

Trinity Te Deum

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Are You Under?

It continually amazes me how facially and unapologetically Americans make up words. Since Watergate in 1972 every Washington scandal ends in “gate” though the gate in Watergate had nothing to do with an opening. “Selfie” is another new word as is “tweated,” “twerking,” and “under.”

Of course, under isn’t a new word, but like the “gate” from Watergate it has become a conceptual framework.

It started with the news media telling me I didn’t just need to be concerned with the unemployment rate but the *underemployed*. I next heard it in the realm of social politics. This time it was the *underserved*. I take this to mean that they don’t get their fair share of government services.

At the beginning of May, I first heard of a new problem involving “under.” Horror of horrors, it’s the *underbanked*. I’m not making this up. You’re *underbanked*, from what I could tell, if you don’t have one of the too big to fail banks servicing you.

I’m not saying there is not some cause for concern for all of these. But it’s not my calling to be concerned with the *underbanked*, *employed*, or *served*. My calling is to be concerned for the *underchurched*.

You’ve heard of the unchurched. That was whom I was told was to be my main focus when entering the ministry. I had to find ways to get the unchurched into church. By hook or by crook, by daycare or day school, by food pantries where people take food out or Mother’s Day Out where, ironically enough, mothers’s put kids in, I was to get the unchurched into church.

Well, doesn’t St. Paul himself command Pastor Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:5, “As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry?” Yup, I do the work of an evangelist and fulfill my ministry every single Sunday I am here proclaiming the *euaggelion* which is Greek for Gospel. As Saints Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and more fulfilled their ministry by preaching public sermons aimed at the nations of their day, so I fulfill my ministry and do the work of an evangelist by preaching the Gospel here every Sunday. The unchurched are without excuse. I am not going to be asked, and neither are you, why I didn’t do more to bring in the unchurched. No, they are going to be asked why they never heard God’s Word being proclaimed to them and for them.

But my concern is not for the unchurched; it’s for the *underchurched*. That’s you

who can’t manage to come to church

regularly. That’s you who will not come to Bible class. That’s you who are content to know what you know about Church and that’s it. You are *underchurched* and it is my calling to serve you more.

But let’s be clear, my calling is not to serve you with unchurchly things. You want entertainment; go to a movie. You want comedy; go to a club; you want intellectual stimulation; go to a library. You can want all those things, but what you need is churchly things.

You need to hear so much of the perfect Christ that you can’t see the things you do wrong but only all that Jesus did right. You need to hear so much of the crucified Christ that you can’t see a one of your sins so covered are they by the blood of Christ at the foot of the cross.

You need to be churched so much, so over the top much, till the Waters of your Baptism never evaporate but every step you take leaves a wet footprint. You need to be churched so much that the Words of Absolution ring louder in your ears than the words of accusation of the Devil, the World, and your own self do. You need to be churched so much that your body and blood take a back seat to the Body and Blood of Jesus in Holy Communion.

Nobody wants to but many are *underfed*, *underpaid*, *underloved*, but no one has to be *underchurched*. The Lord is never going to ask anyone why they were *under fed*, paid, or loved. In fact, He stands by them, over them, under them. How about the *underchurched*? I can't see inside anyone's heart but my own fallen one. I can tell you this. The *underchurched* ought not to wait till the *undertaker* to find out if they were too far under.

A Thing you Probably Don't Know

Tapping On A Ketchup Bottle With A Knife To Extract The Ketchup Works Because Of?

Answer: Shearing Forces

Tomato ketchup isn't just a delicious and widely used condiment, it's a veritable science experiment in a bottle. In order to create a topping that can be applied to food without running all over the place, various thickening agents are added to the ketchup, including a tiny bit of xanthan gum. The addition of the xanthan gum gives the ketchup a really novel and curious property: it acts as a pseudoplastic with a shear thinning property. In other words, when it is at rest it is resistant to moving, but when the right amount of shearing force is applied, it changes the viscosity of the ketchup and it suddenly moves very quickly.

