

LIFELINES

of

LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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What You Should Be Thinking About

We live in an age with so many distractions. Each of us has enough going on in our lives to consume ourselves with nothing but the here and now; the day to day. We can spend all our time concerned about work and success, family and country, health and safety, or the endless pursuit of pleasure and material goods. There are enough concerns like this in our everyday lives to distract us from ever pondering heavenly matters. Unless we are intentional about it, we can float our way through life without ever giving a moment's thought to our Lord and what He has done and will do.

This is true for many unreligious people who are not so much hostile toward God as they are apathetic and distracted. They never ask the deep questions about life like: Where did we come from? Why are we here? How should we live? What will happen when we die? They may have some vague ideas about these questions, but they aren't concerned enough about them to face them head on. Instead, they tell themselves that they will deal with them some other time when they aren't so busy and in the meantime, they turn on the TV and forget about it.

Christians are not immune from this problem. All those same daily distractions can lull us into a way of thinking that sees this world as all there is or all that matters. For this reason, the Apostle Paul when writing to the Christians at Colossae, told them what they should be thinking about.

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, [i.e. baptized, see: Col. 2:12] set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.” Colossians 3:1-4



Paul says those who are baptized and now united to Christ, are to set our hearts and our minds on things above where Christ is. He explains that Christians may look like everyone else in this world, but in reality, our true lives are hidden away with Christ –kept for safe keeping. We await His appearing and when He comes in glory, then our new and glorified existence will also be evident. And in the meantime, our hopes and our thoughts should be about higher, heavenly matters as opposed to only earthly things.

How do we set our hearts and our minds on things above? This isn't something that automatically happens. We need to be intentional about it, otherwise, the worldly distractions consume our attention. But once we have determined we will set our minds on things above, we can do so by reading God's Word and pondering the truths it reveals. We can do this daily in our own private devotion and prayer, but also, we should do this with fellow believers, each and every week as the Lord commanded. Part of the purpose of the Sabbath was to intentionally interrupt the week in order to give you rest, but also to distract you from your work and all the things that keep us from pondering our God and our place before Him. Sanctifying the day meant a weekly opportunity to set one's heart and mind on things above.

In these strange and hectic days in which so much competes for our attention, be sure to ponder Christ your Lord who is seated at the right hand of the Father. Lift your thoughts high above the things of this world with all its problems and imperfections and instead, hope in the One who was, and is, and is to come.

Peace,
PrS



prepare for worship in July

Sunday, July 5: Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Zech. 9:9-12; Rom. 7:1-14; Matt. 11:25-30

Hymn of the Day: "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say,"
699

Sunday, July 12: Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Isa. 55:10-13; Rom. 8:12-17; Matt. 13:1-9,
18-23

Hymn of the Day: "Almighty God, Your Word is
Cast," 577

Sunday, July 19: Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Isa. 44:6-8; Rom. 8:18-27; Matt. 13:24-30,
36-43

Hymn of the Day: "In Holy Conversation," 772

Sunday, July 26: Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Deut. 7:6-9; Rom. 8:28-39; Matt. 13:44-52

Hymn of the Day: "From God Can Nothing Move
Me," 713

Lord of Life Small Groups

EMPTY NESTERS' CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Mike and Sandra Paradise at (972) 424-2951 or itsparadise.inplano@verizon.net
- † Usually meet one Sat. a month at 2:30 PM

EPIC PARENTING

- † For 30ish couples with kids
- † For info contact Ben Scarth BenjaminScarth@yahoo.com
- † Usually meet one Sunday a month in the afternoon or evening

FRUITS OF THE VINE CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Scott Peters at 972-898-3351 cell or speters@planolutheran.com
- † Usually meet one Sun. a month at 5:30 PM

GOOD NEWS CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Chris Oltmann at (972) 727-6330 or Mike Kunschke at (847) 951-6974
- † Usually meet the 2nd Sat. of each month at 6:30 PM for Bible study

MIXED BLESSINGS

- † For info contact Fred and Ruth Bernhardt at (972) 398-0771
- † Usually meet one Sat. a month at 6:30 PM

TWENTY SOMETHINGS

- † For couples and singles in their twenties
- † For info contact Pastor Shaltanis at PastorShaltanis@yahoo.com
- † The group is currently in transition, but has usually met on Sundays after late service



No New Medicine

I receive several devotions throughout the week and this one caught my attention! This devotion is from Lutheran Hour Ministries June 5, 2020.

*Tom Read
Board of Elders*

1 John 1:7 - But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

The records of any church more than one hundred years old will tell you that influenza can be a nasty beast.

If you are a member of such a church, I encourage you to take a quick look at its official records. Beginning with the year 1910, look at the section marked "Deaths." Without sitting by your side, I can tell you what you will find. In 1910, people died from all kinds of diseases and accidents. The same was true in 1911, 1912, and 1913. But when you reach the year 1918, things change. In the Deaths column, you will see one word written over and over again. That word is "influenza." In 1918, the world was brought low by an influenza strain of catastrophic potency: the H1N1 virus. It impacted some 300 to 500 million people and left behind a death toll of somewhere between 30 to 60 million people worldwide.

