale. Technology has made our lives so convenient that we are ill-prepared for a return to the 1800's.

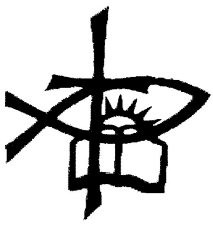
"THEY DIDN'T ASK ME"

The workers were standing in the parking lot in front of the budget health club I attend; they were waiting for patrons to move their cars so that they could restripe the parking lot. As club employees made the rounds to request the last few cars be moved, one woman whose car sat right outside in front of where she was riding her stationary bike refused to voluntarily move her car. I was surprised that this seemingly chipper, thoughtful woman said, "They didn't ask me to move my car." Even though she saw the situation and was encouraged to help by myself and others by moving her car, she chose to exercise her right to be stubborn, selfish and antisocial in her reaction. Perfectly correct according to the letter of the law, and perfectly selfish and worldly in her behavior.

It is that kind of mindset that contributes to the decline of our culture. When people willfully resist doing what would be helpful to others due to their self-interest (In her case, she didn't want to interrupt her exercise), society loses. It's not only the blatant "leaches", those who overtly cause crime and loss, but it's also the seemingly nice granny's, and "good people" who choose to be selfish who are contributing to our culture's decline. It was a good reminder that as Christians we are to conduct honest self-assessment of motivations when tempted to justify a callous attitude or refrain from doing what would help others.

REVENGE BEST NOT SERVED

"Revenge is a dish best served cold," was an expression indicating that it is preferable to wait until things have cooled off before serving up revenge. That kind of thinking is typical for the World, which seeks its own interests, not the will of God. Recently I preached on Proverbs 20:22, "Do not say, 'I'll pay you back for this wrong!' Wait for the Lord and he will deliver you."



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

November

2
0
1
9

There are different reasons to wait upon the Lord. Childless couples may wait for years to have a child. The ill wait for God to restore them to health – they hope! Those who are falsely accused await vindication. It is perhaps the most difficult to wait upon the Lord to forego revenge and depend upon him to right wrongs. Yet, this is perhaps the Christian's most powerful witness, in refusing to "pay back" those who malign and mistreat us. We are most like Christ when we love our enemies and bless those who curse us.

MOVING

Pastors see a lot of transition in peoples' lives; job relocation, change of residence, children going off to college, a retirement move – they all come into play. Sharlene, a lovely retired woman who first cared for, then lost her husband and mother, is going South to be closer to her family. Charlene was a humble worker around the church; she always put up the Advent wreath, and had made gorgeous floral arrangements for various occasions. One of her best efforts was redoing plants at the inside entrance of The Word Today building's theological library.

We had a lovely discussion, a "God go with you," chat in which she assured me that she will continue to support TWT, and the church she will join will be a Biblical, conservative fellowship. It was nice to have a personal farewell. Most of the time "goodbye" is a handshake in the line at the final worship service, or a phone call. In fact, I have only had perhaps 15 scheduled farewell discussions in 30 years of pastoring. Most people are consumed by the crush of moving activities to do much else.

It has become inordinately difficult to pastor people in this highly mobile society. Losing people due to their changing cell phone numbers is a regular occurrence. I had our church start a Facebook page partly so that I could attempt to reconnect with people who drift away and are unreachable by phone. It is common for people to move, switch churches, even become hospitalized without notification of the pastor. Some leave the church permanently without a word – likely because they have drifted away. Yet, without a contact, how can they be encouraged to recommit? I should also point out that many join our church the same way. If I did not inquire as to their history of faith and whether they are transferring membership, it might not be brought up.

Some of the most painful losses are due to the government's HIPAA Privacy Rule. Often I am not able to get clear information on where a member has entered a hospital. Several times persons who were members of our church for decades and who were living in assisted and special needs facilities simply vanished. I called...no answer. I went over...they were *gone!* Information regarding their whereabouts was not given out. One dear woman, a friend of our family and charter member of our congregation disappeared from the care facility I visited her at for years. To this day I do not know if she is dead or alive. Did her son move her to his town? No one ever informed me. As responsible Christians, please keep your pastor informed on the big moves in life. Thankfully, God will not lose anyone slated for residence in the Heavenly mansions!

Blessings!
Douglas W. Schroeder

THE WORD TODAY reaching the world with **GOD'S WORD**
Visit us online at *thewordtoday.org*