

Reaching an ever-changing world with God's never-changing Word!

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May 2023



Pastor Kent

"But he answered, 'It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"
(Matthew 4:4 ESV)

We are approaching the time of year when our confirmands will stand before us confessing their faith in Christ. We're approaching the time of year when we'll celebrate our high school graduates, as many of them prepare to move out of the area. And, statistically speaking, this is the time when many of them stop going to church.

Many, as they are confirmed, view it as a graduation of sorts. As they have made it through confirmation, they now view church attendance as an optional exercise. And many parents, at this point in their child's life, no longer insist on church attendance.

As our young people move out of their parent's home, and experience independence for the very

first time, they also tend to stop attending church. They stop attending church, preferring to sleep in on Sunday mornings. And they stop attending church as an expression of questions and doubts which have been present for some time.

And let's face it: Many adults view church attendance as optional as well. We view it as unnecessary. We see it as a tradition. We view it as something to do when we don't have other plans. And we attend seeking to feel good about ourselves.

It's true, of course, that we don't earn God's forgiveness and mercy by going to church. We must not make our worship of the Lord a legalistic exercise. But we fail to realize that, by our failure to worship, we miss out on the blessing of God.

Attending worship, you see, isn't so much about doing something for God. It's not an act on our part to please him. And it's not an act by which we merit brownie points.

It's about receiving a blessing that God has for us. It's about receiving the grace of God, offered to us in his

Word and Sacrament. It's about being fed with that which nourishes us for life eternal.

This is what Jesus was getting at in the passage above. This is what was being emphasized in Deuteronomy 8:3, which Jesus was quoting. Our life isn't sustained by bread alone. It's sustained by the Word of God.

Just as we understand food to be necessary for life, so should we understand the Word of God. Apart from the Word of God, we cannot have faith. And, apart from the Word of God, we cannot be saved.

Scripture tells us that we are brought to faith through the Word of God (Romans 10:13-17). It tells us that, as we hear the Word of God, we are enabled to believe. And, in this way, we receive the grace of God.

In addition, this is how our faith is nourished. It's how our faith is sustained. And it's how our faith in Christ grows.

Realizing this nurturing aspect of God's Word, then, we naturally desire to receive it. We naturally desire to hear it as it's taught and preached. And we naturally desire to gather with our fellow believers to study it.



Prayer request

Prince of Peace is part of a community wide prayer chain. If you have something you would like added to the prayer chain – please email or call the church office.

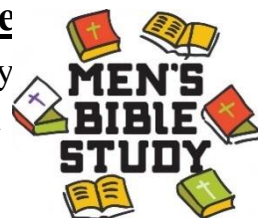
Threads of Love Quilters



Our quilting ladies meet on Wednesday mornings @ 9am. All are welcome! It is a wonderful time of working together and fellowship. Our quilters are planning on meeting through the month of May then resuming in September.

Men's Breakfast & Bible Study

Join us Saturday May 20@ 7am for study, food and fellowship.



Sunday School Corner

We are already into our last month of Sunday School. Our last day of class will be May 7th. On May 14th we will sing for church and recite a Psalm that we memorized this year. I appreciate the teacher's faithfulness for preparing and teaching the lessons. I also am thankful that you as parents feel it is important to instill God's word into your child's life and have faithfully brought them.

In His Hands, Donna Bieri



From Hunger to Hope

We plan to serve muffins, turnovers, and fruit during fellowship time on May 14th to celebrate the end of the SS year and graduation recognition. We appreciate all of your prayers, help and support tremendously!! It is very humbling to see what we have accomplished in a little over 2 months. God is definitely working in this congregation! Your love for starving children whom we haven't ever met is unwavering! Our mobile pack is scheduled for September 8th and 9th.



Radio Broadcast

Please contact the church office if you are interested in sponsoring a Sunday radio broadcast. The cost is \$40. The radio broadcast is heard on Sundays at 11:30am on KDKT 1410 AM. Available Sundays to sponsor are May 7, 14, 21 & 28 and June 4, 11, 18, 25. Please email or call the church office to reserve a Sunday to sponsor.



