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The Reporter

October 2021

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“Strength in Weakness”

by Pastor Proeber

When we read through Paul’s Epistles, there are many powerful and encouraging passages. These we know and depend on daily. At the same time there are also some passages used by Paul which make us wonder. One in particular is recorded in his Second letter to the Christians in Corinth:

The first and second letters do not offer a seamless transition. The first letter dealt with serious problems within the church. Most came from not following God’s Word and living in an unchristian, worldly way. The people listened to Paul’s discipline, repented, and addressed the problems. This is why the second letter has a different tone. There were still challenges and issues, but they had been addressed by sound Scriptural teaching. The major issue which Paul needed to address was an attack on his ministry and his authority as an apostle of Jesus.

Various teachers had descended on the congregation in Paul’s absence. Not only did they raise doubts about Paul ministry, they also offered substitute teachings which were attractive to those who heard them. These teachers also attacked Paul as a man. Every possible insult was launched against him. Sadly, they were effective because many people began questioning their allegiance to Paul and following these new inspirational and energetic teachers.

Instead of arguing or cowering before these attackers, Paul met them head on. He did it in a most unusual and extraordinary way. Consider what he wrote regarding himself and his credentials as an apostle:

“Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that he would take it away from me. And he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, because my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will be glad to boast all the more in my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may shelter me. That is why I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties, for the sake of Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

(2 Corinthians 12:8-10)

Did you catch Paul’s rationale? “I will be glad to boast all the more about my weaknesses.” This didn’t make sense to most people. Why would Paul be glad to boast about his weakness rather than his strengths? For Paul the answer was obvious, “for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.”

We live in a world where strength, worldly wisdom, and affluence are glorified. If

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one happens to be weak, unwise by human standards, or an ordinary person, you really don't matter. This affects us in our walk with the Lord. Because strength is admired, we have a tendency to rely on ourselves first. Then when everything is chaotic and completely out of control, we desperately turn to the Lord for help. In a way, we treat him as we would a fire extinguished. He's good to have around in case of an emergency.

So, how well does this work? Experience reveals it doesn't. It doesn't work that well from the Lord's perspective either. This is why we need to carefully consider what Paul is saying.

What does it require to say, "I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions and difficulties?" It requires the right perspective, and Paul provides that. He explains it simply and directly—"for the sake of Christ."

People can have incredibly difficult lives. They can endlessly labor without seeing measurable results. They can sacrifice everything, but in the end, there is nothing to show for it. They can have every good intention, but nothing works out. This is what happens when things are done from a worldly perspective. It isn't this way when things are done for the sake of the Lord.

Paul presents a completely different perspective—it is not about me, it is about Christ. This means Jesus' will is my first priority and my greatest joy. When I make this my focus, nothing else compares or matters as much. This thinking makes us recall the words Paul spoke to the congregation in Philippi: "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain for me." Life would offer fruitful and faithful service for Paul. Death meant eternal life in heaven. When you compare what we do for the sake of Jesus, and what we do for ourselves, there is no comparison.

This was why Paul was able to endure weakness and still conclude he was strong. In his weakness he depended all the more on the Lord—just like we do.

This is not a bad thing. Certainly the world scoffs at our dependence on the Lord. Let them scoff and ridicule. We know what our life is about. We also know what the Lord accomplishes in our weakness. Furthermore, we know the Lord is always there with his undeserved love and power.

It shouldn't be that surprising. When we recognize our weaknesses, we readily look to the Lord with greater urgency and more sincere prayers. We avail ourselves to his gracious strength. However, it is when all is well and we appear to be in control that we tend to forget about the Lord—our Refuge, Strength, and Help. We can also become overly confident in ourselves. This is when our fall is inevitable. You and I need to start with the undeniable reality. We are weak. We are unprepared to meet the challenges of living in this world. We are confused as to where we can find true strength. This is why we need the Lord and his perfect strength.

