



June 2019

## THE SOUND OF SILENCE

As I sit writing this sentence the sound of an airplane flying overhead has caught my attention. They fly overhead so often it can be easy to drown them out, but if you listen you hear them almost all the time. In fact, if you take the time to listen you will realize it is hard in our modern culture, with its technology, smart phones, and gadgets to truly find a place of total silence. Furthermore it can be hard, living in the Puget Sound Region, to find a place of total solitude. Yes, you can drive out to places on the Olympic Peninsula to find silence and solitude, but you have to work at it if you truly want it.



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Why am I mentioning silence and solitude in the first place? Well, I just read an interview entitled "Living as an Apprentice to the Master" by The Navigators in Christian Living with Dallas Willard, who was a professor in the School of Philosophy at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. In the interview he focuses on what it means to stay committed to discipleship, living as Jesus did every day. He specifically talked about silence and solitude as a key to discipleship. This idea was something I had never really thought about before. I want to share a few of the questions and his answers from the interview and I pray they will be beneficial to your Christian walk as they were for me:

### “Q: Why are solitude and silence so basic for discipleship?”

The mind and feelings are transformed through a process of training—which is where the spiritual disciplines come in. They teach us an inner posture of not having to have our way, which relieves us of one of our greatest burdens. Solitude, for example, is a wrenching experience for most people. Solitude is difficult because it exposes the illusion of our self-importance. It can be terribly threatening to be silent, or to not have the last word in a conversation.

Solitude and silence are means of being with God. They form a context for listening and speaking to Him. God will not compete for our attention. God waits us out. He has certain purposes that He's going to accomplish. How do we fit in? What choices will we make about our lives? The tempting choice is to work, work, work, talk, talk, talk.

Solitude and silence train us to let go of thinking we have so much we “have to do”—that's a dangerous phrase. There's very little that I have to do, and those things generally apply to my personal relationships. I realize this by going into solitude and silence.

### Q: What do we focus on during these solitary times?

If we want to be disciples, we should ask Jesus to reveal Himself to us. To see Jesus clearly, we need to fill our souls with the written Gospel. Without the help of the written Gospel, our minds are filled with junk. Our character and actions are confused, befuddled, and dissipated. That's where most people live. They drag into church confused and scattered, hoping to have a rousing service to pump them up and get them through the next week. Then they'll need another charge. The way to redeem this cycle is to give the mind an intensive bath in the Word of God.

Through the written Gospel, Jesus reveals Himself. As we deal with people, we can imitate what we've read and pondered—for example, the striking quality of Jesus' generosity. He gave time and attention to people, whether they were lepers, Roman centurions, or rich Jewish kids who knew everything. He was absolutely generous that way. He didn't have to touch lepers to heal them, but He did. Reflect on scenes like these from the Gospels through journaling, meditation, or talking with a spiritual friend. Put into practice what God gives you in these times. This is how we experience the reality of the Kingdom of God.

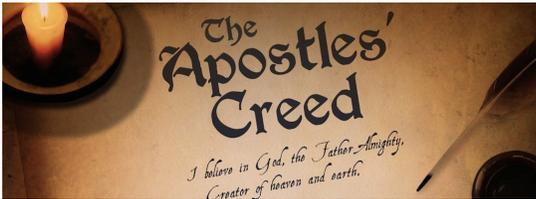
In His Love,  
Pastor Matt

## LCMS STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY JUNE 2019 ARTICLE

Some disciples of John the Baptist were questioning him about the baptism and preaching of Jesus. Many disciples were going to Jesus instead of John the Baptist.

John the Baptist answers: "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven" (John 3:27).

John the Baptist says this to show that Jesus, His teaching, and His baptism are from heaven. God provides everything we have in body and soul.



We are taught this in the meaning of the Apostles' Creed in the *Small Catechism*.

In the First Article of the Creed, we learn that God has made us and everything in the universe.

"He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life. He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him."

In the Second Article of the Creed, we learn that God sent His Son, Jesus, to humble Himself by taking the form of a servant.

In so doing, He "has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity."

In the Third Article of the Creed, we learn that the fruits of what Jesus Christ, the Son of God, did are given to us through the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

"That I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ."

Indeed, "a person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven."



But how easy is this for us to forget? How easy is it for us to think that what we have in life is because we have earned it? How easy is it for us to forget that all our skills – the abilities of our hands and minds, the ethic to work diligently, and the desire to improve – is given to us from heaven, just as John the Baptist said?