In fact, this is exactly why Heinz Ketchup bottles have a small circle with a 57 inside it located on the neck of the bottle. It's not just a branding trick, that logo was placed in the glass bottle mold at the optimum place to tap the bottle with the back of a knife or other piece of silverware to apply the most efficient shearing force to the ketchup and trigger movement. After the ketchup flows out of the bottle and is no longer exposed to the shearing force, it thickens again to its original viscosity.

Aborted babies are being used to heat UK hospitals. This is the culture of death

By Tim Stanley Politics, United Kingdom, *Telegraph*, March 24th, 2014

Abortion stories read like dispatches from the frontline of a war. The *Telegraph* reports: The bodies of thousands of aborted and miscarried babies were incinerated as clinical waste, with some even used to heat hospitals, an investigation has found. Ten NHS trusts have admitted burning foetal remains alongside other rubbish while two others used the bodies in 'waste-to-energy' plants which generate power for heat. That's right – institutions created to protect life are being fuelled by burning the remains of the dead. Some bureaucrat somewhere obviously regarded

this as "efficient recycling". It's more akin to cannibalism.

We pride ourselves in the West on being more civilized than the rest. We have a free press, jury trials, human rights and relative peace. And our TV screens are filled with images of brutality in the developing world that reinforce our sense of superiority. I've just finished reading *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters*, Jason Stearn's account of the Congo wars that depicts savagery committed wantonly and in the open. Its crimes are visceral – "something foreigners do", not us.

But what we actually do in Europe and America is to tuck our social evils away into spaces that we can't see. Elderly homes full of neglect, children's homes where unspeakable things occur, and medical facilities in which patients are abandoned or abused with the catch-all excuse of underfunding or targets that override the priority of human compassion. The latest story, of light bulbs lit by human remains, is the purest example of the banality of evil, because it is the kind of evil that is motivated by the desire to keep things quiet and tidy. Consider this: One of the country's leading hospitals, Addenbrooke's in Cambridge, incinerated 797 babies below 13 weeks gestation at their own 'waste to energy' plant. The mothers were told the remains had been 'cremated.'

It's awful, but it's also part of a pattern. We know that abortions could be carried out in Britain on the basis of gender-selection – something the American Congress has refused

to ban. The UK sees around 180,000 terminations every year, and the Government has admitted that in nearly half of all cases the woman involved doesn't even see a doctor. The Government has responded by proposing to change the rules to say that she shouldn't have to. Meanwhile, we've witnessed a record rise in the number of "repeat" abortions and a parliamentary commission has warned that in some cases parents are "steered" towards a termination on the basis of cosmetic problems such as a cleft lip or a club foot. The recent Gosnell case has highlighted abuses carried out by doctors working for profit, as well as dangers involved in some procedures that many women are not warned about.

All of this ought to trouble us, ought to prick the conscience. Even if you think that abortion should remain legal for those who want it – and there is an overwhelming consensus that it should be available in cases of rape or medical danger – isn't it important that our society knows what's really going on behind closed doors? That people are informed about the statistics, the physiological realities, the economic factors at play? Isn't it self-evident that a woman who has undergone a termination has the right to know what will happen to the baby's remains – and that those remains are treated with dignity?

Failure to talk about these things protects, even fosters, the banal culture of death that pervades the West today. It starts by tagging aborted babies not as

babies but as "medical waste" – something to be disposed of, not respectfully buried or cremated. And it ends with a generally reduced understanding of what human beings are. Not living, breathing, wonderful creatures with souls but, simply, animal matter. Although a deceased pet is generally treated better than this.

We desperately need to have an honest conversation about abortion in the West. Free from hysteria, yes, but cognizant of what it really involves. Otherwise, we tolerate the demise of human dignity.

Thrivent: More About it's Pro-Abortion Agenda

DATE: February 13, 2014

"Thrivent Financial has ruled that LFL and other pro-life organizations—including crisis pregnancy centers—will no longer receive funds from, or through, *any* Thrivent program. [See our response above.] Not only does this deprive Thrivent members of the choice of supporting a life-affirming ministry, it has financial implications for us. We will now be losing over \$2,500 each month in income.

