



AUGUST 2022

THE LAMPLIGHTER YORK FIRST MORAVIAN

HOW GOOD MUST I BE?

When he was a young man, Martin Luther viewed God as an angry judge and he was AFRAID of God. "How much good must I do to get all my sins forgiven and gain heaven?" This is what Luther desperately wished to know. He tried many different ways to make his peace with God.

At the age of 21 Luther joined the Augustinian order and became a monk. Later he wrote, "I was a good monk and out-monked them all..." He confessed his sins so often, that the priest to whom he confessed sent him away until he committed some real sins. He took a pilgrimage to Rome and said prayers in every church in the city. In desperation, he beat himself with whips to show God that he was sorry for his sins. But he could not find the answer to his question, "How much good must I do?"

When he was 29, Luther began to study the Bible in order to become a Doctor of Theology. In ROMANS 3:23-24 he read, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God, but they are now justified by God's grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. In ROMANS 1:17, Luther read, "The just shall live by faith."

While he was teaching students from the book of Romans, he found the answer that he had been seeking. could never be good enough for God but he came to believe that God would forgive him through trusting Christ, and the great rallying cry of the Reformation was born, JUSTIFICATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH!

I believe that I understand how Luther felt. I grew up in the Church, I believed in God and I tried to be a good person. I knelt here in the sanctuary. was confirmed and joined the Church when I was 12 years old and later received the rank of Eagle Scout in this Church....But I never knew that I was good enough for God. Sometimes I compared myself to other people and depending upon whom I compared myself with I felt hopeful or despairing. In my high school class there was a boy who was always in trouble. After high school he ended up in Eastern State Penitentiary for armed robbery. Compared to Charlie I'm doing pretty good do maybe I will make it. Then I would compare myself to someone really good like my Sunday School teacher, and Anna Swartz and knew that I was not nearly as good as Mrs. Swartz.

Then someone showed me EPHESIANS 2:8-9, "For by grace are you saved through faith, and this not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." He helped me understand that it was not my works, but faith in Jesus that was the key to peace with God.

Why can't we satisfy God by doing good? Ephesians 2:9, explains this is "So that no one may boast." When I get to heaven, I cannot say, "I did it, I did it, I really, really, did it." BUT, "Thank you Jesus...." Jesus did it! He died on the cross. His body was broken and his blood was shed to pay for my sins. This is what we remember at COMMUNION...Faith means trusting in the sacrifice of Jesus to save me. Faith means opening my heart and my life to Jesus...This is what the Bible means by the statement, "By grace are you saved Through faith."

If I am trusting in my own goodness and my good works, I will never know if I have been good enough for God, but if I am trusting in Jesus, his sacrifice is everything I need! As the familiar hymn puts it "I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus, trusting only Thee,
Trusting Thee for full salvation, great and free."

But Steve, if we are not saved by being good, if salvation comes through trusting Jesus, then what is to keep people from taking advantage of God? If being good will not save us, then WHY BOTHER TO DO GOOD? Someone has said, "Every crook will say, I like committing crimes and God likes forgiving them. Really, we are admirably matched..."

Let me ask you a question, which is the best motivation for people, is it fear, or is it love? Let me illustrate this with the story of the two philosophy professors who taught me in college. Professor W. had no love for philosophy. For him, teaching was simply a job. He had little love for his students also, and when class was over he promptly left the room. Dr. M. loved to talk and to teach philosophy. After class was over he would head for the student union building where he sat with his students arguing and discussing the great questions of philosophy. He lived with his wife on a farm, and in the fall would bring a basket of apples from his orchard and sit it in front of the classroom for his students.

When Professor W. gave an exam, he walked up and down the aisles of the classroom to make sure no one cheated. No one cheated in his class. When Dr. M. gave an exam, he wrote the questions on the board, handed out exam books, and left the room. No one cheated in his class either. We respected, even loved Dr. M., and no one would think of letting him down by cheating in his class.

If you love someone, you want to please them. Isn't that true to human experience? Here is the motive for Christian behavior in a single sentence, "Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe." Salvation may be free to us, but it is costly to God! It cost God the bloody, sacrificial death of his son. In ROMANS 6:1, Paul answers the hypothetical question, "What then, shall we sin that grace may abound. God forbid!"

Brothers and sisters, even though I know now that being good will not save me, I still try to be good. Why? For the same reason that I did not cheat in Dr. McConnell's philosophy class, because I love Jesus, I am grateful to Jesus and I want to please Jesus.