How easy is it for us to forget that it is Christ alone, and the work of the Holy Spirit, that reveals His salvation to us, delivers it to us, and that none of this is our doing?

Sure, we have responsibility for coming to church, for delving into God's Holy Word, and for praying without ceasing.

But even these responsibilities are given to us from heaven. These duties are not earned; they are given in response to what He has accomplished for us.

Everything we have, and everything we are – in both body and soul – are gifts from God in heaven.

Let us then respond in thanksgiving and give back to Him as He asks – with a first-fruits, generous proportion offering of what He has given to us.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND WAYS TO SERVE

### **Think 1st Wednesday**

*Resurrection Quilt Ministry* invites all women to help supply many more quilts this coming Wednesday, June 5 at 9:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. in Room 200. **We focus on quilts for Lighthouse Family Ministries in Des Moines and Lutheran World Relief overseas.** *Please join us for constructive camaraderie!* No sewing skills required comfortable tables for tying and sit-down tasks. See you then!



### **Time to Fellowship**

Resurrection family, check your June-July calendar for an opening to provide Fellowship treats, especially nice to welcome visitors. Find the sign-up sheet on a table in the Narthex/Foyer with simple guidelines. **Late service attendees may bring treats marked with selected date, then put in the church freezer.** Thank you!

## I DO AND I DON'T by Steve Gruenwald from Concordia Plan's "Better Health"

# DO & DON'T

When I said "I do" thirty-five years ago, I should also have said "I don't." I have come to realize that back then, I had little knowledge about what this uncharted journey called marriage would involve. On our wedding day, perhaps the following "I do" and "I don't" statements might have been more appropriate.

I do love you; I don't yet comprehend love's strength and capabilities. We have yet to be tested to see if it will withstand the turbulence created by our sinful natures and a sinful world. I pray that our surface love of holding hands and saying "I love you" matures into a Christ-anchored, three stranded cord (Ecclesiastes 4:12) that won't easily be broken, but continually grows stronger each time we reemerge on the other side of life's eventual challenges.

I do want to spend the rest of my life with you; I don't have any idea how it's possible that two unique and sometimes opposite personalities can live together in harmony without our habits irritating one another! Together with God's help, we will work to leave bad habits behind and form positive ones. Thank you in advance for living with my peculiarities. In time as I discover that some of your behaviors aren't so quirky after all, I may like to emulate them, too.

I do honor and support you; I don't know if that will always show if I'm wrapped up in my own self-centeredness. Because of God's forgiveness, please forgive me for those times. During moments when you won't get support, understanding, or forgiveness from others, I'll pray for the strength to be by your side supporting and forgiving you and affirming your worth.

I do commit to being with you for better and for worse; I don't see the "betters" as being a problem, but I also don't have a clue as to how "worse" some situations will be. This earthly life can get ugly and surreal, but thank God for His undeserved forgiveness for you, me and all people. Thank God that He works to make a "better" out of a "worse" situation — even if we don't recognize it.

Through the hindsight lens, ignorance was certainly bliss, and I'm grateful that I didn't have a way to see what was to come — both good and bad. We put our trust in God's hands and see now how He was always in control especially during those times when we felt out of it. Now that we've reached this particular milestone, I don't believe how quickly the years have passed. I do believe, however, that I'm ready for the next 35.



Kairos Prison Ministry  
International

Kairos is a volunteer, lay-led, interdenominational Christian ministry, started in 1976, which consists of three programs: Kairos Inside (Men/Women), Kairos Outside (for families of the incarcerated), and Kairos Torch (to reach incarcerated youth). Kairos Weekends are much like the Walk to Emmaus 3 day retreat weekend, but focused on the special needs of those affected by incarceration.

By sharing the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ, Kairos hopes to change hearts and transform lives. Studies have shown that Kairos helps reduce recidivism, improve the prison environment, make communities safer, reunite and heal family and relatives, and create positive and productive members of society.

A common misconception is that in order to volunteer with Kairos, one must enter a prison. For those who feel a calling but are not able to assist in that capacity, there are **many** other options that are just as rewarding. Here are just a few:

- Be a prayer partner every Tuesday at 1:30 pm EST. Be a part of a prayer chain for our weekends to show attendees how much they are loved by people all over the world.
- Be a support volunteer. Opportunities include preparing meals or helping with fundraising.
- Create Agape. This includes artwork posted on walls of the community room for the participants to read throughout the Weekend. Signed placemats for meals and posters made by children (first name and age only) are also especially treasured by prisoners.
- Be a cookie baker. Some Weekends require thousands of cookies, at least a dozen for every inmate and staff. We're talking 20,000 cookies! May God bless you for the gift of baking!
- Be a ministry financial donor. If you would like to support this ministry, make your check payable to Kairos Prison Ministry International and send it to our office address, or make a donation online at [www.kairosprisonministry.org](http://www.kairosprisonministry.org)
- Be a team member.



