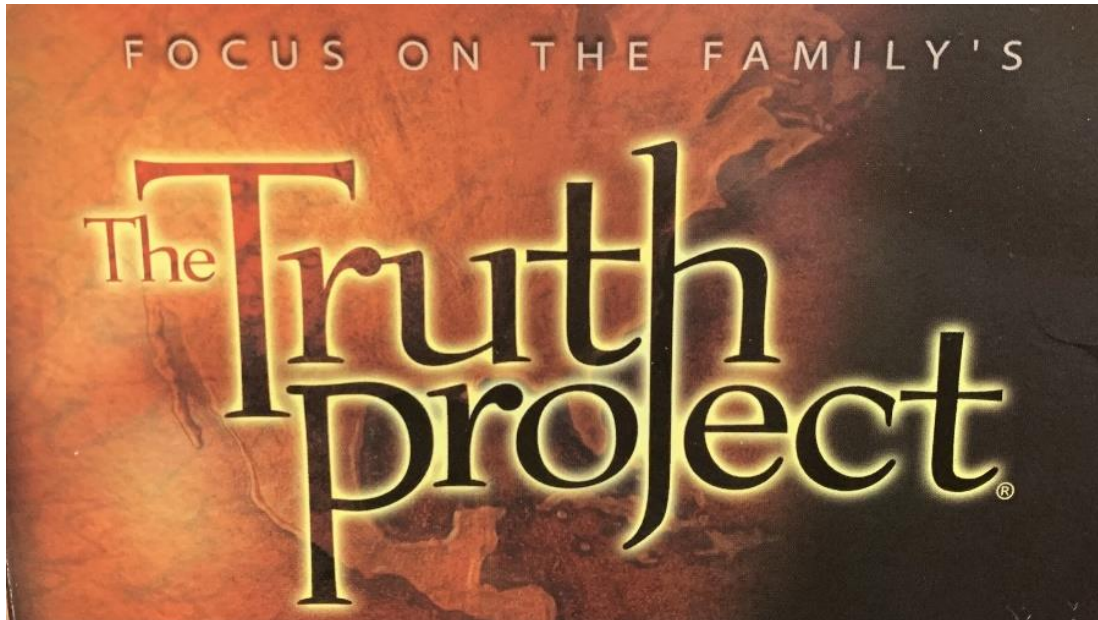


Good Shepherd Lutheran Church September 2022 Newsletter



In a recent study, the Barna Research Group revealed a stunning statistic: only 9 percent of professing Christians have a Biblical Worldview.

Because of this, today's believers live very similarly to non-believers. We spend our money and time on things that fail to satisfy and we begin to wonder what life's ultimate purpose really is. We are, in short, losing our bearings as a people and a nation.

To counter this slide within the body of Christ we will be studying **The Truth Project** together.

The Truth Project is a DVD-based curriculum comprised of 13 one-hour lessons taught by Dr. Del Tackett. Each lesson discusses in great detail the relevance and importance of living the Christian worldview in daily life.

Two different class times offered starting
Wednesday September 7th 10 AM or 6:30 PM
GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN – 1 Meigs Dr Shalimar, FL
For more information (850) 651-1022

LCMS Stewardship Ministry

What is a steward? Most people, when asked this question, will reply: “A manager.” That is correct, but it is only half right. A steward is indeed a manager, but he is a manager of what does not belong to him. Someone else is the owner, and the steward manages the owner’s property on the owner’s behalf.

We are God’s stewards. Our stewardship is that God has made us managers of what belongs to Him. For we have brought nothing into this world, and we can take nothing out of it (1 Tim. 6:7). Everything that we have and everything that we are comes from God’s fatherly Divine goodness and mercy. God is the owner. Not only because, as the Creator, He created all things. But also, as the Redeemer, He has redeemed, that is, purchased and won all things. It all, therefore, belongs to Him.

We are simply managers of everything in this world. Like Joseph in Egypt, we are put in charge of managing what belongs to God. What a privilege. Think about that for a minute. The all-knowing, all-powerful, all-wise God has asked us to manage His possessions on His behalf here on earth. And by doing this, He invites us to take part in the allocation of His good gifts. He wants us to give our input and advise Him in where His gifts are to be used. What a privilege indeed.

