



LCMS Stewardship Ministry

More Than a Negative

Even if you've never had to testify in court, a thousand TV shows have made you familiar with the question, "Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?" Why not just make people swear to tell the truth? Or make them promise not to lie?

Any parent who has ever had to interrogate a child about a broken cookie jar or a scuffle over a toy knows the answer. There are plenty of ways to try to get out of trouble without technically lying. You tell just enough of the truth to skate on by.

We often play the game of seeing how close we can get to sinning without technically going over the line.

But in our heart of hearts we know that this is not what God intended when He gave us the commandments. He's not giving us a merely negative rule and challenging us to just barely stay away from this or that. There is much more to each commandment than a prohibition. We shouldn't just avoid murdering people — we should be of service to our neighbor.

For each negative prohibition in the commandments there is a positive good that we are to cherish and protect. In the Eighth Commandment, that gift is the reputation of our neighbor and our relationship with him:

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

Your relationship with your family members (who are your nearest neighbors), the other members of your congregation, your coworkers and your friends is one of the most precious gifts you have been given. You need to exercise good stewardship with this gift just as much as you need to exercise good stewardship with your life, resources, time and income. This is an especially fragile gift because it's easy to ruin a relationship with slander and talking behind someone's back.

But speaking well of your neighbor in Christian love is absolutely free; it costs you nothing, yet it pays you great dividends. If you find this challenging at times, if you are tempted to speak ill of others, just remember that this other person is also a beloved child of God for whom your Lord Jesus suffered and died. Your Lord Jesus loves you both.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF BIBLE TIMES

Bread - For most people food was simple. Bread, olives, cheese, fruit, and vegetables formed the staple diet. Meat was eaten on rare occasions. Bread was so basic a food that it became synonymous with life itself. "Eating bread" was the equivalent phrase for "having a meal." The Egyptians could not "eat bread" with the Hebrews (Genesis 43:31-32). "Give us each day our daily bread" (Luke 11:3) was a prayer for daily provision of food itself. Bread was something so basic and so special that Jesus referred to himself as the "bread of life" (John 6:35).



Bread seems always to have been broken and never cut with a knife, which gave rise to the phrase "to break bread," used in Acts 20:7 to describe the Communion service. Bread made from barley was less favored than wheat bread; it was also cheaper. In addition to being used for bread, grain was also parched by heating the grains on a metal plate over the fire AND WAS OFTEN EATEN RAW WHEN PEOPLE WERE WALKING THROUGH THE GRAINFIELDS. There is a well-known example of this when the disciples of Jesus were told that they should not eat raw grain on the Sabbath (Matthew 12:1). Such grain was known as "new grain" (Leviticus 23:14).

Honey - Honey was used for sweetening because there was no sugar. There are many examples in the Bible in which honey was obtained from wild bees. Samson found it in the carcass of a lion (Judges 14:8-9), Jonathan found it in a forest (1 Samuel 14:25-27), and Moses found honey in a rock hole (Deuteronomy 32:13).

Bees were colonized in hives in Egypt and Assyria, and this may have been taken up by the Jews by New Testament times (Luke 24:41-43). When grape juice was boiled down it became a sweet, sticky syrup, and this too may have been referred to as honey in some Bible passages. It was spread on bread and sometimes diluted with water and drunk. Jacob sent this to Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 43:11), and it was exported to the Phoenicians (Ezekiel 27:17).

Submitted by Beverly Steele



Thank you from Opportunity Place

Thank you so much for your generous donation. Our shelter and the families we serve depend greatly on the kindness of our donors. Without you we would not be able to provide hope to

our families. Fiona, Laurel, Spike, Ron, Paul, Kathy, Ann, Tanya, Felicia, Chris, Bonnie, Balon, Michelle, Sara, James, Sabu and Jean.

Thank you from Joshua Horst and family

Thank you for your support of Concordia Seminary! Your gifts and contributions are appreciated by the whole church for the training and sending out of pastors. Here at the seminary, we are at the halfway point of the spring semester. I am in my second year and am in classes that are essential to my formation as a pastor. For instance, I have a Pastoral Care class, where we learn the basics of counseling. Another class is my preaching class, where we focus on going from a Bible passage to the complete sermon. I am looking forward to getting experience on my vicarage, next year, where I will be putting into practice what I have learned, as an intern church worker. May you have a reflective and meaningful Lent and Easter season. Joshua, Jenna and Henry Horst.

