Outreach Center Network News Letter

March 2017

In this issue:

*The reason for a season called Lent- a devotion*

A Helpful Video about Sight and Medicine

Lutheran Library for the Blind Goes Independent

Final Thoughts

Each article will begin with ###. You may move to the next article by searching for this.

### *The reason for a season called Lent*

*You may have heard the parable that compares our faith to a good seed that falls on the ground. ?some of the ground is rocky and the seed doesn’t grow. Some of the ground has thorns growing in it as well. Our faith, when it grows among the thorns, gets choked out. These thorns are the cares and concerns of life while on this journey. The seed needs good ground, free of thorns to grow well.*

*Lent is a time to cut back those thorns a bit, to let some things go, to introduce something that will help us grow.*

*T*here is in our society these days a prevailing hunger for meaning in life. There are people who don’t necessarily like what they are doing but don’t know what else to do. They really don’t like the way they live but don’t know how else to live. Many times these people don’t really know where they’re going in life and therefore don’t know how to get there. They may not be happy but they’re not unhappy either, and so they settle for that.

This is what leads to all kinds of quick fixes that numb the mind and cripple the soul. We can become locked into myself, my own needs and my own wants. It is so easy to think about ourselves, Feel sorry for ourselves, prove something to ourselves. How easily self-focus leads to self- importance. This leads to self-bondage. And these are some of the thorns of life that choke out faith.

And now into our lives comes Lent.

John the Baptizer proclaimed, “Behold the Lamb of God”. Look to him. Set your sights and your hearts upon him. ”Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world”. Including the sins of self-focus, of self-bondage.

John preached a baptism of repentance, but no more. He could preach words that judge us, but not save us, that help us, but not heal us. He could not erase the burden of guilt and sin that tire us out. Only Jesus can do that; only the Lamb of God, who would be led to the slaughter of Calvary, where those sins would be left hanging on the cross, empty and powerless.

My wife Debb, loves to grow roses. In the front of our house we have several yellow rose bushes. She planted these as they are to celebrate friendship. Just a few weeks ago she went out and cut off a lot of the dead branches. This will leave room for the new branches and buds to grow. She does this every year about this time.

Likewise, every year about this time we enter Lent. We consider the suffering that Jesus experienced. This suffering is not from the thorns of rose bushes, but the thorns of our self-focus, of our guilt and sin. “By his wounds we are healed”. Isaiah 53:5

### A Helpful Video about Sight and Medicine

The link listed below takes you to a 46 second youtube video.

First it shows a variety of pills of different shapes and colors. Next it says My Poor Vision. Then those three words get progressively blurrier until you can’t even tell what they might say. Then it talks about how people with failing vision cannot always distinguish their medication or read the small print of the directions on the bottle. It ends with a note that you can ask your pharmacist for Large Print, Talking, or Braille labels for prescriptions.

This is sponsored by Scrip Ability. It is designed for family and friends and caretakers of people who are losing their sight.

Whether you watch the video or not, its good information to let people with visual impairments know that they can ask their pharmacists for those options.

<https://www.youtube.com/attribution_link?a=AzeyHK782yI&u=/watch%3Fv%3D_jw9PEH3OCI%26feature%3Dem-share_video_user>

### Lutheran Library for the Blind Goes Independent

This Library has been around since 1939. It has moved locations many times but always was there to help people who are blind with Christian reading materials. When Lutheran Blind Mission unified with Lutheran Braille Workers (LBW) the Library moved to Florida. It was within the umbrella of LBW. In November of 2016 the Library became independent and is under the management of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, where it is located.

The Library continues to provide Braille and audio cassette books. It is working hard to move toward the NLS cartridge as well as internet downloadable books.

If you would like Christian reading material contact them at:

Lutheran Library for the Blind

6620 Arlington Expressway

Jacksonville, FL 32277

Phone: 888-215-2455

Email and website: coming soon.

### Final Thoughts

In upcoming issues we can and will look at many of the same topics as well as others. If you have questions, thoughts or suggestions, please send them to me or post them on the blind ministry email list.

Pastor Dave