What a responsibility. For to whom much is given, much shall be required (Luke 12:48). We are not the owners. And while He puts us as managers, we are still to do with His property what He wants done with it. That means we need to know what His desire and will for His property is.

How do we know this? How can we know the will and mind of God? We find the will of God in the Bible. There God tells us what His will for all His gifts are to be used. He tells us how we are to spend our time and use our talents and treasures. He instructs us in the use of our minds, bodies, and souls.

There is nothing that we have that doesn’t belong to Him. “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price” (1 Cor. 6:19–20). He informs us of the big picture, the overarching policy, of how we as His stewards – His managers and custodians – of His property are to do the managing.

And that is what stewardship is. It is simply doing what God wants us to do with what He has given us. As St. Paul said: “Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness” (Rom. 6:13). So, let’s dive into the God’s Word and listen to what the owner desires from His stewards.

Deacon's Digest,

September is here and Rally Day [restart of Sunday School after Summer Break] is on the 4th. I hope you are able to attend the activities -- especially the picnic. I do hope you take advantage of some of the courses we are offering in the curriculum. Later in today's column I will mention a specific course that you might consider taking. Today, I'm continuing to offer comment on current events, through a spiritual lens. I will do my utmost to keep it non-political [non-partisan I guess would be a better term], non-judgmental, and try to provide God's guidance through the Word.

[Disclaimer: The views and opinions below are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of any affiliated organization or other person] I would like to start our discussion today by bringing up the fact that current polling (ABC-IPSOS, 2022) indicates that the majority of Americans are of the opinion that our economy is getting worse. Some of the items likely causing this concern are: 1 - we reached, on 1 Jan 2022, a record National debt of 30 trillion dollars (The United States Treasury Department, 2022): 2- the recent rise of inflation has caused the cost of debt servicing [ie loan payments] to rise greatly. How much is a trillion? Answer: it is a million million; that is twelve zeros! Writing and distributing one trillion dollars' worth of checks could make one million millionaires. Debt is not new, the US has carried a debt since its inception [with the exception of a short period just before the civil war], as a newly founded country, we had to borrow money from France to be able to fight the war for our independence from England. Economy experts [I am not one] use the measure [a ratio] of comparison of a country's debt to its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) [GDP in essence is how much yearly income the country generates, indicative of how much money it can use to pay down the debt]. Economists get worried when the debt to GDP ratio gets to about 75%. It is kind of like those loan people who ask you a lot of questions on your income when you are financing a car or a home. They want to make sure you have enough extra money to pay down your loan. The US blew through the 75% test years ago and we just reached 130%. Now then, the debt increased steadily over the past several decades independently of the Political Party in power.

Noting the worrisome mood of the populace I did some research on what caused the failure of the Roman Empire. Volumes of books have been published on this subject but The History Channel (Andrews, 29 Jan 2119) provided 8 primary reasons for the collapse and number 2 of the eight was "Economic Troubles". When our country faces a national challenge such as a war, a pandemic, or some other deep challenge such as a recession, I believe the citizenry would favor increasing our debt if we did not have the money to tackle the challenge in our treasury. As I mentioned above, the increase in debt is not limited to just one political party. Here are some quick comparison numbers: to combat the great recession of 2007 to