If you can not be with us in our Sanctuary for worship, please know that our service is available on YouTube. You can access the link via our Facebook page or subscribe to Prince of Peace Free Lutheran Church Beulah ND



VBS is fast approaching and we are in need of volunteers! We need class leaders (no teaching required, just supervision!), class helpers, craft leaders, craft helpers and a PreK teacher (Pastor Kent will be teaching the lesson for all grades, except PreK).

We are also asking for food donations, please see the sign up list in the back of the fellowship hall or use the link to indicate what you can bless VBS with this

year: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0944A8A82EAAAFAC70-vbs20231>



Registration forms can be found in the back of the fellowship hall. (ages 4 by Aug 1 through 6th grade) We are trying something new this year and offering online registration as well!

This can be completed using the following link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0944A8A82EAAAFAC70-vbs20231>

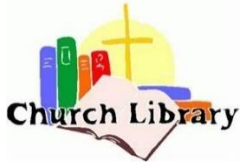


VBS is also in need of your old photo frames! Donations of 5x7 or 8x10 frames would be greatly appreciated for one of the children's crafts!

Thank you for your help, support and generosity!

Graduate
recognition
Sunday is
May 14!





I have still been plugging away on the library, tons of progress has been made! All of the books & movies have been cataloged through Libib. The next step is to get new stickers on all the items to match the system. I am still working on this. TONS of new books have been purchased and donated. Please stop by and check it out! Please keep in mind things are still in progress and not yet complete. Please contact Kelsey Glynn if you have any questions 710-0616. Also, thanks to a Thrivent card a 50" flat screen TV has been purchased and mounted in the library to display library announcements and to be used for bible studies and meetings.

Library website: www.libib.com/u/poplibrary

Communion prep for May

Tad & Gina Feist

Communion prep for June

Darrin & Leeta Olin

POP Worship Attendance

03-19 - 161
03-22 - 58 Lent
03-26 - 164
03-29 - 70 Lent
04-02 - 170 Palm Sunday
04-06 - 68 Maundy Thursday
04-07 - 103 Good Friday
04-09 - 42 Easter Sunrise Service
04-09 - 207 Resurrection Service
04-16 - 168
04-23 - 158

Confirmation Sunday

Is May 7 during our Sunday Morning worship at 9am.

Devotionals

We have a large selection of devotionals for you to choose from at the back of the Sanctuary. Pick one up for yourself or someone you know!

Noisy Offering

Our Sunday School children will be collecting change in our noisy offering on Sunday, May 21. Bring your pockets full of change if you are interested! This month's offering will benefit our **Vacation Bible School**.

Fellowship for May 2023

May 7 : Jeremy & Heather Brandt

May 14: Jay & Karen Seibel, Vern & Karla Boehm

May 21: Gary & Susan Miller, David & Stephanie Hottman

May 28: Doe family, Dan & Rebecah Martin

Fellowship for June 2023

June 4 : Garrett & Anna Sayler, John & Carmen Mohl

June 11: Angie Wanzek, Nancy Wright, Fred & Donna Bierl

June 18: Bill & Kris Keller, Carl & Bev Sorensen

June 25: Bernard & Judy Tolosky, Lynell Renner, Anna Novak

Ushers for May 2023

May 7 : Hottman family, Jared Glynn

May 14: John & Carmen Mohl, Frank & Sarah Senn

May 21: Marvin & Jan Sigman, Bill & Kris Keller, Vern & Lisa Pederson

May 28: Jerry & Marlys Reichenberg, Klaudts

Ushers for June 2023

June 4 : David & Stephanie Hottman, Jared Glynn

June 11: John & Carmen Mohl, Frank & Sarah Senn

June 18: Marvin & Janice Sigman, Bill & Kris Keller, Lisa & Vern Pederson

June 25: Jerry & Marlys Reichenberg, Kacey & Michelle Klaudt



Prince of Peace
Women's Missionary
Federation (WMF)

***The Mission of the WMF of Prince of Peace
is to study and share the Good News of Jesus, through
word and deed, at home, in our community and
throughout the world.***

Our next WMF Bible Study will be Monday, May 15 at 10:30 am and 6:30 pm. We will be looking at "Rahab- The kindness of God- Kindness".