It is obvious, we are living in strange times with strange events. We are often confused by the lack of truth and certainty. We are tired. We are worn. We pray for God to intervene. But he seems to be delayed. Instead of angrily responding to what we would rather see, let's look at what we know. God continues to be in control. God continues to use his wisdom and power for our blessing. God continues to strengthen us when we are worn and weary. This is why we need to accept with complete confidence Paul's perspective: "for whenever I am weak, I am strong."



The grace of the
Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the communion
of the Holy Spirit
be with all of you.
2 Corinthians 13:13

Beach, Bike, Barbeque

by Al Todd

On Sunday afternoon, September 19th, Our Redeemer hosted a Beach, Bike, and BBQ event at Goleta Beach. 18 members and guests showed up and most began arriving in Area C at Goleta Beach around noon where we had reserved tables and a BBQ pit. It was a gorgeous, "patented" Goleta day with clear skies and only a slight breeze off the ocean.

The gear and food for the event was trucked in, and after quickly preparing the site (covering the tables, arranging the plates and utensils, etc.), we all gathered around for a prayer of thanksgiving for all of God's blessings.

All the food was prepared at homes and brought in, so we did not have to use the BBQ pit. The dishes were laid out and Pastor prepared the main dish of pulled chicken cooked in barbeque sauce which was served on hamburger buns. Condiments, side dishes, and drinks were set out as a buffet and everyone served themselves.

After about an hour of eating and fellowshiping around the picnic tables, the usual bean bag games were set up and friendly competition followed. It was low tide which made walking along the beach enjoyable for those that chose to do so.

Folks started to head for home around 3:00 P.M. and, after returning the area back to normal, the clean-up crew headed back to the church. A very enjoyable 3 hours at what turned out to be about as perfect a picnic day as could be imagined.

Please keep these events in mind when you plan your schedule. In addition to affording a great opportunity for fellowship, they are perfect for inviting guests who can get to know church members in an informal setting.

September & October Birthdays

We rejoice in the many blessings God has given the members of our family of faith. May the Lord continue to bless them richly. We also thank the Lord for the gift of an infant son to Janelle and Jonathan Young. Mason was born on August 14th, and baptized on September 18th.

SEPTEMBER

8th - Roseanne C.
24th - Kathy B.
30th - Pastor Proeber

OCTOBER

2nd - Greg G.
8th - Erle P., Sr.
13th - David G.
22nd - Jim B.
23rd - Darby J., Jr.
25th - Michelle C.





The Outreach Committee meets monthly and plans activities through which the members of Our Redeemer can plant the seeds of the Gospel in the lives of their family members, friends, and neighbors who need to know Jesus.

Some of these activities are attached to a worship service—Festival of Friendship, Easter, and Christmas. Others are non-worship events—Beach-Bike-Barbeque, Reformation “fest” and the Pre-Thanksgiving Pot-luck.

The goal is to build a relationship with people through which they can be introduced to the Lord, his Word, and our congregation.

**The Outreach
Committee meets
October 12th at
7:00 pm.**

Outreach & Fellowship Opportunities

Reformation Fest

On Sunday, October 24th, we will gather for an evening of friendship, food, and education. The evening will begin at 5:00 pm with a pot luck dinner. You may bring your favorite “German recipes”, or anything else—main dish, side dish, or desserts.

Around 6:30 pm we will gather inside the sanctuary for the showing of the Academy Award Nominated film “Martin Luther.” It is one of the first films made regarding Luther and his work to reform the Roman Church. It will last about 100 minutes.

The evening closes with dessert and friendship. Plan today to come, and plan to bring along some friends.

Thanksgiving

On Sunday, November 21st at 5:00 pm, we will hold our annual pre-Thanksgiving pot-luck and fellowship. It is always an enjoyable evening with plenty of good food to go around.