Thank you from 1517

Your monthly support enables us to boldly declare the freedom and forgiveness of sins found in Christ alone. Your monthly commitment is a big deal to us. Thank you 1517 staff.



BROWN SCHOLARSHIP MESSAGES

Greetings from St. Paul Lutheran Church and School!



It has been a swift three months since I last wrote to you all. Life in Boca Raton, FL with Shelby has been a blast. We have grown in our marriage, spiritual walk with Christ, and in our community of friends. One of the really exciting new ministry opportunities that Shelby and I started is a Young Professionals group at St. Paul. Men and women aged 21-35 meet monthly at different restaurants to fellowship, support, and learn from one another. Our first meeting had 11 and the second had 14 ranging from 4 different local churches as the word got out. It is a blessing to foster a community of young Christian individuals who share life and love Jesus!

I have continued to get lots of preaching experience! I helped a sole pastor get a well-deserved weekend off and preached in Lake Worth, FL. I also helped formulate a miniseries on "Calling" based on the selected texts of the lectionary. And working with Pastor Steve and the 40 Day Serving Challenge; worked through a 5-week Lenten series on Philippians. With opportunities to preach in school chapels, Saturday nights, Sund mornings, and Wednesdays I can confidently say I am getting a lot of experience!

Lastly, as I write this letter to you all, Shelby and I are packing our bags for a week long mission trip to Guatemala! St. Paul is partnering with Casas Por Cristo where a team of 16 (us included) are going to build a house for a family in need. This is something very new for Shelby and I because never done an out of country mission trip before. Please keep us in your prayers for safe travel and health while we are away!

Jason Shelter

7 Down, 1 to Go

Hello all,

And with that, there is one semester left. I have sincerely enjoyed my time at Concordia Wisconsin and I am grateful for all the support I have received. It has been a blessing to learn under such great professors and among such wonderful friends.

Fall was another amazing experience. It was my busiest and most challenging semester to this point. I learned so much in every class. In Greek 6 I translated through Colossians, Galatians, and 1st and 2nd Timothy as well as doing a very deep grammatical, philological and theological study of Romans 4:1-12.

I was also able to take Hebrew 4 which finishes my Hebrew classes during undergrad. I look forward to continuing to use Hebrew in my own personal devotion now that I know the basics.

I also had two courses in Theology last semester, Lutheran Worship and Senior Seminar. It was a joy to learn about the rich and historic tradition of worship in the Lutheran Church and I left that class with a much higher respect for the liturgy. It is marvelous how well the Divine Service and other services focus on Christ. Senior Seminar is a two semester class. In the first semester we worked primarily on picking a topic for our final paper and beginning research. My topic is the Old



Testament Genealogies and their significance for Christians today.

My final class of last semester was a Philosophy elective focused on C.S. Lewis. It was a pleasure to read and discuss many of the works of one of the greatest Christian apologists. Over the semester we read *Surprised by Joy*, *The Abolition of Man*, *Miracles*, *Perelandra*, *The Screwtape Letters* and *The Great Divorce*.

During this semester I will be taking a course on the prophetic books of the Old Testament. I will also be taking another Philosophy elective that will go over some influential works in philosophy such as Plato's *Republic* and Soren Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*. I will be finishing up my Senior Seminar as well as taking a Greek readings class. My final class is an introductory piano class.

Looking a little farther into the future, I have been accepted at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis where I will attend seminary in the fall! Thank you all so much for your support throughout my undergrad and I look forward to seeing God's continued work in my life this Spring and into the future.

God's Blessings

Zeke Potts

On The Homefront

We have been busy at home and thoroughly enjoyed having all the boys together for the Christmas break! Just prior to Christmas break, Chad was called to help with a mission overseas in Japan for 2 weeks. While he was gone, Michelle took a quick trip to see Zeke perform in his last "Christmas at Concordia" concert.

After Chad got back home, we spent a week in Orlando where we picked up the boys for Christmas break! While in Orlando we spent some time at Universal Studios and particularly enjoyed the Harry Potter sections and eating WhoHash and Green Eggs and Ham in Dr. Suess Land. We also spent a day enjoying the Christmas lights of Sea World in Orlando. We arrived home just in time for Christmas and enjoyed activities around our area for the remaining 2 weeks before Zeke and Noah drove back to Wisconsin for the Spring Semester.