It dawned on me as we went through the lesson 4- "Tamar-She is more righteous than I- Righteousness" that the word in italics isn't just referring to God but to the woman we are studying. Tamar committed adultery with her father-in-law, Judah. Judah found out that Tamar was pregnant and said that she should be killed. Tamar had proof that Judah was the father of her child, that she was the prostitute he had slept with. Judah is the one who said "She is more righteous than I" because he had not kept his promise to bring her to his youngest son, Shelah. God worked this thing for good, for His purpose. Tamar and her son Perez are listed as descendants of Judah and are part of Jesus's ancestry (See Matthew 1:3a.) The story of Tamar can be found in Genesis 37:12-36 and Genesis.

I looked back at Lessons 3, 2 and 1: "Leah-This time I will praise the Lord- Steadfast Love", "Hagar- The God who sees me- Known", and "Eve- Rescued from Shame- Forgiven". Leah was the bride Jacob didn't love but she could praise the Lord for her children and be a faithful wife. Hagar was sent out to the wilderness with her son Ishmael and was ready to die but God met her there and spoke to her. She was known by God and she recognized God herself. Eve was the original sinner along with her husband. God covered her shame with animal skins and in spite of the curse that resulted from this sin, DEATH, Eve and all humanity were promised a Savior. We are forgiven.

There are still a few Bible study books in the back of the church. Take one and see what you think. Come

to one of the Bible Study times. I learn so much studying with others.

We meet every Wednesday at 10:30 in the fellowship hall. All women are welcome. Besides keeping up on Missionary activities and needs we have good fellowship. Happy Spring! Happy Mother's Day!

In His hands,
Judy

**VIEW OUR
CHURCH
DIRECTORY
ON YOUR MOBILE
DEVICE!**

FREE App for iPhone, iPad
& Android

Our church directory is a great resource tool that allows you to get to know our church family better!

Simply go to the App Store, search for *Instant Church Directory* and download the FREE app to begin.

You will use your email address listed in the directory to **CREATE A LOGIN** the first time you use the directory app.

If you're not listed in the directory, **OR** if you have trouble logging into the app, please contact the church office.

Available on the App Store | Get it on Google play

In order to log into the POP church directory – please use the email address that you have supplied to the church office. If you have any problems, please contact the office.

Warehouse Report

As we look and see that the grass is starting to turn green and come back to life. We feel warm inside. When this time of year comes around we talk about how wonderful it is, to see the green grass again. We talk about how it is coming in slowly or quickly. We talk about how thick it may be coming in this spring. We often times talk about the lawn mower that we will use to cut the growing grass, or the other tools we have to help our lawn look nice. Have you ever stopped to think about how much time we spend thinking or talking about the grass? We all know that come November we will be looking at a bunch of dead worthless grass. That is saying the grass makes it that long, it could be burned up in July with a dry summer, it could look patchy from animals or grandkids destroying parts of it. I'm not saying that we should let our yards grow into jungles and have them look terrible. But, imagine if you took half the time you talk or spend on the grass, and shared the Gospel with those around you. What would that look like? I will admit that if you did that, you probably wouldn't have the best looking yard in the neighborhood. It might look like a small group meeting in your home. Or a neighbor coming to know Jesus as Lord and savior. The next time you invest in your grass, I want you to remember

1 Peter 1:24-25

For "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

HSYG will be moving to Sunday nights for the summer. Starting May 28 this will continue until school starts in the fall. Start time will still be 7pm. Because of camps there will not be HSYG on July 2,9,23.

MSBS will be meeting every Thursday throughout the summer, 3-5pm. With a few weeks off because of camps this summer, no msbs june 15, july 6 and 27.



July 2-9 in Estes Park Co – contact Cody for more information!



Mon-Dak-Ada

AFLC District family camp
Sunday Evening, July 23 - Thursday
noon, July 27, 2023.
Mt. Carmel—Towner ND
Brochures available!



From the Chairman

Open Manholes

I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it, I do what I hate.

Romans 7:15

It happens in an instant. One minute you walking and whistling, the next you are wide-eyed and falling, Satan yanks back the manhole cover, and an innocent afternoon stroll becomes a horror story. Helplessly you tumble, unable to gain control.

Such is the pattern of sudden sin. Can you relate to it?

No one who is reading these words is free from the treachery of sudden sin. This demon of hell can scale the highest monastery wall, penetrate the deepest faith, and desecrate the purest home.