(Rev. Dr. James Lamb, executive director of Lutherans For Life, <http://www.lutheransforlife.org/article/thrivent/>)

Christ, Unionism/Syncretism, And the Church

"You shall have no other God's before Me" (Exodus 20:3).

"It is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve (latreuō, worship)'" (Matthew 4:10).

"Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people.'"

Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you" (II Corinthians 6:14-17).

Christ brings all of Satan's temptations to a dead stop in the Judaeen wilderness with these words: 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve (latreuō, worship)'" (Matthew 4:10). He pulls this Old Testament truth from Deuteronomy 6:13 where Moses goes on in the next verse

essentially to restate the First Commandment, after which he says: “for the Lord your God is a jealous God among you” (verse 15).

Our God, the Triune God, “whose name is Jealous” (Exodus 34:14), lives up to His name. So jealous is He – so demanding is He of His people's exclusive service to Him from womb to tomb – that He warns His people of the corollary of His name: “For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God” (Deuteronomy 4:24). The Greek word used in the Septuagint for jealous is where we get the word zealot, which goes a long way in explaining this verse: “For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me” (Deuteronomy 5:9). And were it not for the verse which follows this one and concludes the thought of all that it means for God to be a jealous God, there would be no hope for anyone: “but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments” (Deuteronomy 5:10).

What's my point? Simply this: God's standard of judgment and mercy, to which He Himself is accountable, does not change in any generation.

When it comes to unionism/unionistic worship – “joint worship with other Christians with whom we are not in doctrinal agreement” (ACELC Evidence of Errors – Unionism & Syncretism, p. 4) – or syncretism/syncretistic worship – “joint worship with those who

are not Christian” (ibid.) – the Church, the Bride of Christ, does everything in its power to align its standard of judgment and mercy with God's standard of judgment and mercy. All this is to say that the Church, moved by the grace of God in Christ Jesus, who is “head of the body” (Colossians 1:18), is bound by and to the inerrant Word in its day to day affairs, all of which impact matters of eternity. Anything less is to risk hearing the same warning our Lord spoke to Peter: “Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men” (Matthew 16:23).

The proposition that pure doctrine can coexist or be presented side-by-side with false doctrine – as most recently happened in Newtown, CT, just over a year ago – without compromising the truth of God, and thus the Gospel, violates every Scripture quoted at the beginning of this essay. For Lutherans, indeed for all Christians, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article VII & VIII (The Church), sets forth the pattern the Church is to follow. “[48] Ungodly teachers are to be deserted because they no longer act in Christ's place, but are antichrists. Christ says, 'Beware of false prophets' (Matthew 7:15). Paul says, 'If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed' (Galatians 1:9)” (Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions).

The fact that the LCMS has men on the clergy roster who publicly foster, promote, and

participate in unionistic and syncretistic worship without discipline is undeniable (documentation found here). Moreover, the reality that Synod is doing little to nothing to get such men to recant or be disciplined serves as testimony that we, as Synod, no longer hold to the axiom that the Church's standard of judgment and mercy aligns itself with God's standard of judgment and mercy. In other words, when one asks the Lutheran question – “What does this mean?” – one is led to conclude that we, as Synod, no longer hold to Scripture, The Confessions, or our own Constitution.

Clearly, Synod's current indifference to its Constitution means we are violating man's law and our “covenants of love” (Foreword, LCMS Constitution). Still, something far more revealing is happening here. We, as Synod, have forsaken or ignored the truth that “the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God” (Deuteronomy 4:24) – the very thing which ought to compel us to do the right thing in all matters of the Church, because it is a First Commandment issue!

In the words of St. Paul quoted in the opening lines, it is time for the congregations of Synod to “Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you” (II Corinthians 4:17). We may not like to hear it, but the track record of the LCMS since the Statement of the Forty-Four reads like a page right out of Revelation 2 where in Christ is addressing the

church in Ephesus: “But I have this against you, that you have left your first love” (2:4). Kretzmann's Popular Commentary does a nice job of summarizing this verse. “It is a sad ‘but’ that introduces such a reprimand. In spite of the many praiseworthy factors in the congregation at Ephesus this sad state of affairs existed, that they had left the first fire and zeal for the Truth, for the Word of the Gospel, and for the honor of the Lord which had been so prominent in the early days of the church.”

