

THOUGHTS

By Douglas W. Schroeder

SPEAKER ON THE WORD TODAY

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2020

BOYCOTT THE HALMARK CHANNEL AND ALL ASSOCIATED ADVERTISERS

The channel decided to override the concerns of conservatives and cave in to criticism by reinstating gay marriage ads. Our household dropped Netflix and we have survived. You would do well to abandon most TV altogether and read books.

“WE NEED A RESURRECTION”

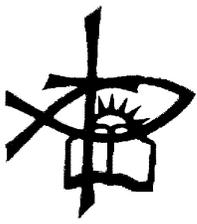
That was the comment of a staff member of a California church who was requesting prayers for a resurrection of a two-year-old girl, a daughter of church members, who died suddenly. Looking at the type of church (and associated doctrine) I suspect the little girl was not baptized, and that she died before the “age of accountability”, that is, before she could make a knowledgeable confession of faith in Jesus.

The leadership of this church made a major doctrinal error in promoting the request instead of teaching the family a few hard things about life, death and the Word. The family has what is referred to as an over-realized eschatology. That means they were seeking to pull things promised in the New Testament to occur at the return of Christ into the present, chiefly the resurrection of the body.

Church doctrines have real world consequences. One of those real world consequences is that those who die in Christ are promised resurrection *at his return, not when we want it*. Another real world consequence is that failure to employ the means of Grace, in this case Christian Baptism of infants, puts a child in spiritual limbo – not smart, considering that as sinners any of us can die, and need adoption by God in baptism to counter the effects of sin. Baptism is a beautiful act of God for salvation and should not be denied to infants!

I warn members of Our Shepherd who are moving to consider carefully the teachings of any church they may join. There are many churches with horrible doctrine, skewed theology. They may have a dynamic preaching pastor, and great music. But, the teachings are often heterodox, meaning that they do not line up with Scriptures. When this family does not receive its resurrection, despite fervent faith, they will have a crisis which was precipitated not by the death of their daughter, but by the poor leadership and bad doctrine (even though so many verses are trotted out to support it) that led to ignorance and avoidance of infant baptism. When it comes to “church shopping”, beware the enticing, pretty, big-box type churches, because they are typically light on the sacraments, the very tools given us by the Lord to supplement the Word as He keeps our faith strong!

Thoughts
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*The Bible is God's Word . . . Jesus is God's "Word" made flesh . . .
His death and resurrection, the message needed Today.*

February

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The Word-Faith Movement in North America has done much damage to the faith of sincere people. By holding out promise for healing to the point of avoidance of all illness, and even in this extreme form promoting the potential for resurrection to address parents' fears, it is making the Body of Christ ill. These are not healthy doctrines, and people who accept them will experience crisis spiritually when they or their loved one faces serious illness and death – the consequences of sin that cannot be put off through prayer indefinitely.

MID-WINTER BEAUTY

Blah is the typical reaction to mid-winter. We have celebrated Christ's coming, had our social blowout events, and now must endure the dreary days until Spring arrives. I am not one given to depression; I thank the Lord that I have a good measure of the buoyant spirit of Sylvia, my mother. However, historically somewhere around the last week of January or one of the first weeks of February my spirit tanks. For about a week the world is bad, life is horrible, everything is no good... it's a spiritual assault on my mind, a battle that thankfully breaks after about 7 days.

Perhaps that admission is surprising to you, but it shouldn't be. Most of us will suffer depressive moments, most certainly following a streak of difficulties or an overwhelming loss, such as the death of a family member or loss of a job. God did not make us to be rocks without emotions. It is tough to hang with commitments such as daily physical workouts during that time. Going through a depressive episode like that opens my eyes to experience a bit of the mental weight pressing upon persons with major depression. I can see how their viewpoint turns negative and motivation to accomplish is M.I.A.

If you put on your emotion-sensing goggles (the act of being emotionally perceptive) you can see people in this condition. You can hear it in the listless greeting, the weakness in their smile, perhaps even series of sighs. What a wonderful encouragement we can be to such people! Just spending time listening to their troubles can alleviate much of the heaviness in their mind. Usually when I am in my "funk" God sends someone, or a couple people during that week, who listen and support me. I am very grateful for the caring ears at those times! Perhaps you can use caring ears to encourage someone when they are in the pits.

TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

On January 2, as I write this, long lines of people are standing, waiting to buy marijuana legally in Illinois, the 11th state to legalize it. I fear very negative consequences to our society. The Lord will not let people go unpunished who turn their bodies into trash cans. God created mankind in His image, and Christians are to be the *temple of the Holy Spirit* (1 Cor. 6:19). Your body is *redeemed*, so avoid desecrating it.

Blessings!
Douglas W. Schroeder