Want to sharpen your defenses a bit? First recognize Satan. Our war is not with flesh and blood but with Satan himself. Call him by name. Rip off his mask. When the urge to sin rears its ugly head, look him squarely in the eye and call his bluff. "Get behind me Satan!"

Second, accept God's forgiveness. Romans Chapter 7 is the Emancipation Proclamation for those of us who have a tendency to tumble.

"Thanks be to God, who delivers me though Jesus Christ our Lord!.... Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 7:25-8:1).

Amen. There it is. For those in Christ this is no condemnation. Absolutely none. Claim the promise. Accept the cleansing. Throw out the

guilt. Praise the Lord. And Watch out for open manholes. Marvin C. Sigman

May Birthdays

1-May	Jake Sperry
2-May	Heather Funk
2-May	Lisa Lenzen
2-May	Kameron Plienis
3-May	Maiya West
5-May	Kayla Palmer
6-May	Emily Wenning
7-May	Ross Lenzen
8-May	Izabelle Gooss
11-May	Dara Hausauer
11-May	Kermit Wiest
12-May	Betty Hausauer
14-May	Scott Funk
14-May	Karen Knell
15-May	Rachel Sperry
16-May	Joette Buchmann
18-May	Teresa Klipfel
18-May	Hannah Krebbs
19-May	Mariah Richter
20-May	Anna Iverson
20-May	Jason Mohl
20-May	Eric Timmer
22-May	Heather Brandt
22-May	Samantha Flemmer
22-May	David Hottman
23-May	Joyce Bauer
23-May	Ty Schaper
24-May	Zoe Placke
24-May	Gary Renner
27-May	Sierra Vasilakes
29-May	Tom Doe
30-May	Karingtyn Reinhardt
30-May	Garner Sailer
30-May	Violet Schnaidt
31-May	Bryan Aalund
31-May	Dan Martin

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

April 13, 2023

President's Report – Marvin Sigman

He worked with FMSC in Dodge, went to Deacons meeting and went to the Easter Breakfast. Marvin, Carl Sorensen and John Mohl went to Bismarck for the planning meeting for the new AFLC church.

Pastor's Report – Pastor Kent

A majority of the month was spent on the Uganda mission trip, representing the AFLC World Mission Board. My primary role was to serve as a mediator between the director, along with the rest of the Board, and the missionaries. This went well. I was also able to take part in a retreat consisting of our missionaries and Ugandan leadership, casting a vision for the future of the ministry. I presided at two graduations of Ambassador Institute, visited with several graduates, and took part in a couple of classes. Finally, I attended a meeting with a Finnish Lutheran group, working with Sudanese refugees in Uganda, who are looking for help.

Attended our deacons meeting and staff meetings.

Led worship at KRCC. Communed our residents at KRCC.

Confirmation is winding down. The students will take their final quiz next week. I'll then be preparing the second-year students for their confirmation ceremony.

The adult Sunday School class has continued working through our curriculum titled "Enduring Faith" which focuses on answering the difficult questions of faith with which people struggle.

Intern Pastor's Report – Joe Larson

3/8+: Meals/visits (phone and in-person) with shut-ins

3/13–30: Maintaining pastoral responsibilities with Pastor Sperry in Uganda.

3/13: Burial for Elsie W.

3/15: Funeral and Burial for Mildred H.

3/15, 22, & 29: Confirmation teaching and encouraging students to finish well.

3/19, 22, and 26: Did Lenten preaching here at POP and Adult Sunday School.

4/2: Leading of service and preaching at Trinity Parish.

4/6: Holy week preaching (Thursday at POP, Friday for community at New Life).

4/8, 12: Soundboard work, puppet ministry.

We currently can consider and accept calls. Please keep us in your prayers!

Preaching at POP: sometime after May 7th (TBD).

Youth Director's Report – Cody Halverson

Lent meals went really good. Thankful for the congregation supporting the youth.

Easter breakfast was from what I can tell a great hit going back to the bigger breakfast. Again, very thankful for the support of the congregation in helping serve and attending.

Things that are new in the youth group.

There are a couple of youth members that have started a book club we meet normally on Fridays after school. We are reading Mere Christianity by C.S Lewis

One youth has agreed/asked to be in a "discipleship program" we meet on Tuesdays after school.