Thankfully, Christ, through the pen of St. John, provides the one and only antidote in the next verse: “Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place – unless you repent” (2:5). It is high time we in the Missouri Synod renew and restore our “first fire and zeal for the Truth,” by heeding the first of Luther’s 95 Theses, and the first public words out of Jesus’ mouth: “Repent.” We in the ACELC invite and encourage you to join us in our efforts to draw the attention of the congregations of the Synod, and the Synod’s leadership to this primal need.

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Pastoral Evaluations Need to be Changed

When a congregation is faced with a pastoral vacancy, typically names of pastors are solicited from members of the calling congregation and are sent off to that congregation's District President, who then has the power to exercise extraordinary influence on that list of proposed candidates. Sometimes District Presidents will remove names from the list he has received, and more often than not he will add more names to the list. Following that process, the District President then sends a request off to the various districts in which each candidate lives, and then the District President in those districts is supposed to supply information for each name under his supervision.

The bulk of the information a calling congregation receives, and on which they rely to narrow the list down to two, three or four names, is almost exclusively obtained from what is known as a Pastor's Information Form or PIF for short. These forms are partly filled out by the pastors themselves and partly completed by the pastor's District President. These are extremely important documents both for the calling congregation and for the pastor himself, because in the latter case what is written on the pastor's PIF may or may not be accurate.

For instance, if a particular District President has a favorable view of the Church Growth Movement and wants to acquire pastors in his district who will advance that agenda, he may word his comments on the PIF in such a fashion so as to place the pastor who advocates the

use of our Lutheran traditional, historic liturgies in a less than positive light. Additionally, if a congregation is a traditional Lutheran congregation, and the District President believes that the future of the Synod lies in the employment of Praise Bands, contemporary worship and more open communion practices, he may discourage that congregation from calling a pastor who favors traditional worship. How is this done?

The Pastor's Information Form or PIF is not a "neutral" instrument, but is clearly biased against traditional pastors who espouse the use of our historic Lutheran liturgies. The sad reality is that our Synod is no longer seeking uniformity in our worship practices, but has fallen prey to the prevalent view of our culture which more often than not worships at the altar of diversity, personal preference and innovation. Thus the traditional congregation seeking a pastor to lead them in that same tradition must choose those who are seen as "Rigid" as apposed to those who are "Flexible".

Now "Rigid" has an automatically negative ring to it, while "Flexible" is seen by most as a positive trait in just about any venue of life. After all, who would want to have a "Rigid" pastor when they could have a "Flexible" one? Why not call the traditional pastor "Liturgical/Traditional" instead of "Rigid?" And why not call the man who wants to advance contemporary worship what he is, "Contemporary/Innovative" or something like that? As long as one category of pastor is described with a term that is al-

most always viewed as negative, and his counterpart on the contemporary end of the worship spectrum is described using positive terms, the description becomes simply inaccurate both as a description of the pastor – and is likewise misleading for the prospective calling congregation.

Another important issue with respect to the PIF is the item by which pastors must categorize themselves on a "Theological Position" continuum. The very first difficulty is that a pastor is supposed to "grade" himself regarding whether or not he holds to one of five different Theological Positions! I was under the impression that if all pastors took their ordination vows to conduct their offices in accord with Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions we would only have one theological position, not five!

Oddly, the continuum has the middle position labeled "Evangelical," but there is no other descriptor for the other four positions. The calling congregation then needs to decide what is meant if the candidate pastor marks his theological position two marks left or right from "Evangelical." Since the word "Evangelical" very simply means someone who tells the Good News about Jesus, should a congregation assume that the pastor who marks himself two clicks to the left of "Evangelical" is less or more interested in telling the Good News about Jesus? Just precisely what is more "Evangelical" about the middle position, but not the others?