In conjunction with our pot-luck, we will also have our regularly scheduled Thanksgiving worship service. It will be Thursday, November 25th at 9:30 am. In so many ways we have seen the Lord’s rich blessing, and want to “give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, and his love endures forever.”

Advent

The first Sunday of Advent will be November 28th. During our regular 9:30 worship service we will prepare ourselves to meet the Lord at his coming to this earth. Unlike previous years, we will not offer mid-week Advent services this year.

The Birth of Our Savior

Christmas is always a special time at Our Redeemer. Not only are there the worship services on Christmas Eve, December 24th at 7:00 pm, and Christmas Day, December 25th at 9:30 am, there are also the other get-togethers and opportunities to invite people to “come and see the great thing the Lord has accomplished.”

As we approach this special time of the year, invite the people you know to hear what the Lord has done for them. Not only will it give you an opportunity to share your faith, it will also give you an opportunity to share your joy in Christ.

Notes & News

Handbell Choir

Practice for the Fall—Reformation, Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas—continue every Monday evening at 7:00 pm. We are thankful for those who generously give of their time and efforts to make practices and ring for our worship services.

There is also an invitation—if you are curious, or if you would like to try ringing—to speak with Debbie.

New ringers are always welcome, and can be worked into the future playing schedule.

Wednesday Evening Bible Class

The Wednesday class continues to meet at 7:00 pm. Recently a class on the “End Times” was completed. It proved to be timely and interesting as we watch and wait for the imminent coming of our Savior Jesus Christ.

On September 29th a new class was introduced on the book of James. Although there were some who spoke against the inclusion of the book into the New Testament

canon, it became part of the 27 books.

It is rightly viewed as a book on sanctification, or how one lives their life set apart for God's holy purposes.

If you were not able to come this past Wednesday, plan on coming this week. The study will concentrate on our living faith attested to by works and evidenced by our conduct. In these difficult days, such lessons are very appropriate.

Opportunities

We are always looking for new opportunities for service, outreach, study of the Word, and encouragement. Recently some thoughts have been shared, and will be scheduled for the Spring and Fall of 2022. Both of these programs will help us reach out to families with young children. One suggestion was a “spring egg hunt.” This would be in conjunction with Easter. Another suggestion was a Fall Festival. Watch for more information.

Sunday Morning Bible Class

As always there is a regularly scheduled class after the worship service. Through the end of the year one of the lessons from the worship service will be studied. It offers a few extra insights into the lesson, and some timely insights and applications.

The class usually last about an hour and follows coffee hour and refreshments.

Sunday School

Once again we will offer Christian Education for small children. Sunday School will be held on the second and fourth Sundays of the month, during the worship service.

If you have any questions, regarding the program or possibly helping, please speak to one of the teachers—Sonja Todd, or Sue Proeber.

If you are not able to have your children attend on Sunday morning, please ask one of the teachers to mail the lessons to you. They will be happy to do it.



Serve the Lord with Gladness

Reporters Wanted

Book review? Personal Story of Faith?
Event report? Potluck-gathering? Party? Field Trip?

Half-page to three pages
Reviewed for scriptural consistency
Due by 25th of month to appear in next issue

Send hardcopy or email to Pastor Proeber—pastor.orldsb@gmail.com

A simple and rewarding way to serve!

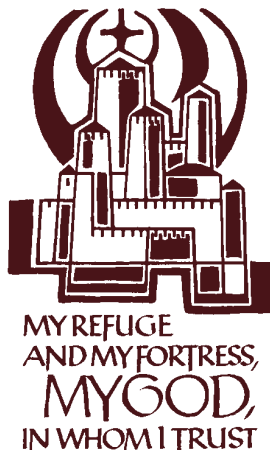
Thanks to Alan Todd for his article this month on the Beach, Bike, Barbeque. There is always a standing invitation to provide thought provoking and encouraging material for the *Reporter*. Throughout the past volumes, articles authored by members have really made every issue more interesting. We pray that every member will consider providing an article in 2021. If you have an idea, or you are not sure whether to act on it, please don't hesitate to speak to Pastor Proeber for advice. Thanks!