We have 3 youth going to Campus Days

Middle School Bible Study is going good, there have been some bumps, that's to be expected. The group is really enjoying the deep dive into 1 Peter. They also want to meet every week throughout the summer. We are planning on still meeting Thursdays.

High School Youth Group having taken a break for lent it is great to get back into a schedule again. They also want to meet every week during the summer, we will likely move youth group to Sunday night, it works for most of the youth's schedules to move it to Sunday evenings during the summer.

Treasurers Report – Margie Lee

General Fund	\$	16,029.89
Building Fund	\$	35,866.60
Coffee Hour Fund	\$	259.58
Coat Closet	\$	558.74
Intern Fund	\$	14,224.14
Van/Storage Fund	\$	8,800.00
Total Bank Acct	\$	146,152.53

Deacon's Report – Kevin Lee

It seemed that Lent and Holy Week went well. The services were well attended. The sermon series that were shared were well received. And the Easter event, hosted by Christian Ed, was well attended by

church members and by many people not often seen.

Confirmation – Joe worked hard to get the kids caught up on work while Pastor was gone. They will be finishing up and having the last quiz shortly.

There was a meeting on March 19th regarding a possible church plant in Bismarck. Approximately 40 people attended. 9 expressed interest in helping with a plant. Prayer was encouraged, with a possible start date later this month.

POP is scheduled to serve Wednesday evening supper at Family Camp, and breakfast for the men's retreat.

As we move into summer, Pastor will be planning for fall. If there's anything you're interested in studying for Wednesday night Bible study or adult Sunday School, please give him your suggestions.

Trustees – Ryan Tolosky

List of Current Projects

Van Storage Building - ongoing, electrical feed and roof still not complete

Upgrading Church lighting - ongoing, Keith has been doing most of this

North entrance ramp - monitoring the weathering of sealant and will evaluate if a grit needs to be added.

Need to fix fascia on west roof peak

Need to add a bird screens to sanctuary furnace vents

Asphalt patch to new north ramp (didn't get done last year)

New Tasks that we have on our list

Fix up the men's stall dividers, look at the possibility of adding 1 urinal

Some lighting in Warehouse that does not work at all, troubleshoot

Will need to add topsoil and seed the area around the new north ramp

Cut in a sidewalk trough drain on SE corner near steps.

Add a handrail on SE corner new steps

Modify hand rail on east entrance to the sanctuary to allow access to new sidewalk

May want to look into resurfacing the north parking lot asphalt pad.

Move the snow fence to the north side of the new lots. Possibly.....

Christian Ed – Angie Wanzek

VBS- Our theme & material will be Keeper of the Kingdom. We will need helpers for classrooms, kitchen, & crafts. Please use your God given talents to help out.

-We will be serving a meal this year for each day of VBS. Watch for a food list donation signup sheet.

-We need a preschool teacher

-Nicole will take care of registration for the kids

-There will be a "Mom" room where mothers can visit and bring children who are too young for VBS.

Church in the Park: This will be August 27th. Chrisy Rotondo will reserve the shelter.

Discussed graduation gifts, we will continue giving the book Visual Guide to Theology. We have 3 kids this year.

Our end of the Sunday school year event will be May 14th on Mother's Day. Sunday school kids will sing.

We voted to give FMSC \$150 for teacher appreciation

Safety Team – Garrett Placke

The team discussed the security cameras and some of the issues.

Discussed the lighting in the parking lots.

The Safety Team discussed the safety film that could be applied to the south and north double doors. This film is a sticky layer that keeps the glass together if someone would hit the glass. Garrett showed the video of the recent Nashville school shooting and the video of how the film works on glass

Council discussed the need for a new Warehouse door.

Council approved purchasing the higher grade of safety film for the south and north double door to be installed by a company from Fargo. Council also approved purchasing Ring doorbells for the north and east doors.

Council discussed having a survey for the congregation to complete about their preference for locking the doors during church services.

NEW BUSINESS

Tithe - Council voted to give our Tithe of \$2,670.54 to AFLC World Missions.

New Lots North of Church – Chrisy Rotondo spoke to the council about the possibility having a community garden on the new lots. Discussion on no water being available on the lots, having raised beds, would it be for church members or the community.