At home, JJ has started a new job working in the maintenance department for the school that he coaches at. He continues to work on Potts Blox when he can. We are also preparing for a 6 month deployment. Chad will leave in a couple of months and be gone through Fall of 2024. Keep our family in your prayers as we navigate this longer separation. Michelle is thankful that all 3 boys will be home for the summer to help fill the time!

Peace in Christ!

--The Potts Family

CHURCH HAPPENINGS

- Jeff Adams has taken over as president of the Properties Board
- Maureen Taylor went home to Jesus March 7, 2024.
- Joshua Potts has brought his membership to Good Shepherd.



5/4 Brandon Wood
5/5 Katelyn Berkowitz
5/8 Brian Carstens
5/20 Kay Gasper
5/21 Pam Chandler
5/21 Esenia Baughman
5/23 Charles Schneider
5/24 Flo Hofman
5/28 Bettie Farmer
5/29 James Straub
5/30 Sherry Wiese

5/8 James and Bre Anderson
5/15 Dave and Ann Lienemann
5/18 Jeff and April Adams
5/23 Seth and Susan Sharpe
5/26 James and Alex Straub
5/31 Jason and Sandy Boole



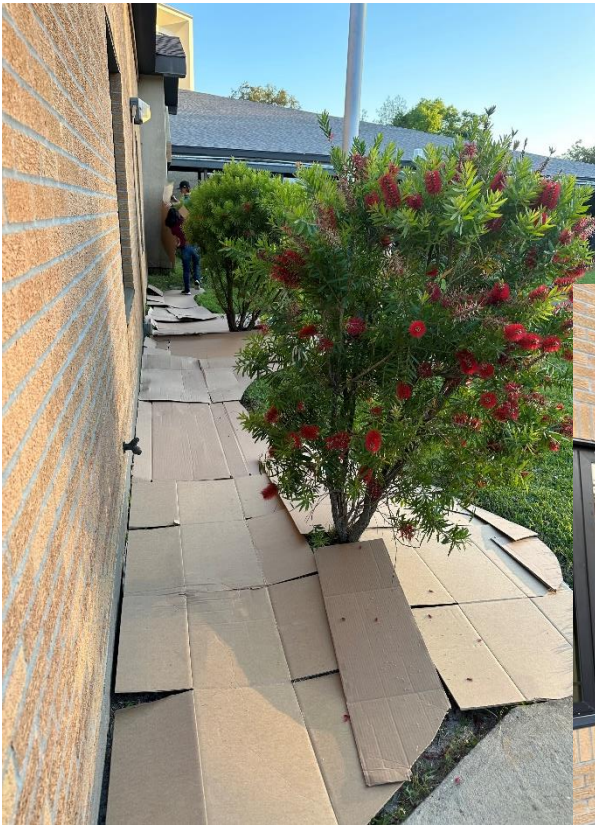


Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 9:30 AM Quilting 10:00 AM Bible Study	2 5:00 PM American Heritage Girls 6:00 PM Elder's Meeting	3	4 8:00 AM Praise Band 10:00 AM American Heritage Girls
5 Early Communion Mite Collection Both Services 8:00 AM Traditional Service 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Contemporary 2:00 PM Confirmation 6:00 PM Youth Group	6	7	8 9:30 AM Quilting 10:00 AM Bible Study	9	10	11 8:00 AM Praise Band 10:00 AM Women's Bible Study
12 Late Communion 8:00 AM Traditional Service 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Contemporary	13	14	15 9:30 AM Quilting 10:00 AM Bible Study	16 5:00 PM American Heritage Girls	17	18 8:00 AM Praise Band 9:00 AM Life Team
19 Early Communion 8:00 AM Traditional Service 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Contemporary 2:00 PM Confirmation 6:00 PM Youth Group	20	21	22 9:30 AM Quilting 10:00 AM Bible Study	23 6:00 PM Council Meeting	24	25 8:00 AM Praise Band
26 Late Communion 8:00 AM Traditional Service 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Contemporary 2:00 PM Confirmation 6:00 PM Youth Group	27 Office Closed	28	29 9:30 AM Quilting 10:00 AM Bible Study	30	31	

A Bed for me kids.



The Youth Group caring for the property.



The joy of painting with Curtis!



EASTER SUNDAY