## CONFIDENCE THUS FAR by David Graves



As we work toward wrapping up our series Resurrection Confidence, I thought I would share with you an article from a classmate of mine from Concordia Seminary, David Graves, written on November 16, 2018, but is very appropriate for us today. He posts, along with a few other classmates of mine on a website called The Unbroken Cord. Here is their website if interested in further readings [www.theunbrokencord.com](http://www.theunbrokencord.com)

I don't know where I would be without close friends that I trust. If it wasn't for a place and a person to confide in and trust I would be lost. Recent events drove me into a place of rather deep sorrow—and I found myself in need of a person and a place to embrace me by the grace of God. The darkness crept in and rather than bottling it up I called a pastor who I was confident I could trust. He answered as he always does not acting as if I was wasting his time. He listened and responded in the way a truly good pastor does by bringing the penitent—the broken and the lost—to the gospel. I expressed my struggle which enveloped me in feelings of worthlessness, loneliness, and anxiety. Through it all he led me and reminded me to see who I was in Christ. Despite all of my failings it is Christ who has redeemed me and called me. That healing is something I can receive at the push of a button, not only with a loyal friend who spoke to me that day, and another close pastor who called that night, but a whole variety of good Christians who are ready and willing to listen. Yet how confident are you that when the darkness comes in that you can make that same call?

My friend showed me that I was having a crisis of confidence. I was confident in him, but I was less confident in God's grace. I was confident a friend would listen; I trusted that a friend would listen because he has for years. Yet my worry was my place with God that somehow I was too much in the darkness for the one whom the scriptures call light. As a pastor I know that is not true, not in the slightest, yet that is how it felt. We have all been there at one time or another, life isn't perfect and we can despair and lose perspective. That phone call, that brother, and the other brothers who I speak with always bring me back to the cross and the risen Jesus. They always comfort me with what I need.

The gift of community in this way is so important for the church, do you realize that you also have that gift? It's true, we each have that gift. We each have that person. Scripturally speaking, if you are in the Church this is guaranteed. In the Church you are to have a pastor who you can trust, who you can confess with, who is ready to listen to you. In the Church you are to have brothers and sisters there in the community willing and ready to embrace you—darkness and all. Yet that confidence that we can simply press that button and it will all be okay is easier said than done. My hope is we can begin to encourage our churches to be more who they are meant to be rather than more of what we've become.

We are not effectively being the body of Christ, the community of the wounded and lost, when our members are no longer confident that they can approach their brothers and sisters let alone their pastor with the struggles they face. More and more I hear from hurting people outside the Church that the Church is not a place they can bring their brokenness. Certainly that is far from the truth—this why we exist after all—yet there are various examples where the Church has unfortunately fallen short of its call to pastoral care.

Walking through the darkness together is a big reason why we are here for the world, so that it may see the light of Christ, that those who suffer with physical, mental, or emotional pain may come to receive the gift of grace and the promise of peace. That is the amazing truth of the cross, that Jesus suffered and knows our suffering now. He did that for you, and in that place of anguish he is right there beside you. You can be confident in that good news because he is living now and the land of the living is the place to where he is leading you, no matter how hopeless life may seem.

Now more than ever confidence is something the Church needs. The confidence to be who we are without every little ripple making a big wave. We need the confidence to not be shaken with every minutiae of liturgical practice or online bravado. We also should not settle for the Church to be a country club where boards and events take the place of the gospel and real healing. That is a cheap and expendable entity if that is what we have truly become. Perhaps that is why so many have left, why so many are searching and placing their confidence somewhere else. We cannot afford anymore to settle as a cultural institution rather than the visible presence of God on earth. This is not a matter of institutional pride and preservation; it is a matter of hope and despair, of life and death.

Consider what St. Paul tells us about confidence in 2 Corinthians 3:4-6, "Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."