Angie Wanzek mentioned that Cody talked about having a fire pit north of the parking for youth gatherings.

Correspondence

Thank you note was received from WARC for our recent donations of \$415, 10 quilts and 19 pounds of food. Also received a thank you note from Women's Care Center for our donation of \$760. Last year, every 6th child born in Burleigh County got their start at Women's Care Center.

Intern's Israel Corner – May 2023: **Caesarea**

Just before heading down to catch our flight out of Tel Aviv, our Israel team had a chance to visit Caesarea (the one by the sea, not Caesarea Philippi). Waiting for us there was the beautiful Mediterranean Sea. Smelling the salty air and basking in the toasty sun was a strange thing for me to experience in November!



But we didn't go to Caesarea just to enjoy the beach. We were there to consider some of the biblical events that occurred at this notable port. Acts speaks at length about Caesarea and its tie to Phillip and Paul, but it's Peter I want to highlight today; mainly because our Israel group was about to head from Caesarea to Tel Aviv for our flight home. Well, Peter made this journey in reverse in Acts chapter ten, going from Joppa (Joppa is known today as Joffa, a suburb of sorts to Tel Aviv) up to Caesarea.

Why did Peter have to wander up the coastline? To share the Gospel! And not just to share the Gospel with anyone, but with Cornelius, a prominent Roman centurion. Both of them having been given direction in a dream, Peter's arrival was an event of great importance. Here was a chance for the Gospel to go even to the Gentiles! I would recommend reading the whole chapter, but here is one of the key moments:

Acts 10:34–43 (ESV) — 34 So Peter opened his mouth and said [to Cornelius, his household, and all who had gathered]: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, **35** but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. **36** As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), **37** you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: **38** how God anointed

Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. **39** And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, **40** but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, **41** not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. **42** And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. **43** To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

The account ends with the Gentiles believing this Word, the Spirit working, and the household being baptized. Truly, God confirmed that the Gospel was for everyone! This was a wonderful day in Caesarea! But not every Gentile would be as ready to believe in Christ as Cornelius was. In fact, in the decades following this event, persecution from Roman Gentiles would grow stronger and stronger. Most of the disciples, including Peter, would meet their end via Roman execution.



The beach that we stood on in Caesarea had long rows of stands across from the water. These very beaches that we walked on had been used for chariot races, gladiatorial games, and the execution of Christians. There was a bloody history tied to this place, but that blood speaks to

a living hope! Peter writes in his epistle: **1 Peter 3:13–18a (ESV)** — **13** Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? **14** But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, **15** but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, **16** having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. **17** For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God’s will, than for doing evil. **18** For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God...

Peter says to have no fear of those who would harm us for believing in Christ and following His good and perfect will, His commandments. Why do we not have to fear those who can take our lives? Because we have been given life eternal from our Savior. Christ suffered for our sins once and for all. His blood was shed so that we might be redeemed through faith in Him. So, what does the shed blood of the martyrs at that beach in Caesarea (and everywhere) testify to? The shed blood of Christians shows that the life of Christ given to them and us will endure even beyond death.

Standing there at Caesarea, we were sobered by the reality of just how many Christians confessed Jesus with their dying breaths on that beach. But we rejoiced because that Gospel they held to, the Gospel shared with Cornelius in the same city, would endure. Christ will not forsake those who trust in Him. Those martyrs stood firm until the end because they knew that their hope, life, and righteousness was already made secure in Christ and Him alone. What matter was it to shed blood for the Savior who shed His blood for me? Why would I fear those who threatened me with death when I know my life is hid in Christ? This mindset of the martyrs is still at work today in

many areas where it is illegal to speak of the beautiful Gospel of Christ that Peter shared. But it also must be at work in our own hearts. We have the eternal good news to share and the perfect Law of God to cling to. We must do what is right, even if others will mock us for it. We must be ready to share about Jesus' work with those in our community, even if they should persecute us for it, discreetly or openly.

Most of the martyrs didn't go out seeking glory or martyrdom. They went to their deaths seeking to be faithful to the Lord who had been and always will be faithful to them. Our Lord is still faithful to us, so we can face any terror with confidence that the Gospel we cling to will outlast even the darkest days. Praise God that His blood is our eternal testimony and that our Lord saves Jews and Gentiles by faith in Christ!