



Pastor's Message—*Pastor Noah Bater*

For Better or for Worse

I hate to admit it but my wife has turned me into a reality T.V. junkie. It's sad how entertaining others' stupidity can be. One show that I've recently been sucked into is based on the life of former rock star Gene Simmons. Like most celebrities, Gene is living the dream. He has more money than he knows what to do with; lives in a huge mansion; and travels the world promoting his name and brand. However, there is something that makes Gene different than most celebrities: he's never been married. Not because he could never find the right gal—he's found plenty of them. Nor does he fear the commitment (so he says). The reason Gene Simmons has never been married is because he simply doesn't believe in it. He describes marriage as *"an institution, and you must be fully committed to it. That sounds crazy to me."* Using words like *"institution"* *"committed"* and *"crazy"* to describe marriage is this rock star's uncanny way of claiming that marriage isn't for him, nor is it a good idea for any sane person.

Despite the inept philosophy of Gene Simmons, getting married doesn't make you "fit for a straight jacket." On the contrary, God's Word sheds endless light on the blessings of marriage and, in particular, a Christian marriage. And yet, similar to every other blessing mentioned in the Bible, the blessings of marriage are never divorced from their crosses. Even the greatest blessing we have--God's grace and forgiveness in Christ--does not come apart from our Savior suffering a cross to achieve it. So what crosses exist in your marriage? And when, if ever, are you relieved from bearing them?



First things first, it is necessary to remember that God ordained marriage. Gene Simmons did have one thing right about marriage: it's an institution. God's institution. Think about that for a moment. And then think about it again. Then open your Bible and read through the first chapter of Genesis. Notice all the times during the creation process that God describes his creative work as *"good."* Like a broken record, he repeats it again and again. God saw that the light was *"good"* (v. 4). The separation of land and sea was *"good"* (v. 10). The vegetation, sun, moon, stars, birds, fish and livestock were all *"good."* And when the almighty Creator, the everlasting God calls something *"good,"* it's nothing short of perfection.

But then, like a speed bump in the middle of I-15, God calls something *"not good."* Do you remember what it is? *"The LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable helper for him'"* (2:18). Again, I would ask you to ponder that for a moment. In God's eyes, the only thing his near-perfect creation was missing was marriage. And after taking one of the man's ribs to create his suitable helper, the two *"became one flesh"* (2:24). Finally, God's creative work was done. And *"God saw all that he had made and it was very good"* (1:31).

If God's instituting marriage isn't enough to give it divine credibility, the Bible tells us even more. Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to a wedding banquet (Matthew 22). Anticipating Jesus' return on the Last Day is likened to a group of virgins waiting for the Bridegroom's arrival to take them into the wedding feast. By no mere coincidence (since those don't exist in Scripture), Jesus' first miracle during his earthly ministry was performed at a wedding reception. An entire book of the Bible, Song of Songs, is dedicated to the joy of wedded bliss. And in arguably one of the most comforting and beautiful sections of Scripture, the marriage of a husband and wife is given the honor of portraying the relationship between the perfect Bridegroom, Christ, and his Bride, the Church.

Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, (continued on top of page 2)



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and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— for we are members of his body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."

(Ephesians 5:22-31)

A husband and wife become one flesh because the heavenly Bridegroom Jesus and his Bride, the Christian Church, are united as one body. Eve was created from the rib of Adam because every Christian is a member of Christ's body. God wants the blessings and relationship of a marriage to continue "till death do us part" because the blessings and relationship between Christ and his Church have no end.

But if marriage was created in heaven, then why does mine so often seem like a living hell? Hopefully by now, you see that the fault doesn't lie with the institution of marriage. Nor does it lie with the holy Creator who instituted it. Sadly, then, that leaves only one answer. The reason suffering exists in marriage is because of the sinful people who enter it.