So the first problem is that we have a diversity of theological positions in our Synod instead of one. If we have a pastor who holds to false doctrine or wrong practice, why not just say it? Would it not be wise for the District President to simply not recommend such a pastor to any congregation at all! Might it not be more accurate to simply label the middle position as "Orthodox," the far left position as "Liberal," and the far right position as "Legalistic" – except for the fact that it is quite possible to have a legalistic liberal. The fact of the matter is that entire rating system is terribly flawed and is therefore nothing more than a tacit admission that we are tragically divided in our Synod with regard to doctrine and practice. And that's the problem that needs resolution! If a District President is going to provide information to a calling congregation, what they need to know is if the man they are looking to call is orthodox or not. What's needed is the intestinal fortitude to say so. Congregations of the LCMS deserve nothing less.

But there is another issue respecting the PIF, and that is that about half the second page of the form is reserved for, "District President's Comments to Calling Congregations". This, I am convinced, is the "make it or break it" section for the reputation of the pastor. On one occasion I know of a good and faithful pastor who was described in a letter from a District President this way:

"Because of the promise I made to your congregation, I am supplying this information,

but I also promised that I would offer you my best counsel regarding the qualifications of the men on your list. In sincere love for you, brothers and sisters, I cannot recommend this man for a call to serve as your pastor." (Taken from a letter from a District President to a calling congregation.) I might add that the man in question was not under any sort of church discipline, and was classified as being qualified to receive a call.

But really, who in their right mind would extend a call to a pastor who had received such a vote of "no confidence" from a District President? In this particular instance the man who was described in this inaccurate way was a solid, able, young Lutheran pastor who is now faithfully serving a congregation of another Lutheran church body (and, I might add, is loved by his current congregation). Such removal of a pastor from our clergy roster is a disgrace to our Synod and a waste of God's precious gifts to His Church. And this particular pastor is not the only one this has happened to. Please see page 19 of the ACELC's Error Document VII, Unbiblical Removal of Pastors from their Calls, regarding "...over 40 LCMS (or former LCMS) pastors who have been unBiblically removed from their calls..."

When I was a member of the Missouri District of the LCMS, it was very difficult for a pastor to even know what his District President had said about him on his PIF, and there was absolutely no avenue of redress for inaccurate comments contained therein. As a pastor in the

Missouri District if I wanted to see the District President's comments about me, I had to make an appointment at the district office, drive four hours across the state to physically be present in the District Office. Once there I would be given the PIF to examine in a private room, and then (if desired, and if the District President was available) I could talk with the District President respecting his comments. Under no circumstances, however, would I be allowed to have a copy of my own evaluation! Most pastors I knew never went to such lengths to see their ecclesiastical supervisor's remarks.

I know of no other work environment in which the evaluation of a worker is not provided to the worker. As a former public school principal I was required to provide each teacher I evaluated with a copy of their evaluation, and have them sign a paper that proved they had received it. The purpose of such public school evaluations was to assist the teacher to improve his or her performance in the classroom. It would seem that the purpose of a District President's evaluation has no such goal, but is often no more than the personal opinion of a District President which can, under normal circumstances, be made public not to the pastor, but only to calling congregations who will judge him without any idea as to whether or not the information on his PIF is accurate or not.

I served as a pastor in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod for 25 years prior to my retirement in 2011. During that

quarter of a century, never once did any District President in any of the four districts I served, ever observe me in the conduct of a worship service, watch me as I preached a sermon, provided catechism instruction or teach a Bible class. Rarely, did my Circuit Counselors/Visitors ever observe any of these things either. Yet, I was "evaluated" by my District President in each and every district in all of these areas. Thus, there is only one conclusion that can be reached – namely, that District Presidents often write their evaluations of the pastors in their districts primarily based on hearsay information, which is then passed on to calling congregations as though the information contained therein was obtained first-hand.

Clearly, the evaluation system for pastors is broken. Clearly, the information congregations receive from a pastor's District President may well be inaccurate. Clearly, even the forms that are used are either misleading to congregations or intentionally skewed to present some pastors in a good light and others in a more unfavorable way. The congregations of our Synod deserve better, and so do our pastors.

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Failing Homosexuals

Posted on January 13, 2014
by Rev. Paul R. Harris

“Preach the Law as if there is no Gospel; preach the Gospel as if there is no Law,” is a Lutheran dictum, and it is here we have failed homosexuals.

