

April 7, 2018

Reflections

ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

*Romans 8:38-39
(NASB)*

The Right Response

When it comes to getting ahead in life, it is important to know the right response. Take, for instance, the humble traffic light. Everyone knows that red means “stop,” green means “go,” and yellow means, “go very fast.” Imagine you are three months behind on your mortgage, your spouse just walked out because of your money problems, and your child has run away from home. When your neighbor bumps into you and asks, “How are you?”, what is the right response? Correct! “I’m fine.” When there is a grease fire in kitchen, you don’t throw water on it or use a hand towel to put it out. You smother the flames with something nonflammable, like a pot lid.

The apostle Paul was also concerned with right response. In the first eight chapters of Romans, he laid out God’s gracious plan of salvation. In chapters nine through eleven, he got sidetracked a bit by the fate of the Jewish people. But then he returned to what he was talking about at the end of chapter eight and explained in the first few verses of chapter twelve the right response to God’s grace.

In Romans 8:31-39, Paul reminded his readers of our deliverance from bondage by the Father, our victory in Christ, and our receiving of the Holy Spirit, which demonstrate that God is for us. No one can overrule the Father, who has justified us—declared us right with Him—through His Son’s sacrificial death. Jesus pleads (intercedes) for us even now, defending us before the throne because we belong to Him. No earthly difficulty can separate us from God’s love. Not even death can separate us from God, even though Christians are at times “sheep to be slaughtered.” We are more than conquerors, Paul wrote, because death is defeated. Even better, no heavenly power can separate us from God’s love, either. And because of all that, our right response, found in Romans 12:1-2, is to worship God.

Jesus loved us so much He died on the cross for us. That’s what we remember when we take communion. Because He is on our side—and we know Jesus is on our side because He is even now pleading (interceding) for us in heaven—we know nothing can separate us from His love. Not even death, for Jesus has conquered death and has raised us to new life, such that we are more than conquerors in that regard. What other response can we have to what Jesus has done other than attend to God in worship?

Just as the right response to a traffic light is to proceed if it is green, to stop if it is red, and to speed up if it is yellow, so the right response to the Father’s love for me is to worship. Just as the right response to the phrase, “How are you?” is “Fine,” whether I’m fine or not, so the right response to Jesus’ death for me is to worship. Just as the right response to a grease fire is to smother it with a lid or some other nonflammable object, so the right response to the Spirit’s presence in me is to worship. We gather here every week for worshiping God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, through whom we have been delivered from our sin, found victory over death, and are helped in our weakness. Come, then, and let us worship.

*Pray for our church plant
in Clifton Park, NY.*

Pray With Us

Elaine Michaels: Thankful that God is in control.

Amber Davis: Continue to pray for James as he transitions back into their family. Ian is in California for his grandmother's funeral, please pray for him and her family. May God be with Ian as he travels home this week.

Casey Greene: Pray for those families who lost middle school teens in an auto accident.

Chantel Bink: At Wednesday night YF there were newcomers. The salvation message was presented and many asked questions, pray the Holy Spirit works in each heart. Her friend Sam who lives in Arizona recently found out her mom, who lives in here, has stage four cancer with no treatment options. May God's peace and comfort be with them all. Chantel is again not feeling well, pray that God helps her to be healthy to do her job and guide the upcoming youth camp.

Teresa Zema: Her sister Peggy is home recovering. Thankful for all our prayers and may she be completely healed.

Bob Michaels: Their son Pastor Josh and fiancé Lindsey will be getting married on May 12, 2018. Bob's sister Sandy is home pray that she has peace of mind.

Matt Olson: Juliet and her daughter Joy Lynn will be alone for Monday to Thursday as husband, Jason is away for training. Pray all goes well for them all.

Bryan Manning: Landon is home with a sore throat, pray that he heals soon.

Jeff Morstad: His wife Pauline is home as their daughter, Jacqueline and Pauline's mom Ellen have the stomach flu. May they all be healthy soon.

Paula Dibble: A friend Suzanne's mom passed away suddenly, pray for Suzanne and her husband for peace of mind.

*Berlin Youth Fellowship,
Monday, 6:30-8:00 pm
(grades K-12)*

Weekly Events

Women's Bible Study, Evening study Tuesdays, 7 pm in the church library.
Daytime study Wednesdays at 10 am in the church library.

Bennington YF, Wednesdays, 6 pm, at the Bennington Rec Center.

Men's Bible Study, Thursdays, 7 pm in the church library (next meeting 4/19).

Upcoming Events

Advisory Board Meeting, April 19, 6:30 pm in the fellowship hall.

Quarterly Business Meeting, Sunday, April 22, 2 pm.

April Operation Christmas Child Collection: Toys for boys (small cars, balls, magnets, stickers, puzzles, marbles, yo-yos, and so on).

Baby Quilt Squares: We have two baby quilts to make for expectant mothers in our church. If you are interested in doing a square, let Dorothy Stall know. She hopes to collect the squares by April 21st.

Middle School Camp needs a cook. If you are interested see Chantel Bink.