We are wounded, we are not superior to anyone else, for that we have confidence in Christ because we have been crucified with him and now are being made alive in the resurrection of Jesus. For that reason also we ought to be confident in one another, since each of us who have been baptized are given that same confidence and that same vocation to care for the wounded and hurting that need the confidence that Jesus gives. The confidence to face life, the confidence to have hope, the confidence to embrace one another with joy and know that there is a light that outshines the darkness. When we can finally be confident in that, in Christ and in the people he gives to us, the community of believers will once again find itself and the world may just get a little brighter.

## LESSONS LEARNED IN THE GARDEN by Melina Mantey

If you follow me on Facebook, you will notice 97% of my posts are about my garden or gardening in general. (The other 3% are of my furry, four-legged children.) And as someone who has largely learned through trial and error when it comes to gardening, I thought I would share some of what I have learned when it comes to some of the top things we all deal with every year. Whether your garden is big or small, has beds or is just pots, I am sure you can relate to at least one of these things.



### Rodents

I have had an increasing squirrel and rodent problem in my garden for the past few years, and have often found myself googling ways I can stop them from digging up my newly planted flowers and bulbs. While there are many different ideas and trains of thought out there, here are the two things I have found to actually make a difference.

1. Chili powder or cayenne pepper—sprinkle it around your flowers, veggie beds, herb pots, etc. It will not harm your plants, but it will discourage the local rodent population from digging up your beautiful garden.
2. Netting—you will often see this referred to as “bird netting” on Amazon or in your local hardware store, but it works for rodents as well. Just get some garden “staples” and lay the netting around your plants or in your pots, and the rodents can’t touch them. I usually leave this in my pots until things have grown in, and in my garden beds until the ground around my new plant has settled and is therefore not so easily dug-up.

### Watering



Watering can often feel like a full-time job. Especially when we are seeing 80 degree weather for 10 days straight in our weather apps. I realized pretty quickly my garden would not be sustainable if I kept watering by hand, unless I was fine with never eating dinner. So, I went out and invested in soaker hoses. I use the MiracleGro brand, but any of them should be fine. Lay them out around your flowers, and use the same garden staples mentioned above to hold them in place. I recommend covering them with mulch to help keep the moisture in. This will pare down on your watering time immensely. I even went so far last year as to set them up on timers, so I don’t even have to worry about turning them on and off. (Life-changing!)

I also recommend getting some self-watering stakes for your flower and herb pots. They keep the watering down to just once (or twice during the really hot season) a week. Make sure you soak the pot first, then fill the self-watering stake and stick it in. I like the plastic globe ones, or the clay one that you stick a beer or wine bottle in. They saved my pots last summer.

### Other Garden Pests (Aphids, Whiteflies, Thrips, etc)



I struggle with these every year! Who doesn’t? (If you don’t, you are one of the few and lucky ones!) Here are the 3 things I highly recommend:

1. Neem Oil—this is organic and safe to use on your veggies and herbs. You should use it two ways: Spray it on your plants, and water the soil with it. That way you get any and all of them.
2. Yellow Sticky Traps—You can buy these on Amazon for super cheap, and they attract and catch all of these little buggers. Put them up around your garden, and it should help prevent them from going after your beautiful plants, and tasty veggies and herbs.
3. Sweet Alyssum—This stuff is cheap and easily found at any hardware store or nursery this time of year. It comes in 3 or 6 packs, and smells amazing. It also happens to attract a certain bug that eats aphids. (I don’t know which one.) Therefore the aphids avoid anywhere it is planted. It has made the BIGGEST difference in my pots (especially the ones with annuals—petunias, calibrachoa, geraniums, etc.) the past couple of years, so I finally wised up and planted it in with my veggies this year. Bees love it too, so great for pollination. It blooms well into October, and is considered a tender perennial, so it may come back next year.

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As we enter into the month of June, and leave May behind us, we also wrap up Mental Health Awareness Month. I have noticed the idea of “Garden Therapy” or “Dirt Therapy” is becoming a more common and accepted way to work through mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, and PTSD. There are many reasons why, and they will be different for each person; but I can tell you it works. My garden has saved my life in many ways, so even if you consider yourself a “black-thumb” gardener or you feel overwhelmed by the “where to start” aspect of gardening, I encourage you to plant a pot this year, grow some herbs, or maybe even a tomato plant! There is so much healing to be found outside in the beauty that God created; and there are so many colors, textures, shapes, and sizes to play around and have fun with. It’s incredible the pallet of plants God gave us to paint our lives with, and the many ways in which He offers healing for our mind, soul, and body.