Meetings for October

Church Council	October 5th at 7:00 pm
Outreach / Fellowship	October 12th at 7:00 pm.

The Committees will meet following the Council meeting at 8:00 pm.

October 17th - Quarterly Congregational Meeting
The meeting will follow the worship service at 11:00 pm



October 31st - Circuit Reformation Celebration

After a cancellation because of COVID, the Los Angeles Circuit Reformation Service will be held again. The date is October 31st. The time is 4:00 pm. St. Paul's First, North Hollywood will be the host congregation.

There are still some details which are up in

the air. One is the meal. Zion, Torrance, and Prince of Peace, Thousand Oaks, will be serving. However, those plans might change because of restrictions and regulations.

This year we will celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Diet at Worms. Here is where

Luther took his stand on Scripture and his conscience directed by Scripture. In addition to the lessons and messages, there will be the children's choir and mixed voice choir.

Car-pooling will be available if you would like to attend. Please watch for more information.

Devotional Corner

"More Than Fair"

"But he answered one of them, 'Friend, I am not being unfair to you. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the man who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?'" *Matthew 20:13-15*

Some people might argue that God isn't fair. He doesn't punish quickly enough. He doesn't punish severely enough. He even allows bad things to happen to good people. God's fairness is further questioned when it comes to people entering heaven. It doesn't seem fair that some people are excluded. While I might be tempted to think God is unfair, I need to remember the truth which Jesus teaches. God is more than fair.

Jesus' parable of the workers in the field (Matthew 20:1-16) reveals God's goodness and his mercy. The landowner, who is the Lord, graciously calls many to come into his field. Some are there a long time. Others are there only a short time. At the final accounting, the Lord gives everyone what he promised. Unfortunately, the fairness and the generosity of the Lord is called into question.

The landowner's response is critical. "Are you envious because I am generous?" The parable addressed the jealousy of the descendants of Abraham who assumed they deserved more from the Lord. The Lord's answer offers them a completely different perspective, and it becomes a valuable lesson for me when I harbor concerns about the Lord's fairness.

While I may be tempted to think I deserve more from the Lord, I need to start with what I actually deserved. I should have been punished, rejected and separated from God forever. My sin is the reason why God should have turned away from me. God's love, however, brought about a different response. Through the sacrificial work of Jesus, as well as through the substitution of his righteousness for my lack thereof, I am saved. If God would have been fair, none of this would have happened. God would have fairly judged me and sentenced me to eternal punishment.

Through his wonderful love the Lord leads me to rejoice in my rescue and the promise of heaven. It also leads me to rejoice that God offers the same rescue and promise of heaven to all people. He wants all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. This is more than fair. It is grace.

Prayer Thoughts

O gracious Lord, you have poured your grace into my life. Bless me through the work of the Holy Spirit so that I acknowledge your love, rejoice in your love, and daily grow through your love.

Daily devotions can be accessed through www.whataboutjesus.com or www.wels.net. Please follow the instructions to view daily devotions and to subscribe to them. They are also available as "podcasts."

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a pink and white plaid cap, a white t-shirt, and black overalls, is watering a field of large green leafy plants. She is holding a long, light-colored hose that extends across the field. A fine mist of water is being sprayed from the end of the hose, creating a large, fan-shaped cloud of water droplets. The background is filled with dense green foliage and trees. The text is overlaid on the image in various colors and fonts.

**LWMS Goldenwest
Fall Rally**

**“Tending
God’s
Fields”**

–I Cor. 3: 7–9

Rev. Rob Siirila

**October
9th
9 am - 2 pm**

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
6520 N Dapple Gray Rd Las Vegas, NV 89149

**Please speak with Sonja Todd for more information
regarding the Rally.**