The LCMS's latest foray into our society's blitzkrieg of accepting sexual deviancy is found in the October 2013 issue of *The Lutheran Witness*. There is hope yet, but not if we don't break from our past. True to bureaucratic thinking there is no formal backing away, let alone repenting of, the 1999 “A Plan for the Ministry to Homosexual and Their Families” prepared by The Task Force on Ministry to Homosexuals and Their Families. Yet the *Witness* only has one reference to once a homosexual always homosexual and the myth that there is such a thing as a Christian homosexual. There can't be anymore than there is such a thing as a Christian murderer, liar, thief, or adulterer.

The 1999 Plan said both. Homosexual orientation is not a sin, and that you can be a homosexual and still be a Christian. On page 21 we read, “If homosexual orientation and behavior are not differentiated in public preaching and teaching, the person with a homosexual orientation will perceive himself or herself as condemned before God without redemption.” Wait a minute isn't that what a heterosexual oriented toward his neighbor's wife, a teen oriented toward his girlfriend, or an adult toward a child ought to perceive? Isn't that preaching the Law as if there is no Gospel?

Later on it said this, “Sexual orientation does not invalidate

Holy Baptism. God's grace and the inclusion of the baptized into the family of God are fully present in the person of homosexual orientation. God does not love someone less because he or she is homosexual" (28). Insert "Orientation towards violence to others" and "oriented toward violence," and "a murderer" in the italicized portions above. And if you can't do that with the Fifth Commandment, you can't do it with the Sixth.

In reality, the position expressed in the 1999 Plan is the same position the ELCA had in the 90s: you can be gay as long as you are celibate. This is the first step on the path to where the ELCA is today. It begins with distinguishing homosexual feelings from acts (Again try doing that with heterosexual lust and adultery; Jesus says you can't in Matthew 5:28.). Step two is accepting celibate homosexuality. Step three is to accept homosexual acts. The reasoning that leads to this is as follows. We deny celibacy is a command from God in regard to heterosexuals, so how can say it is in the case of homosexuals? This in turn leads to the necessity of Step Four the acceptance of gay marriage. That's the only acceptable way for homosexuals not to have to live a life of enforced celibacy.

You can tell that the Plan started from a foggy understanding of the issues by the fact that one of their resources according to footnote 6 was "A communication from a homosexual Christian to the task force" (38). Well computer companies use hackers and home security companies use

thieves why shouldn't we be using homosexuals to understand homosexuality? Hackers and thieves are not used to better understand them but to better defend against them, and companies use them with the understanding between criminal and company that the criminal is wrong. Not so the Plan. Here is how they used their homosexual resource. "If you want someone who is creative, is hardworking, gets along well with people, and has extra time and an abundance of love to share, then find a homosexual" (26).

Only one author in the October 2013 Witness takes a similar approach. He too cites words "from a fellow LCMS Lutheran." "I am gay but believe the only God approved place for sex is marriage between a man and woman. For this reason, I have chosen celibacy....'Unclear Law is not the problem.' At age 10, when kids called me 'fag,' 'sissy' and 'queer,' it was not a traditional way of proclaiming Law and it was not done in a Christian manner. But it was still Law.'" The self-identified gay man goes on to recount how in 8th grade a hand was held over his mouth till he turned blue and everyone laughed at him, how in high school a teacher greeted him 'Hello, princess,' how adults told fag jokes. Our gay friend is right; all of these are the Law. He says he has had enough Law. He needs hope, not hope "that I will be straight – that's never going to happen – but hope that somewhere out there is someone who truly is a

friend of sinners. Can you give me that hope" (10)?

Preaching the Law as if there is no Gospel says there is no hope for anyone who defends any sin. I can't stand before God and defend my heterosexual lusting anymore than he can stand before God defending his homosexual lusting. But what about orientation? If we accept homosexual orientation we have no grounds for rejecting pedophile or bestial orientation.