Scientists say killing strains of the flu like that of 1918 don't happen often, but when they do happen, "Brother, watch out!" Watching out is exactly what the world was doing in 2007 when the "bird-flu," the H5N1 virus, began to rear its ugly head. If that strain of influenza virus began to spread like pandemic flu do, big trouble was on the horizon. It could have been 1918 all over again.

This likely explains why so many people were pleased backed in 2007 when researchers said there was hope. They believed it was possible to stockpile bird-flu antibodies. If they were right, and the stockpiling worked, millions of lives might be saved.

Of course, this begs the question: "Where would we get bird-flu antibodies?" Science once again provided the answer. We can get those antibodies from the blood of people who caught the illness and survived. In short, others may live because of the blood of someone who has defeated death.

The idea of being saved by someone else's blood isn't a new idea. God said the same thing when He inspired the apostle John to write, "the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin." St. Paul agreed when he wrote, "In Him (Jesus) we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1:7).

Because of Jesus' shed blood on Calvary's cross, we too can be washed of our sins. We are saved by the death-defeating, life-giving blood of Jesus—a spiritual cure promised and delivered by God Himself.

THE PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I give thanks that I have been washed of my sin by Your holy precious blood. In Your Name. Amen.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does the blood of Jesus cleanse anyone from sin?
2. What does walking in the light look like for you?
3. How do you stay mindful each day of Jesus' blood sacrifice for you? Does it impact your thinking in any kind of deep and consistent way



Teen Times

It appears that we are going to be dealing with this COVID-19 pandemic for quite some time. That changes things for tweens and teens who are used to going places, seeing new things, meeting new people, and experiencing things that only the summer months can provide. Honestly, I feel just as deprived as you do. I was looking forward to Higher Things in Colorado this year, but it wasn't meant to be. I was looking forward to some type of extended vacation with my wife, but things are different and we have had to adjust. She and I often find ourselves searching for an original movie or a new series on the TV streaming services to binge watch. It is no surprise that there has been an increase in streaming service subscription over the last few months. Netflix, Disney Plus, Amazon Prime, and Hulu are becoming a normal part of most people's lives now, but there are things to be aware of. Not all of the content is peaches and cream that's available for young minds to absorb on TV.

I receive a weekly email newsletter called "The Culture Translator" from The AXIS Team; a Christian organization that informs parents and youth leaders of the popular trends happening in the world of teenagers. They share information on TV, movies, video games, music, social media, and more. Last week, a segment of their newsletter focused on the popular shows that teens are watching on Netflix. They said:

"The three most populous states (Texas, California, and Florida) recorded outbreaks in Coronavirus cases this week, leading many experts to warn of "apocalyptic" surges in the virus. In California, COVID-19 is spreading through private home gatherings, and suddenly more young people are testing positive. If these trends continue, the U.S. is well on its way to a second round of stay-at-home orders. Instead of pool parties and sleepovers, your teen's summer might be filled by streaming the latest, if not greatest, shows on Netflix. Here are six shows sure to capture their attention as the summer doldrums set in.

1. *Outer Banks*: Set on North Carolina's Outer Banks, this cringe-worthy mash-up of *Dawson's Creek* and *The Goonies* isn't going to win any Emmys, but that won't stop teens from bingeing it. The show depicts a crew of working-class teens searching for an ancient, shipwrecked treasure on the sun-soaked coast.
2. *Legacies*: The second spin-off from *The Vampire Diaries* focuses on Hope Mikaelson, a werewolf-witch-vampire hybrid that battles monsters all while growing up, falling in love, and dealing with acne. You know, just normal, everyday teenager things.
3. *Blood and Water*: Already on Netflix's top 10 most-streamed shows in the U.S., France, and the U.K., this mysterious drama follows a crew of scheming teens in a wealthy South African prep school as they seek the real connection between two rival classmates. Timely conversations about race, human trafficking, and class privilege make this show especially poignant this summer.
4. *The Inbetweeners*: Although this raunchy British sitcom released in the U.K. several years ago, it's finding a new audience among American teens, thanks to Netflix. A painful take on toxic teen

masculinity and sexual insecurities, the show is a comedic attempt to highlight high school issues like binge-drinking, skipping school, and bullying.