Every marriage contains crosses. Whether it's lying or addiction, jealousy or immaturity, a sharp tongue or neglect, every marriage contains crosses to bear. While the weight of these crosses are never easy to carry, they do not give us reason to lay them down. Rather, they are reasons for self-examination. They are reasons for confession and for prayer and recommitment. They are reasons for faith and forgiveness, patience and love.

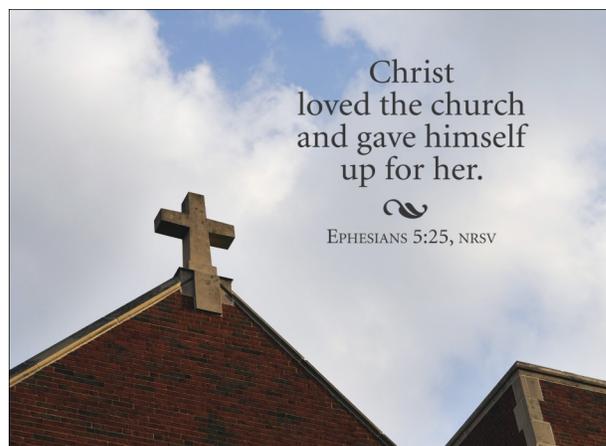
I understand that this makes fixing a marriage sound easier than it really is. But it really is that easy. What kind of hoops, counseling, fighting, bargaining, or frustration does Jesus make you go through when you sin against him? We confess, "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner." And his mercy never fails. We cry out, "Hasten to save me, O God." And "O Lord, come quickly to help me!" And our Lord is not slow in his response—he hastens, he saves, he helps us by pointing us to the cross he refused to lay down. Simply because his love for his Bride wouldn't let him.

If this is the relationship our heavenly Bridegroom has with us—even when we repeatedly sin against him-- this is the relationship he commands exist between a

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husband and wife. You continue to bear your heavy marital crosses and love your spouse—even when they sin against you—for no other reason than, "*Because [God] first loved us*" (1 John 4:19). In dealing with your spouse, God expects you to "*Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgive each other, just as in Christ God forgave you*" (Ephesians 4:32). And "*Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins*" (1 Peter 4:8).

The crosses you and your spouse's sins put on marriage are not reasons for divorce. They are reasons for kindness, compassion and forgiveness. They are opportunities to show deep love and concern for one another. It takes Spirit-driven self-control through the Word of Christ and his everlasting patience to bring us to say no to sin and yes to the guidelines he gives us for a happy and successful marriage. By holding the perfect marriage of Christ to his Church before my and my spouse's eyes, we have the perfect reason to continue carrying our marital crosses whatever or whomever they may be for better or for worse.



President—*Eric Myers*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

There is no place like home. I recently returned from a long vacation in the Midwest. While seeing friends and family is great; there is no place like home.

I had a chance to visit a small town congregation as well as a very large, metropolitan congregation and talk with many people in each of those churches. Certainly each organization, just as Prince of Peace, has their own set of issues. Whether it is dealing with an aging congregation or how to connect all the demographic groups, there are challenges. The more I compare Prince of Peace to our sister congregations across the WELS, I am

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encouraged by the unique circumstances the Lord as placed in front of us. As the new fiscal year has started and a new school year is around the corner, we have the opportunity build on so much momentum that has been created in the last couple of years. We have a stable, dedicated staff; a beautiful, centrally located facility; members willing to work; and most importantly, the Lord's promise to be with us in all that we do.

I don't think we can set our goals too high. I challenge the members and the leaders of this congregation to do all we can to increase the number of souls the Lord can influence through our work.

After all, there is no place like home – the real home that the Lord provides for us at the end of this life. Let's do what we can to help fill up that house.

In Christ,

Eric Myers, Chairman

801-821-0355

Trustees—*Kent Carbon, Chairman*



School Cleaning Day

Saturday, August 13th

9am start!

School families (and anyone else) are invited to come and get the school and classrooms ready for a new year! We will focus mostly on cleaning the classroom carpets, but hope to be able to do any other cleaning that is needed as well that Saturday.