Is there hope? Of course there is, Paul trumpets it in I Corinthians 6:9-11: "Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God." No more than the unrighteous, fornicators, adulterers, thieves, drunkards, or swindlers can inherit eternal life can homosexuals. But the Gospel is that no one is bound to their sins by genes, by addiction, by fate, by chromosomes. Jesus living the perfect life we can't, and dying the guilty death we should broke the bonds of not just Death, not just the Devil, but Sin too.

We have to repent of approaching this sin differently than we do all others. One, it is a very ancient sin. St. Augustine in the City of God says,

“These effeminate, no later than yesterday, were going through the streets and places of Carthage with anointed hair, whitened faces, relaxed bodies, and feminine gait, exacting from the people the means of maintaining their ignominious lives” (VII, XXVI, NPNF, II, 137). Luther knew of this sin asking, “Whence comes this perversity? Undoubtedly from Satan, who, after people have once turned away from the fear of God, so powerfully suppresses nature that he blots out the natural desire and stirs up a desire that is contrary to nature” (LW 3, 255). In some ways this is remarkably close to a conclusion reached by Jerry Satinover, M.D. in *Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth* and Adolf Koberle in *The Quest for Holiness*. Koberle, the Christian, speaks of how repeated sinning against one’s conscience leads to ever thickening chains to a sin so that one no longer regards it as sinful. Satinover, a psychiatrist, speaks of how a person by repeatedly doing something can change their “hardware,” so they regard deviant behavior as perfectly normal.

As far as the poor gay man or lesbian woman having no

choice because they are made that way, the Marquis de Sade also believed that. Writing in the late 1700s he said, “Laws, morals, religions, paradises, hells, gods, and gallows, all will collapse when it is found that perversions are due to differences in blood, nerves, and organs, factors over which man has no determining voice” (Jurjevich, *The Contemporary Faces of Satan*, 275). Writing in the 80s when most think homosexuality was still in the closet, George Gilder said, “The most powerful tool of the homosexual culture is the myth that homosexuality is a fixed and immutable condition, like the color of one’s skin, is widely taught in sex-education programs, in secondary schools, and in college psychology and social science courses and endlessly repeated in all the media” (Men and Marriage, 73). The view of homosexuality accepted by the world ought not to be accepted let alone parroted by the church.

There are dissenting voices to popular culture’s universal acceptance of homosexuality and pitying of homosexuals. Professor George Reekers, at the time in the Department of

Neuropsychiatry and Behavioral Science at the University of South Carolina said that there was no such thing as a homosexual child (*Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, 84). And James Nelsen exposes the concept of homosexual orientation for what it is. “Nowhere does the Bible say anything about homosexuality as a sexual orientation...Our understanding of homosexuality as a psychological orientation is a relatively recent development” (*Embodiment*, 181-182).

The last mentioned book was published by Augsburg Books in 1978, the ALC publishing house. In thirty years those in the ALC went from dismissing homosexuality as an orientation at all, let alone a legitimate one, to embracing and celebrating gay pastors and marriages. The second person down a slippery slope goes all the faster because the path is well worn. The second church goes faster still.

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June 2014

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Adult Class: 12:00 PM Ascension Dinner: 5 PM		←	PASTOR	→		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
			ON			
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
			VACATION	→		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Adult Class: 12:00 PM		Voters' Meeting: 7 PM	Bible Stories: 10 AM Choir 6:30 PM Revelation II: 7:15 PM			
29	30					
Adult Class: 12:00 PM						

July 2014

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
		Trustees' Meeting 6:30 PM	Bible Stories: 10 AM Choir 6:30 PM Colossians: 7:15 PM			
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Installation of Officers Adult Class: 12:00 PM	←	HIGHER	THINGS	WISCONSIN	→	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Adult Class: 12:00 PM		Elders' Meeting 6:30 PM	Bible Stories: 10 AM Choir 6:30 PM Colossians: 7:15 PM			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Adult Class: 12:00 PM			Bible Stories: 10 AM Choir 6:30 PM Colossians: 7:15 PM			
27	28	29	30	31		
Adult Class: 12:00 PM			Bible Stories: 10 AM Choir 6:30 PM Colossians: 7:15 PM			

