



2008 TCW Trip to St. Louis

By Seth Witte



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What's Your Life Worth?

By Pastor Joe Johnson

True North would like to congratulate all graduates including those graduating from the University of Minnesota! God's richest blessings on your future!

This past spring break, True North sent two teams of four students each to help out two congregations through a WELS Kingdom Workers' sponsored program called Travel Canvas Witnessing (TCW). One was in Atlanta, Georgia and the other near St. Louis, Missouri. I had the privilege

of being part of the team that went to St. Louis.

Emily Mierendorf, Adam Lapacz, Lizzie Schimmel and I were assigned to Good Shepherd Ev. Lutheran church located in a western suburb of St. Louis. Our goal was to help Good Shepherd's staff minister, Jim Boggs,

prepare for Easter weekend.

We arrived on Palm Sunday and stayed till Easter Sunday. Jim Boggs had an itinerary for the entire week, so we were kept busy most of the time. His main goal for our team was to canvas to the surrounding neighborhoods

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It Doesn't Matter

Too often I catch myself thinking "it doesn't matter" instead of standing up for a cause that truly does matter. The University of Minnesota Campus offers a unique opportunity to hear so many varying viewpoints. This atmosphere can often be informative and eye-opening. Unfortunately, some of these experiences can also be eternally misleading.

The Religious Coalition for Reproductive

Choice, for example, uses excerpts from various Christian denominations' official statements to argue that "Pro-Life" and Christianity are not mutually exclusive. But what ideas, even "Christian" ideas, have swayed this life-and-death issue from a matter of right and wrong to a seemingly gray area? The Presbyterian Church states, "Problem pregnancies are the result of, and influenced by, so many complicated and in-

solvable circumstances that we have neither the wisdom nor the authority to address or decided each situation.¹" As sinful humans, we do often lack the wisdom necessary to see the plan He has laid out for us, but fortunately "we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:28)."

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Paths

Almost 7 years ago I stepped onto the campus of the U of M ready to start my college years. I also had the opportunity to become involved with a small campus ministry that was just beginning to spread its roots and reach out to the many students on campus. I am very thankful for those

years from 2001 to 2005. I found a place to grow in my faith and my relationship with God. I found some friends who are now some of my best friends. I found Jason, a loving husband who has led me to places I never imagined I would be 7 years ago. Jason and I are

By Amanda Paltzer

living in Lusaka, Zambia in south central Africa. We are working with the Lutheran Health and Development (H&D) Program in conjunction with the WELS Lutheran Mission Zambia

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It Doesn't Matter (...continued from page 1)

By Hilarie Johnson

The United Methodist Church says, "While individuals have always had some degree of control over when they die, they now have the awesome power to determine when and even whether new individuals will be born."² Fortunately for us selfish, short-sided humans, God has *not* entrusted us with the unbearable task of creating or terminating our life or anyone else's. As Deuteronomy 32:30 points out, "There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life..." These straying details amongst our Christian brothers are simply proof that God's Word *does* matter. With so many choices in our life, we can truly rejoice with David saying, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path (Psalm 119:105)."

John 8:31,32 reminds us "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." God makes the truth about "reproductive choice" clear—the choice is His. "The LORD brings death and makes alive; he brings down to the grave and raises up (1 Sam 2:6)." The United Church of Christ "upholds the right of men and women to have access to...safe, legal abortions."³ Our Lord and Savior, "who wants all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim 2:3,4)," did not give us what we rightfully deserved but even gave up his rights to give the ultimate gift of life-eternal life for the soul. Certainly, human life *does* matter to God.

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body (I Cor 6:19,20)." In this way, everything we say and do should be

a zealous reflection of the Holy Spirit within us. God gives us the ultimate outreach task—"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:20)." This holy fervor will then penetrate all aspects of daily life, not simply be quarantined to the church pew, but shine through us when we chat on our lunch breaks, attend the big game with friends, or enter the polling place. "Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Matt 20:28)," so we, too, are commissioned to serve others. Christ preformed the greatest community act of all, sacrificing himself in our place. We can follow his example and be involved within our communities as well because our involvement *does* matter.

