Outreach Center Network News Letter

June 2018

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### Faith Sees What God Sees

GEN 17:1-5; 15-19

When Abram was ninety- nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless. I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers." Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, "As for me, this is my covenant with you. You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations.

God also said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her. “Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, “Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety? “And Abraham said to God, "If only Ishmael might live under your blessing! @ Then God said, “Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.

Faith Sees What God Sees

I remember playing catch with a soft ball and baseball mitt before I lost my sight. I was only 10-years-old. My sight was poor at best and I missed the ball more than I caught it. I always felt that only the professional baseball players could catch the ball with that mitt.

Many times people think of faith as though it was a mitt, in which you would catch God’s words, promises and blessings. Of course this thought will lead you immediately to realize that we often drop the ball of faith.

Well faith sometimes is pictured like a mitt. Abraham caught the words of God in Genesis 12, “Go to a land that I will give you.” And so Abraham went 500 miles by foot and camel.

In Genesis 15 God again told Abraham that he would be the father of many nations. Abraham played catch and so in Genesis 16 took Hagar, his wife=s hand maiden, and had a child. He and Sarah knew they could not themselves have a child, they thought, because of their age.

In Genesis 17 God came back and told Abraham again that he would be the father of many, but Sarah would be the mother. He laughed. He did not believe it. It is here that we begin to see that the mitt is only one picture of faith.

A few months ago I commented to Debb, my wife, that every time I tried to pour water into the coffee maker I spilled as much on the counter as I got into the machine. Debb suggested using a funnel. I tried it and it worked great. This is now how I do it every morning when I make coffee. The funnel helps channel the water into the coffee maker. A coffee maker without water is pretty useless--that is, if you like coffee for breakfast.

God introduced a different picture of faith in Genesis 17. In this picture faith is not the mitt catching the blessing. Faith is the funnel guiding the water to its destination. Like an empty bottle, without God=s Spirit we are useless, of no worth or value. Similarly, a bottle with water is valued by a thirsty person because of the water. So we are valued and of great worth because God has poured his Spirit into us. Faith channels the spirit into our hearts.

When Abraham laughed, God continued to pour. God was saying, "It does not depend on you, your catching it or your doing a thing. I am doing it because I am God."

As people of God there are many times we want to, wish to, but simply cannot. It's all right. God does. He continues to love us, accept us and value us. Jesus paid his blood for us and we now have value to him--just as we are.

### Father’s Day

According to Wikipedia Father's Day has had less commercial success than Mother's Day. We honor our dads with sporting events, grooming or electronic gadgets, a quiet meal at home, or taking him out to dinner.

In most of the Western world, Father's Day is celebrated on the third Sunday in June. We are one of the only countries who celebrate it as a national holiday. In countries like Italy and Portugal, it is celebrated on March 19, on the feast of Saint Josephin Lebanon, and Egypt's Father's Day is celebrated June 21, the first day of summer. The global celebration of Father's Day continues to vary with Russia, where it is celebrated on February 23. Other countries will celebrate it anywhere from May to November.

### Notes from Centers

From the Eureka, MO Outreach Center

This past weekend, June 2, I, Pastor Dave visited the Eureka center. Dannie and Mark from the Maplewood center have been after me to take them and visit the Eureka center. It’s about 45 minutes west of St. Louis. There were nine present and three volunteers. They also had one new person. The fellowship, friendship and support among all, including? Dannie and Mark from another center were wonderful.

**The outreach center in Philadelphia lost its home at St. Phillips Lutheran because the church closed. At present they are meeting in homes of the blind members. They refuse to quit meeting. This is because for several, it is their spiritual home. They ask for your prayer support to find a permanent church home.**

### Funny but interesting facts

The liquid inside young coconuts can be used as a substitute for

 Blood plasma.

No piece of paper can be folded in half

more than seven (7) times.

Donkeys kill more people annually

 than plane crashes.

You burn more calories sleeping

 than you do watching television.

The first product to have a bar code

 was Wrigley's gum.

The King of Hearts is the only king

 without a mustache

Venus is the only planet that rotates clockwise.

 (Since Venus is normally associated with women, what does this tell you!)

Apples, not caffeine,

 are more efficient at waking you up in the morning.

The first owner of the Marlboro Company died of lung cancer.

 So did the first 'Marlboro Man.'

PEARLS MELT

 in vinegar!

It is possible to lead a cow upstairs...

 but, not downstairs.

A duck's quack doesn't echo,

 and no one knows why.

###A FATHER'S LOVE

By Debra Andrus (First printed in "The Lutheran Witness" June 1997)

Note from Pastor Dave: I placed this article in the newsletter because many people who are blind have had bad experiences with their father. God as a Father therefore is not a pleasant idea. This article may help change this fact.

You, O Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness. Ps. 86:15

How important is a father's love to his child! But what about children who don't experience a father's love? Should we rewrite Scripture verses that say Father to read *mother, parent, caregiver?*

When I was a young child, I was not blessed with the love of a father. My father was physically abusive and I spent my life in fear of him-not the awe‑ful fear one has of the heavenly father, but the awful fear of never knowing if the day would bring kindness or bruises from Daddy. Even after my parents were divorced I lived in fear that my father would come to "get me." Even after I grew up and studied psychology and sociology and understood the dynamics of the abusive situation, the fear remained. Knowing that he hadn't meant to be abusive did not take away the fear. Even today, six years after his death, the little‑girl fear remains.

How then can I understand the concept of a loving heavenly Father? One who cares for me so much that He knows the number of hairs on my head (Matthew 10:30)? One who loves me so much He gave up what was dearest to Him‑‑His Son‑‑so that He could care for me for all eternity?

For me it is simple to understand. I just imagine everything I always wished for from my father and then magnify that picture. Even so, I know my Heavenly Father is even more wonderful. How do I know? I know because He tells me so: "From everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear Him, and His righteousness with their children's children" (Psalm 103:17).

I know because during all the hard times, and the good times, and even during the mediocre times, I've felt His loving Heavenly Daddy arms around me, comforting me, holding me. Sometimes He holds me through other people. Sometimes He holds me through His Word-read, spoken, or memorized.

So, should we rewrite Scripture to be more "gender inclusive"? No. God knew what He was doing when He (who actually has no gender) referred to Himself as our Father. He knew that there would be many people who long for the love of a father. And He knew that He would always be there for them.

Do you know the love of your Father? If so, love Him back: Use your worship and praise to tell Him how much you love Him. Obey your Father. Do the "chores" that He, like every good father, has outlined for you to do: "Love your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:39); "Go and make disciples" (Matthew 28:19). Tell others about His love‑‑there may be someone you know who is longing for a Father's love.

If you are one of those who long for your Father's love, stop longing and start believing. He states this love for you: "I have loved you with an everlasting love" (Jeremiah 31:3). He promises to never leave you. He has built a place for you in heaven, prepared by His Son, Jesus.

Every day in God's Kingdom is Father's Day. But He doesn't want presents of a tie or aftershave lotion. All He wants is your love.

### Final Thoughts

In upcoming issues we can and will look at many of the same topics as well as others. If you have questions, thoughts or suggestions, please send them to me or post them on the blind ministry email list.

Pastor Dave