

Consider-ables w/Max Lucado

Loved with a Steadfast Love ... by Max Lucado

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness. Lamentations 3:22–23 RSV

Jeremiah was depressed, as gloomy as a giraffe with a neck ache. Jerusalem was under siege, his nation under duress. His world collapsed like a sand castle in a typhoon. He faulted God for his horrible emotional distress.

He also blamed God for his physical ailments. *“He [God] has made my flesh and my skin waste away, and broken my bones”* (Lam. 3:4 RSV).

His body ached. His heart was sick. His faith was puny. . . . He realized how fast he was sinking, so he shifted his gaze. *“But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness. ‘The Lord is my portion,’ says my soul, ‘therefore I will hope in him’ ”* (vv. 21–24 RSV).

“But this I call to mind...” Depressed, Jeremiah altered his thoughts, shifted his attention. He turned his eyes away from his stormy world and looked into the wonder of God. He quickly recited a quintet of promises. (I can envision him tapping these out on the five fingers of his hand.)



1. The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases.
2. His mercies never come to an end.
3. They are new every morning.
4. Great is thy faithfulness.
5. The Lord is my portion.

The storm didn't cease, but his discouragement did.

—Fearless

Thank you precious Savior, that your love is steadfast. Thank you that your mercies are new every morning. Thank you for your great faithfulness, not only to me but to all your people from the first day of creation. When I am tempted to become depressed and distressed, may I choose to gaze on you. May I remember that you are my portion. May I hope in your unceasing love, amen.



Responsive Reading: Psalm 92:1-5a

North: It is good to give thanks to you, O LORD.
South: *It is good to sing praises to thy name, O Most High.*

North: It is good to declare thy steadfast love in the morning.
South: *It is good to proclaim thy faithfulness by night.*

North: We use the music of the lute and the harp to do so.
South: *We use the melody of the lyre to make known your greatness.*

North: Thou, O LORD, hast made me glad by thy work.
South: *The works of thy hands cause me to sing for joy.*

ALL: How great are thy works, O LORD!



Lesson: Isaiah 62:1-5

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch.

The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married; for the LORD delights in you, and your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your builder marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.



Gospel: John 2:1-11

A wedding [was being celebrated] in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, *“They have no wine.”* And Jesus said to her, *“Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.”* His mother said to the servants, *“Do whatever he tells you.”*

Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, ...



Gospel... (cont'd)

"Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it.

When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this, the first of His signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed His glory; and his disciples believed in Him.



Shalom Thrift Store – Please consider volunteering to work at Shalom – your efforts provide donations to Salem from Shalom!

Women's Bible Study Group – Pr. Ellen has begun a new session of her growing-more-popular study group to discuss "holy relationships." These sessions are held Every other Wednesday evening at 7:00 PM with the next one on January 23rd and followed by another on February 6th, then February 20th. These are informal gatherings for women of all ages and all are welcome!!

Parish Tithing – Also referred to as "Benevolences" this is where we share with various charitable institutions that we support and/or are associated with. Prior to the church annual meeting is the best time to get your input and ideas on where to donate as a congregation. Please share your ideas with a council member before Feb. 3!

Church Council Membership – The time is fast arriving where the **Annual Meeting (February 3)** will seek new members for the church council. This year there are **3** seats becoming available. Anyone who has been a member for at least 1 year and is over 18 can become a council member. Won't **YOU** please consider it? It's fun, interesting, and puts you in the driver's seat of Salem's future!

Women's Pregnancy Support – Baby-Bottle Campaign – Support "Options For Women" (North Branch) in their annual drive to raise necessary funds. This campaign runs through February. Please place loose change or \$\$bills in the large baby-bottles located in the narthex.

Church News... (cont'd)

Men's Bible Study – a men's group will start meeting on the 2nd Saturdays of each month from 8:30 to 9:30 for a discussion/book study on living passionately for God. Brunch-like food will be served. Please express your interest to either Pr. Rob or to Hans, who will be facilitating it.

Newsletter – A new newsletter will be coming out shortly. These newsletters are available on the church website in PDF format (past and present) along with church bulletins (past and present). In an effort to save money, the council has decided to suspend mailing them. If you would prefer them to be emailed to you, please see Jerry Youngquist.



Lutheran-ables... From "The Lutheran Handbook II"

Six Complicated Lutheran Theological Terms in Latin

Lutheran theologians lie to throw around Latin phrases as they argue the finer points of the original "evangelical" theology. This is partly because Latin was the official language of Luther's day and all scholarly writing was done in it, and partly because theologians like to sound smarter than you. Memorize the following phrases to impress (or alienate) your friends.

1. *Lex et evangelium* (leks et ay-van-gay-lee-um) "Law & Gospel." There's one phrase that sums it all up for Lutherans; *Lex et Evangelium*. For Lutherans, all of God's word can be discerned in terms of command or promise, or Law & Gospel. For Lutherans, to be a good theologian means being able to tell the difference between Law & Gospel, and speak the Word accordingly.

____(cont'd next week)



Grin-able(s)...

All-purpose Joke...

It seems a farm boy accidentally overturned his wagon load of corn. The farmer who lived nearby heard the noise. "Hey Willis!!" the farmer yelled. "Forget your troubles. Come in with us. Then I'll help you get the wagon up." "That's mighty nice of you," Willis answered, "but I don't think Pa would like me to." "Awe, come on," the farmer insisted. "Well okay," the boy finally agreed, and added, "But Pa won't like it."

After a hearty dinner, Willis thanked his host. "I feel a lot better now, but I know Pa is going to be real upset." "Don't be foolish!" the neighbor said with a smile. "By the way, where is he?" ... "Under the wagon" said the farm boy.