The pro-choice leniency is more than prevalent at the University of Minnesota in the form of Feminists' Rights Club, the U of M Pro-Choice Coalition, and the U-DFL. The pro-life belief is most often a quiet undercurrent held by only a religious or politically conservative few. Occasionally, this quiet ideal becomes momentarily outspoken. Recently a large, graphic display of the cruelty abortion inherently is occupied the Coffman Memorial Student Union front lawn. Unfortunately, this voice for the unborn did not speak of Christ's love for all beings. God's Word on the other hand gives the motivation for why we value life and the key to eternal life; they are one and the same—the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ who valued all the children of Eve, born or unborn.

¹Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), From "Problem Pregnancies and Abortion," 1992 ²United Methodist Church, 2004 ³United Church of Christ, 1987

STANDING IN AWE

MARVELING AT THE WONDERS OF GOD'S CREATION

Science and the Enigmatic

By Wendy Brat-



In my three years pursuing a degree in genetics, I've heard many professors casually dismiss the idea of faith. Science requires physical evidence, which leaves no room for God, and most certainly not a God who involves Himself in our daily lives.

The complexity of life on earth

gives rise to many questions. Science believes that faith means turning your back

on finding answers. One question that remains seemingly unanswerable is why organisms put themselves at risk to help others. It happens universally across the animal kingdom for reasons,

science says, are completely selfish. For instance, if you help your offspring, then your genes will be propagated. However, science also says that evolution acts on individuals, so

helping your relatives is no more useful to you than helping a total stranger.

Also, we are often even compelled to help our enemies.

This desire to help even at our own expense is the very essence of our idea of a God who exists outside of space and time that is far beyond our simple reasoning. My studies have put me in awe of not only His creation, but also His ultimate act of helping others in the sacrifice of His Son.

"My studies have put me in awe of not only [God's] creation, but also His ultimate act of helping others in the sacrifice of His Son."

Wendy Bratten, a Maple Grove, MN, native, is a junior majoring

ON ASSIGNMENT

ALUMNI NEWS



Paths (...continued from page 1)

By Amanda Paltzer

(LMZ) and the Lutheran Church of Central Africa (LCCA). The road has been winding and uncertain at times with Jason starting as a volunteer with the Central Africa Medical Mission (CAMM) and then becoming a director of the newly established H&D Program. This program deals with a number of issues within Zambia and within the LCCA. We have two Zambian staff who work with us. To check out more about what the H&D Program is go to our website:

www.healthLCCA.com

The work definitely has its challenges, successes and failures. The vision of the program is to promote discipleship among the members of the LCCA while also providing for some physical needs. Many people are in need, not just physically but also spiritually. We ask for your prayers in leading a program that is God-pleasing and builds up the church.

Jason has found joy in teaching a class with the seminary students from Malawi and Zambia at the LCCA seminary in Lusaka. He teaches a public health course (he has a Masters in Public Health). He aims to bring the students to understand different influences and effects of health, and to show them ways to promote a healthy life, family, and congregation. He has also joined some of the students in a Greek course as he pursues theological education.



Jason and Amanda Paltzer on the Kafue River near the Kafue Gorge

I am putting some of my nutrition education from the U to work. I teach a cooking and nutrition class with the wives of the seminary students. We make new recipes that incorporate their local foods but may add new ingredients or new methods of cooking. I also conduct nutrition counseling at 3 private medical clinics in Lusaka. God has definitely led me to trust in him with work opportunities. Even though nutrition is very important there are few formal opportunities in Zambia, especially for a foreigner.

Jason and I have the wonderful blessing of growing together in our faith in Zambia. We have a great Bible study every week with the missionaries in Lusaka and we have a lot of time for personal Bible study. We have many older missionaries who teach us so many things about the Lord and we have grown tremendously in our time here through the challenges and joys.

Jason and I will be going down another new path in October when we are expecting our first child. We praise God for giving us this amazing blessing and thank him for the opportunity to learn about selflessness and love. We will see a clear demonstration of how much he cares for us and loves us when we are caring for our little one who is completely dependent on us. We know that wherever the Lord leads us in the paths ahead, he will be guiding our steps. May God bless and keep you wherever he leads you in your life.