This was the testimony of John Newton, who wrote the hymn "Amazing Grace." When he was eleven he ran away and signed on to a ship. This was his life for the next two decades until he rose to captain his own sailing ship. Back and forth he sailed between England and Africa carrying cargoes of slaves. It was a cruel business. During a violent storm Newton feared that his ship would be lost and he cried out to God. When his ship was saved, he left the business of transporting slaves and studied for the ministry. With his good friend, William Wilberforce, he led the movement to banish slavery from England which succeeded in 1834. To the end of his life, he never forgot how the grace of God had delivered him from a life of sin and brought him into the kingdom of God. One of the last things he said was, "My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things, I am a great sinner and Christ is a great Savior." What do you think John Newton would reply if you said, "John, now that you have been forgiven and accepted by God's grace, why bother to be good? Why not go out and live it up?"

What would he say?" "GOD FORBID! How can anyone who has been saved by God's grace possibly want to do such a thing?" John Newton was saved by grace and he never forgot it, but he lived a life filled with doing good because he was grateful to God!

Brothers and sisters, you and I are called to do the same thing! We are NOT saved by being good, we are saved by trusting Jesus. BUT when we are saved by Jesus, we will want to do good, not to appease an angry God, but to thank a merciful God. This is what we Christians need to remember, especially when we gather to celebrate Holy Communion!

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now am found. Was blind, but now I see."

Brothers and sisters, if you and I believe these words, then we will go out and try to do good things and live good lives - NOT in order to earn God's forgiveness, but to show our gratitude for the forgiveness which God has already given us in Jesus! AMEN!

Rev. Steve Nicholas

Trustee News

The Trustees met on July 18th. Repairs and updates continue to be done on the parsonage. Thank you to all who have been contributing to the work there! Repairs for the church and annex were discussed as well and will move forward as necessary.



Total Income & Offerings from Sundays 06/05/2022 to 06/26/2022:

General	\$5,913.00
Refurbishing	\$226.00
Parking	\$50.00
Memorial Fund (In memory of Rudy Moore)	\$250.00
2023 Daily Text	\$36.45
TOTAL	\$6,475.45

Upcoming Worship Services

August 14th - Rev. Dick Godfrey
August 21st - Mr. Lloyd Purswell
August 28th - Rev. Terry Folk
September 4th - Rev. Steve Nicholas
September 11th - Rev. Dick Godfrey

Summer Worship schedule - We will be holding worship services downstairs starting Sunday, June 4th. (We will continue to use the blue worship hymnal.)

The offering plate will be placed on the communion table instead of in the back for future services.

The communion elements will be placed on the communion table using the glass cups and wafers for future services. Members will be asked to come up to take the elements back to the pews with them.

Did you know...

We have an online giving portal! If you prefer to catch the service via Zoom you can send your offering online! Just go to

- mmfa.info
- click Giving Portal at the top
- Click 'F' and select First Moravian Church - York, PA

If you prefer to mail your offering you can send it direct to:

Wanda Hendricks
3715 Fox Chase Drive
Dover, PA 17315

August Birthdays

- 8 Sherry Campanella
- 11 Rev. Terry Folk*
- 14 Judy Martin
William Austin
- 16 Elisabeth Taylor
- 18 Sam Pauley
- 19 Binky Gehly*
- 21 Rev. Steve Nicholas
- 24 Don Eckert
Jason Martin

August Anniversaries

- 9 Larry & Jeannette Sprengle
- 13 Justin & Lindsey Messersmith
- 14 Stanley & Judith Martin
- 22 Rev. Stephen & Kathie Nicholas
- 25 William & Carol Austin



Prayer Concerns

- Amy Ardison (Betsy Senft's sister)
- Pastor Jeff Coppage
- Ann Coppage
- Don Eckert
- Mary Jones
- Kathie Nicholas
- Karrie Rishel
- Cliff & Elaine Rowell
- Ruth & Clair Seiple

For pastoral care until
our new Pastor is received,
please feel free to call any of the
3 elders listed below.

Jeannette Sprengle 717-225-4304

John Knokey 717-848-9220

Steve Nicholas 717- 755-7412

***Please do not call Steve
on a Monday***

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2022 Watchword

“Happy is the one who trusts in you, O lord of hosts.”

Psalm 84:12