Fellowship—*Darrell Koptin, Chairman*

Interested in Fellowship Activities?



Join us after late service

Sunday, August 7th

for light snacks & a suggestion sheet for your ideas!

Spiritual Welfare Board—*Larry Steinbach*

Have you ever wondered why life is so up and down? It seems like an emotional roller coaster. Well, it isn't because God wants to



keep us guessing. No, as we already know from the dawn of time when Adam and Eve munched on the forbidden fruit, there are things in life that just don't turn out as we had hoped. It seems just when things are going well it all turns to crapola.

We think at times that we should not have these ups and downs. Why does this stuff happen to me, I don't deserve it! Problem is we deserve not only IT, but a lot more. If it was not for our loving God, our Maker and Redeemer, we would be in so deep that we would be buried alive right this minute. But God keeps death at bay just long enough for us to hear and understand his plan for our salvation. He gives us every chance to know our sin, not just those we commit daily, but those original sins we inherited from our first parents in the Garden of Eden. I hear it was a really nice place, but we humans of God's creation screwed that up and Eden faded into Biblical and earth history.

So, here we are struggling with day-to-day life trying to figure out why we are on this roller coaster of life. With days when everything seems to be going well only to be followed by disappointment, failure and a heart heavy with sin, you are not alone. We are all in that same boat. But we, as Christians saved by the blood of Christ, need not let the burden of sin weighing so heavy on our shoulders overcome us. We have reassurance from Christ himself when He says "Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver you and you will glorify me".

That is a humbling revelation to sin burdened Christians. And it isn't just for those real heavy times either. Losing a loved one, a job or facing an uncertain future can be cause enough. Take your cares to Jesus and you will gain spiritual and emotional relief from God's Word. But even for lesser fears or occasional guilt trip about what may be typical day-to-day challenges. Isn't our sin always causing us to not see clearly and to question why? Take those single, routine, or even simple troubles and place them at your Savior's feet. A real good place is at the Communion Rail and often. Yes that means you. Oh, OK that means me too. That means all of us. I'll make one more comment on this subject as a voice of experience. Yes I am a sinner and no, I am not proud of it. But this I know, just like you have and I heard before, I am PERFECT in God's sight and you can't get any better than that. Praise God and take all your cares to Him today and tomorrow and as long as you live. You might just be surprised how life get just a bit easier to take.

Principal's Update—Jeff Sell

Discovery Camp/VBS—The Lord blessed our Discovery Camp/VBS this year with 53 children eager to learn new things and be taught the Gospel message. Countless thanks go out for those people who volunteered many hours preparing crafts, planning workshops, prepping lessons, distributing fliers, telling friends etc. What a privilege to have so many faithful brothers and sisters in Christ to be able to share the joy of serving Christ in various ways. As an encouragement to those who gave of their time—one family that sent a child to our VBS ended up enrolling that child in our school. To God be the Glory!



A quote from my July's portion of the newsletter:

“Although we are currently falling short on funds, we look toward the future and pray that the Lord would continue to open the floodgates and move more families to make use of our school so we can share the sweetness of being 100% forgiven”

School Enrollment Update— The quote in the box was from a month ago when we had about 43 children enrolled for the 2011-2012 school year in grades K-8. As of today, there are 55 children whose parents have committed to sending their children in the fall! I anticipate that we will likely have a cap and a waiting list by mid-August with enrollment around 60. As a point of reference, last year (2010-2011) we had 34 students in K-8 at the end of the year. The most we have ever had in those grades was 48 back in 2008-2009 and the average since the school opened is 34. I have provided some graphs to help you see the tremendous blessing the Lord has graciously provided. Obviously, with this many students, the finances are looking much better than they were in June. Are we able to pay for all the staff and supplies with just tuition? No. However, many of the financial restrictions we placed upon ourselves at the last voters' meeting are slated to be lifted. I would encourage you to take a moment to thank the Lord of the universe for His unwavering faithfulness and abundant love and for the ability to share the Word with so many families.