2008 TCW Trip to St. Louis (...continued from page 1)

By Seth Witte

and invite people to the Easter services. The main outreach at Good Shepherd is a pre-school because of the magnitude of young families that live close to the church. Naturally, Good Shepherd had planned on having an "Easter for Kids" that consisted of an Easter story skit performed by my team, which turned out great, more Bible stories, pizza, and crafts. Unfortunately, I'm not too great with kids. I just looked at one during "Easter for Kids", and he hid under the table! I was then given tasks that didn't involve interaction with the children.

Good Shepherd's congregation was extremely hospitable. They had two host families lined up for us to live with for the week. Every meal was provided by a different family in the congregation. Some had us over to their house. Some brought food to the church, and others straight up gave us cash! I couldn't complain.

Overall, the week was a success. We served our Lord and were taken care of like the original apostles. I will definitely consider TCW for spring break 2009, and I hope more WELS college students around the US consider TCW as well.



[from left] Seth Witte, Lizzie Schimmel, Emily Mierendorf, and Adam Lapacz spent their Spring Break in Missouri on a Travel Canvas Witness Trip.

EQUIPPING THE SAINTS



CONVERSATIONS TO SHARE WITH UNBELIEVERS

Equipping the Saints, another regular addition to "The Compass," is a series of scriptural answers to modern-day topics with the aim of equipping Christian brothers and sisters with BIBLICAL tools for conversing with unbelievers.

Parasitic Human Life

Is human life of any intrinsic value, or can it be disposed of when inconvenient? Does human life have value in and of itself, or can it become parasitic? Let's make this more personal. Is your life or my life worth anything? The answers to these questions may seem obvious, but look around you. How often do we as a nation or society treat humans as nothing more than parasites?

The sad fact of the matter is that our society does not have a high regard for human life. Babies are left in garbage cans. High school students arm themselves to kill as many of their classmates as they can. Men kill themselves after murdering their children. What value does human life have?

What makes you think your human life is of value? Is it what you do with your life that gives it value? What if you don't do anything spectacular? Will your life have been worthless? What about your first years on this planet when you could do nothing but cry? Was

your life then less valuable than it is now?

Your life does have value! In fact your life is priceless! And it has this value no matter what anyone says or thinks or even how you feel. Here is why you and everyone you know is so special and valuable.

The first reason is that you are a unique creation of God. King David praised God for this when he said, "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made." There is never going to be another person like you in this universe—God made you one of a kind. God is the one who gives value to human life.

And look at how highly God values your life. He knows that you are going through this life, and you are not perfect. He knows the things you have done that fill you with shame and sorrow. He also knows that someday you will die and must face the consequences for how you used your life. But because he loves and values you so much, he had to intervene. The Bible says, **"This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son**

into the world that we might live through him." How much did God value and love you? Enough to send Jesus his Son into the world for you. And look at how much Jesus values you. The Bible says Jesus is **"the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world."** God the Father loved you enough to send his Son. God the Son loved you enough to give his life to save you. Because Jesus died for you, your life has value! That is not changed by parents who don't think much of you. It is not changed when your boyfriend or girlfriend criticizes or treats you like dirt. It doesn't even matter how society or the government feels about you. God thinks you are special. God loves you enough to create you and to die for you. God knows everything there is to know about you, and he wants you to get to know him.

This is an excerpt from the brochure entitled "Parasitic Human Life." To view and print the brochure in it's

For a WELS Campus Ministry near you contact Karen Marshall at 414-256-3279 or email her at Karen.Marshall@sab.wels.net or access the church locator at www.wels.net.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SUMMER SCHEDULE

Beginning Wednesday, May 28th 'til August 6th

BBQ Bible Study 6/7pm

Join us every Wednesday at Pastor & Val's for dinner and Bible study. Call or e-mail for directions.

Dinner at 6pm and study starts around 7pm.

September 5th **Sunday Worship resumes 11am**

Weekly Schedule:

Sundays

Services available at a variety of WELS churches in the Twin Cities. Call or check out the church locator at www.wels.net

BBQ Bible Study at Pastor Johnson's

Wednesdays 6:00PM

The Battle Within

Anonymous

As I go through each day
my mind flips between right and wrong,
between following what I know to be right
and following what I want.
It's a black and white difference.
No transitions between my thoughts-
like a maze filled with dead ends
and no way out.
I wander through my mind,
climbing over walls
that block my way
only to find another dead end
and still unable to make sense
of the ideas in my head.