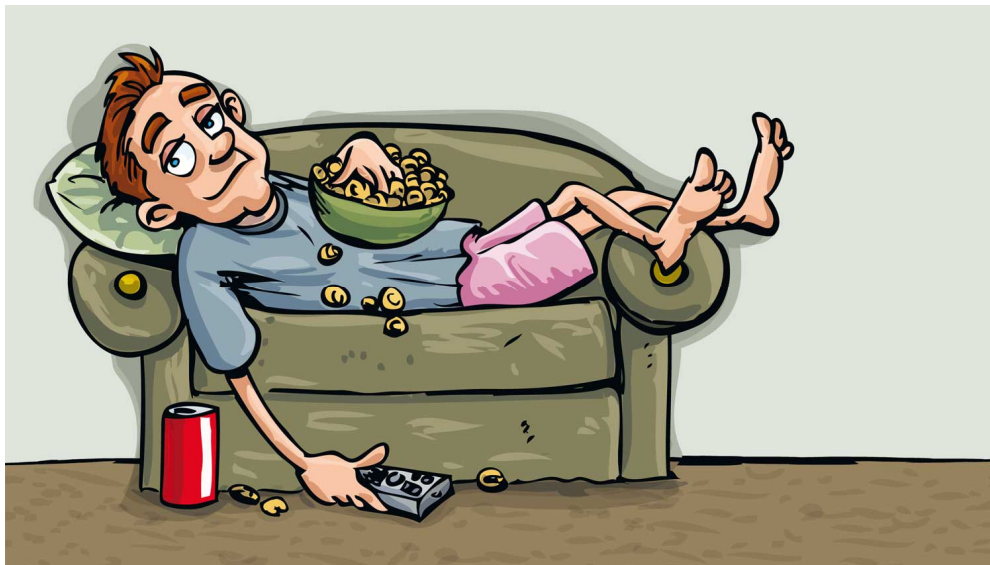
5. *The Kissing Booth (season 2): Releasing on July 24, Elle Evans juggles her long-distance relationship with bad boyfriend Noah (played by Jacob Elordi) as he heads off to Harvard in this romantic sequel to the wildly popular teen drama. Although it is rated TV-14, scenes of sexual assault and sexuality highlight this story of a young girl's first taste of love. Accordingly, the mantra that romantic love is synonymous with sexual expression is the key theme most teens will learn from this series.*
6. *Warrior Nun: Inspired by the Areala manga novels, this ten episode supernatural series hits Netflix July 2 and centers on an orphaned teen girl who wakes up in a morgue with superpowers, only to be recruited into an elite society of demon-fighting nuns."*

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In times like these it would be prudent to ask your teens about the things they are watching on TV or social media, or what games they are playing online. Talk to them and find out why they like them or what makes them so popular. Now more than ever, we need to be working to keep the spiritual well-being of our young people intact. We may be facing more time at home with our families, and maybe instead of binge watching the latest high school rom-com, we could do a little daily binge into the Word of God. I must say that one thing I dearly miss is seeing all of the Lord of Life youth on Sundays for Bible class in person. It will be a very joyful day for me when this pandemic has passed and we are all together again. Until next time, I will leave you with the tag line that The AXIS Team uses at the end of the email newsletter;

KEEP THE FAITH!

Scott Peters





JULY

Birthdays & Anniversaries

| | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Don Bunger | 13 Sandy Ehrett | 19 Noah Ziegelbein |
| 2 Ana Scarth | 13 Carter Bunger | 20 Don Padgett |
| 2 Emily Scarth | 13 Ethan Hacker | 20 Magdalena Shaltanis |
| 3 Nelda Schrank | 13 Garrett Hacker | 23 Charlie & Lynda Abbott (54) |
| 5 Mike Phelan | 13 Jason & Sarah Sowers (7) | 24 Jonelle Peters |
| 7 Joe Bob Isbell | 14 Carol Nance | 24 Matt Sims |
| 7 Sylvia Rippey | 17 Annie Joseph | 26 David Armstrong |
| 8 Emma Padgett | 17 Becky Padgett | 26 John Frinsko |
| 10 Brooks Smith | 17 Ben & Melanie Scarth (10) | 26 Winona Parish |
| 12 Donovan Cawood | 18 Katherine Plagens | 29 Phil & Candace Klein (31) |
| 12 Susan Grabow | 19 Carolyn Moudy | 30 Kenneth Tabor |
| | 19 Emma Ziegelbein | 30 Charles & Dixie Hacker (26) |

SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

5 Months Ending May 2020

| | Y-T-D Operating Funds | Y-T-D Budget | Variance | Jan-Dec 20 Budget |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Contributions | | | | |
| Regular Offerings | \$221,787 | \$244,203 | (\$22,416) | 586,549 |
| Other | \$489 | \$0 | \$489 | 0 |
| Total Income | <u>\$222,276</u> | <u>\$244,203</u> | <u>(\$21,927)</u> | <u>586,549</u> |
| Expenses | | | | |
| Operating Expenses | \$210,128 | \$233,321 | (\$23,193) | \$552,379 |
| Mortgage (P&I) | \$20,594 | \$14,205 | \$6,389 | \$34,092 |
| Total Expenses | <u>\$230,722</u> | <u>\$247,526</u> | <u>(\$16,804)</u> | <u>\$586,471</u> |
| Surplus or (Deficit) | (\$8,446) | (\$3,324) | (\$5,122) | \$78 |
| Other Information: | | | | |
| Operating Fund Balance | \$89,305 | | | |
| Restricted Funds Balance | \$131,846 | | | |
| Building Loan Balance | \$210,443 | | | |