



HISTORY INTEGRITY TRUTH SCRIPTURE

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September 2021 Newsletter History and Lip Service

Compare these two statements. "That's just an outdated document that isn't relevant to us today. The founders of the American Constitution couldn't imagine what things would be like now." And another one. "Wouldn't it be nice if there were a way that fathers, not just mothers, of unexpected children could be required to take some responsibility?"

These are both statements I've seen and heard from some of the more



progressive members of our society. Why did I choose them for this article? Really, take a moment and let the question sink in. Think about the implications of the two statements, together.

Chapter seven of Mark's Gospel speaks of the Pharisees and scribes who held very firmly to their ceremonial traditions, particularly about means of washing. Yet Jesus confronted the Pharisees because they were holding to their traditions but breaking specific commands of God.



The traditions were hundreds of years old. So were the commands of God. Jesus didn't reject the traditions because they were bad or old, but because their application was in contradiction to God's Word. There's nothing wrong with having a ceremonial washing of the hands before eating, or even doing something which symbolically purifies the furnishings or the house. Absolutely nothing wrong with it.

I'm interested in an Irish custom in which people would wish God's peace on all in the house when entering. It is not a custom you find specifically in the Bible, but it is one which, especially if done in truth, would be good for everyone. But if it's just words without meaning, you might as well ask about the price of duck eggs in Thailand or something else that you aren't particularly interested in (No offense meant to people who buy or sell eggs in Thailand.).

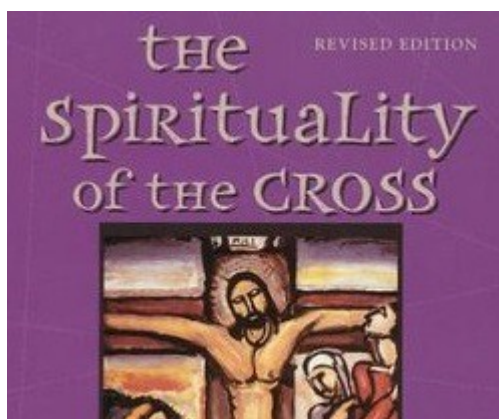
Some of our customs are really, really important. One of them, mentioned above, involves the way law works in the United States. There are certain restrictions placed upon both the

government and the people, drawing boundaries which can be defined clearly. If there are parts which become irrelevant for any reason, including the passage of time, there are ways to change the document. It's been done a number of times. There's a reason we don't scrap tradition.

That's what we see in the second example above. The one that is easily dealt with if we consider marriage a lifelong binding covenant which bears legal authority to force both husband and wife to care for any children they might have. Granted, it hasn't always been followed very well, but even if it were fatally flawed, the results of disposing of a historic view of natural marriage have been very harmful to many people.

Christianity deals with this difficulty by embracing the importance of history. Christianity is a historic faith, developed in real communities consisting of real people who engaged in real occupations, earned and lost real money, and cared for the next generation of real children. Throughout the historic development of Christian doctrine, people were dealing with real problems. And they tried to learn from the generations that came before them.

Do Christians seem to have ready answers for questions? Sometimes it's because those questions have been asked by many generations in the past. Sometimes it's because we debated something for a few hundred years, came up with a correct answer, and settled on it way back when. It may still be exactly the right answer.



What's our custom? We've got some. We are just about ready to start a study of Dr. Gene Edward Veith's book, *The Spirituality of the Cross* (Revised Edition, 2010, Concordia Publishing House). Everyone's invited to the 9:00 Adult Bible Class time at Good Shepherd. We'll also be starting the same discussion on Wednesday evenings at 5:30 at the Heidelberg, on 9th Street in Columbia. I have a number of copies available for \$15 each.

This is a great chance to invite friends, including friends who don't know much about Jesus, to explore with us the way Christianity has been understood over the last 500 years in the Lutheran Reformation. As Christians, we strive to live out our understanding of the Gospel in the context of the local church. Let's explore together!

What Else Does a Campus Pastor Do??

The calendar's getting pretty full! This is a blessing, as during 2020 and the first half of 2021 we curtailed activities very severely due to the pandemic.

You'll notice on our calendar that there are a number of Stephens Stars volleyball games! Not only is this a good opportunity for a little fun, but we're working on offering study and prayer gatherings for those athletes and other supporters who are interested.

The Eucharist and the Liturgy
 Eucharist
 Reading the New Testament
 This is My Body
 Early Christian Doctrines
 The Eucharist: Jasper & Cumming
 Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit
 Reading Matthew, Mark & Luke
 Christian Liturgy
 Feast of the Eucharist

"Feast of the Eucharist are wonderful."

A pastor is always to be a learner. A couple of years ago Pastor Spotts entered the doctoral program at University of South Africa. He's now an "all but dissertation" student. This means he's been spending a lot of time with his nose in a book. Several books, in fact, working on a project analyzing the early evidence in Christianity for practices of baptism and communion.

Normally I am very optimistic about the Wittenberg Door finances. The Lord has always provided for our needs. I'm going to make the unusual step of asking particularly for support at this time. We have had numerous unexpected medical expenses in our family this year. We'll also be looking for different health insurance coverage yet again (for the seventh year in a row), which always creates some uncertainty.

Your contributions to Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry mean we can continue providing face to face pastoral ministry on the college campuses in Columbia Missouri. Your monthly support of \$30-\$50 can make an eternal difference in the lives of our collegiate communities. Please continue to invite your friends and associates to consider supporting this work.

Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Checks mailed to us are deposited with no commission paid to any intermediary. Most of our contributions are actually received this way, but we can receive funds sent through Paypal or Google Pay as well. Giving is easy! Simply visit our website at www.wittenbergcomo.com and click on “about” and “support us.”

Upcoming Activities:

New Day! Mondays at 12:30 pm – Lunch and Learn Bible discussion at the MU Student Center

Mondays – Recommit! Bible study at Beta Sigma Psi after Chapter Meeting

Wednesdays beginning August 8 - Heidelberg Discussions – *The Spirituality of the Cross* (Second edition) 5:30 pm at The Heidelberg Restaurant on 9th Street. If you can't find us, ask the bartender where the pastor went.

Sundays - Adult Bible Class 9:00 am, Divine Service 10:00 am, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Centralia MO

Friday, September 3 - Dinner and Conversation Evening 6-8 pm

Friday, September 17 – Dinner and Conversation Evening 6-8 pm

Tuesday, September 28 – ALTS Greek 1 course starts (auditors invited, see www.alts.edu)

Thursday, September 30 – ALTS The Bible in Context course starts (auditors invited, see www.alts.edu)

Friday, October 1 – Dinner and Conversation Evening 6-8 pm

Watch the calendar at www.wittenbergcomo.com, follow our Facebook page, and friend WDCM Chaplain on Facebook to see times and places where Pastor Spotts can be found around campuses in coffee shops or restaurants!

We always have something new at the website, the blog, and the activities calendar. Please be a friend on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. If you're in Columbia, let's get together on or near campus. Go to <https://www.wittenbergcomo.com/support-us.html> to provide financial support. The Wittenberg Door 300 needs you!