Do you not know that
your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit...
you are not your own,
you were bought at price...
honor God with your body.
I will praise you because
I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
I will never leave you or forsake you.
You will not be tempted
beyond what you can bear.
So whether you eat or drink
or whatever you do,
do it all to the glory of God.

I begin to falter and lose my focus
suddenly my thoughts change-
Meaningless! Meaningless!...
Everything is meaningless.
How did I get here?
Life had been going so well!

I turn around to try to get back to where I
was before.
Instead I'm faced with a mirror
But the girl in the mirror isn't me.

Who are those glamour queens in size
two jeans?
Making me look in the mirror

And hate what I see
Making me ugly and awkward
Making me eat rice cakes
And whatever it takes
To be like those glamour queens in size
two jeans And who are they anyway?
Making me punish myself
hate myself
hurt myself
Because I have no will
Like those glamour queens in size two
jeans And who are they anyway?
Those glamour queens in size two jeans
Making me feel disgusted when I give in
To the temptations of sin
And WHY is it sin to
Feed our bodies
To FEED our bodies
To NURTURE ourselves
To LOVE our bodies
To BE ourselves
And NOT one of those glamour queens
in size two jeans?

I scramble away from the mirror
looking for happier thoughts.
There are many passage ways
filled with sharp objects
and sinks to wash the stain away.
I won't walk down those halls
because I know where they end.
I find myself trapped with my thoughts.
Do you ever wonder what it would be
like to be a bird?
To fly over the lands and the waters of
the earth To sing in the bright, clear
morning To be free like you always
wanted to be Do you ever wonder what
it would be like to be the wind?
To go everywhere without being seen,
only heard To transform into a tornado

having the power to destroy To be
strong like you always wanted to be
Do you ever wonder what it would be
like to be a diary?
To hold and to share the deepest se-
crets of a person To be the only one
to know the real truth To be trustful of
people like you always wanted to be
Do you ever wonder what it would be
like to be free?
I know I do...

Not wanting to face anymore of the
maze
I sit down and cry.
Suddenly, I know that I'm not alone in
the maze.
I am strong when I am in His hands.
He watches over my coming and go-
ing.
I may be lost,
but He knows where I'm going.
And after my skin has been destroyed,
yet in my flesh I will see God;
I myself will see him
with my own eyes-I and not another.
How my heart yearns within me!

*If you or someone you know is strug-
gling with these very thoughts, please
visit www.wlcf.org for help and heal-
ing through Jesus Christ.*

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Devotion... What's Your Life Worth?

By Pastor Joe Johnson

“On 19 September (1990), a student at Delhi University named Rajiv Goswami set himself on fire in protest against the acceptance of the Mandal Commission report. He was badly burned, but he survived. Other students inspired to follow his example. These self-immolators were all upper-caste, and their own hopes for obtaining a government job were now being undermined. All together, there were nearly 200 suicide attempts—and sixty-two students succumbed to their injuries.”

What would you set yourself on fire for? Rajiv and many others felt that the fight against the Mandal Commission's “affirmative action” was worth their lives. I may question their wisdom but I am impressed with their passion and commitment. They believed so strongly in their cause that they literally stopped at nothing.

What do you believe in? What are you willing to give your life for and in the cause of? What do you love more than life itself? You know what's crazy? If we asked Jesus what he loved more than his own life—his answer—YOU! Think of that, Jesus gave his life to save his enemies, to save people who love themselves more than they love what is

good and right. He gave his life to save us, talk about throwing your life away! Which of us would give our life for some ants and yet Jesus the very Creator gives his life for a creation that didn't want anything to do with him. That's amazing, that God would put that much value on human life.

So what's your answer? You can give your life in service of your country. You can give your life to your family and fellow man. You can even give your life for some political cause. But unless you are first giving your whole life and heart to the Lord—you're just throwing your life away. Jesus paid far too high a price for you to do that! ²⁴ **Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. ²⁶ What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matthew 16:24-26)**

¹India After Gandhi by Ramachandra Guha p. 600

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