2009, the Congress approved the injection of \$1.8 trillion into the economy and I believe this got our economy back on track. Compare that to the two most recent administrations who, starting in 2020, have pumped \$4.5 trillion to fight the impacts of the COVID 19 Pandemic. The experts say that this much stimulus has led to inflation which is now a burden on the entire populace. It also impacts our ability to pay down our debt as mentioned earlier. Well, I do not want to turn this into an econ lecture, so let us turn to the bible for some answers/guidance. Look at proverbs 22:7. *The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is the slave of the lender.* The notes on pp1033 of the LSB offer this: This verse does not argue that the rich (the lender) are better or more pleasing to God, nor does it justify any oppression on the part of the lender, it simply states a fact of economic life, one that a potential borrower would do well to heed. So then, who is the holder of our debt? The top 3 are Japan [\$1.3T], China [\$968B] and the UK [\$615B]. I was glad to see that China was not at the top of the list and that we had strong allies at #1 and #3. I believe we need to ask our representatives to stop spending what we do not have and do what we can to get our debt down. We do not want to be “slaves” to anyone. Now then, one more point: we have seen in the last two weeks, the administration’s attempt to spend more money [we do not have] on forgiving college debt. In fact, our leaders and representatives are veering away from the truth when they use words that are misrepresentative in 1- the titles of the bills and 2-the explanation of the purpose to enact this spending. Recent polls have shown that voters are very split on this this bill and some have said that the “winner” in this spending is actually higher education because they will be able to increase their tuition and so they [the colleges] should pay for the debt forgiveness, not the tax payers. The “losers” here are people [tax payers] who may have to pay for the benefit through their taxes even though they already paid their own debt off or chose not to go to college because they did not want to go into debt. It seems like the beneficiaries are an elite group [and not “needy”] of individuals and institutions of higher ed who have raised their tuition costs much higher than inflation rates would influence. So it does look like truth is taking a back seat in some of the “selling” of bills to constituents that will increase our nation’s debt. I’ll bet you know or at least have heard this bible verse, John 8:31-32: *“If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*. What does this mean? Only in Jesus and His teaching will anyone be free from sin, death, and Satan’s rule. Satan is very happy when we believe lies, he is the master of deceit, and we need to always seek the truth. I don’t know when politics started to make lies acceptable and truth optional, but we had better try to get our leadership and our representatives in God’s word. Best way for us to do this, put it in your prayers. Will you join me in praying for our leaders; our representatives; and their staffs to get in God’s word and use the truth? Oh yes about that Bible Study I mentioned in the beginning of this article. I recommend attending “The Truth

Project” which is led by Pastor Ray and is held twice on Wednesday: 10:00 AM and 6:30 PM. I believe you will be blessed and also better equipped to handle the lies that Satan is so cleverly offering to you.

Blessings and Peace!

Joe

Works Cited in Article

ABC-IPSOS. (2022, August 5). Perception of the US Economy. *ABC/IPSOS Poll* .

Andrews, E. (29 Jan 2019). Top 8 Reasons for the Collapse of Rome. *History Channel*, 1-5.

The United States Treasury Department. (2022). Understanding the National Debt. *Fiscal Data: <https://fiscaldata.treasury.gov>*, 1-30.



Tuesday, 6 September
Hosted by Curtis



Regrets, Reality and Restoration
- 1 - It Only Took Once

Tuesday, 13 September
Hosted by Jacob



Regrets, Reality and Restoration
- 2 - I'm So Sorry

Tuesday, 20 September
Hosted by Curtis



Regrets, Reality and Restoration
- 3 - You're Forgiven

Tuesday, 27 September
Hosted by Jacob



Regrets, Reality and Restoration
- 4 - But for a Moment



- 9/1 Don Panzenhagen
- 9/3 Curtis Parker
- 9/4 Gene Bollin
- 9/6 Nancy Johnson
- 9/12 Bryan Baker
- 9/12 Don Gatchell
- 9/15 Jenavieve Fooshee
- 9/17 Elizabeth Adams
- 9/18 Linda Babiak
- 9/19 Ella Parker
- 9/20 Dick Mahlum
- 9/21 Joshua Hofman
- 9/28 Herb Steeb
- 9/29 Jason Boole

- 9/2 Chad and Michelle Potts
- 9/3 Weldon and Barbara Brinkley
- 9/5 Chris and Lisa Schwartz
- 9/6 John and Trudy Gronning
- 9/11 Bob and Bettie Farmer
- 9/14 David and Pam Chandler
- 9/18 Al and Brenda Hemmer
- 9/22 Frank and Kathy Shaw
- 9/29 Brian and Teresa Dailey



From the The Bavarian's Wirtshaus German Restaurant

We proudly announce that **EDELWEISS TRIO** will be playing live at the Good Shepherd Reformation Festival on Sunday, October 30th.



Lincoln Dinner

