

July 21, 2024

FEAR GOD AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS

Are God's commands right and just because God says so, or did God command that which is right and just? This was the question posed to my ethics class at the University of Minnesota several years back. The graduate student in charge of the class used the question to chip at a traditional understanding of right and wrong. He went on to describe the implications of his question. First, if God's commandments are right based solely on the fact that he commanded them, isn't that too arbitrary? Morality becomes a divine whim. On the flip side, if right and wrong exist apart from God, something for God to apprehend, doesn't that make God less than divine? The suggested conclusion: give up on a religious foundation for ethics altogether. Much of the semester involved similar theories and arguments that sought to remove God from any framework for understanding the world.

The biblical author of Ecclesiastes isn't swayed by the philosophies of man. All of man's wisdom comes to nothing before the all-knowing, all-powerful Creator. After recognizing the vanity of the world, Ecclesiastes concludes with this simple advice: "Fear God and keep His commandments" (12:13). God's commands aren't arbitrary. Ethics has no basis apart from God. The answer to the dilemma is God Himself. First John 4:16 says that God *is* love. The basis for right and wrong is God's eternal nature. Each of His commands align with His divine attributes. Murder is wrong because God is the author of life. Lying is wrong because in Him there is no falsehood. We know love because He first loved us.

A search for the foundation of morality has occupied fallen man for centuries. Arguments like the one from my ethics teacher will continue to provide him with an excuse to pursue sinful desires. For Christians, it is enough to fear God and keep His commandments, resting in the love of our gracious heavenly Father.

Mr. Josh Johnson
FLBCS Communications Director
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AFLC Promotion for July is the Free Lutheran Bible College

Bulletin Art by Charlotte Wilson



Helmar Lutheran Church
Newark, IL
Sunday, July 21, 2024
Eighth Sunday after Trinity

Prelude

Welcome

Hymn: "Revive Us Again"

Scripture reading: Ephesians 6:23,24

I Peter 5:12-14

Pastoral Prayer

Praise Team: "In Christ Alone"

"Man of Sorrows"

"Holy, Holy, Holy"

Sermon: "Caution and Commendation"

III John 1:11,12

Benediction

Hymn: "The Lord's Prayer"

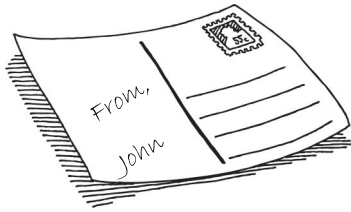
Postlude

Wed. 6:30am Men's Bible Study @ Southern Belle's

Sun: 9:30am Fellowship
10am Worship **in the FLC**
6:30pm GriefShare

Welcome and thank you for attending our church service today. If you are new to Helmar and are interested in finding out more about us, please stop at the Welcome Center and talk with Marlon and Sheila. We have a gift bag for you.

There will be no **Children's Church** during the month of July.



July 21, 2024
Postcards from John
”Caution and Commendation”
III John 1:11,12

This portion of III John is directed toward Gaius, whom we met in v.1 of this epistle. John tells him to imitate what is good and he mentions a fellow named Demetrius as an example.

I. John cautions Gaius v. 11

- Imitate what is _____
- Do not imitate what is _____

II. John commends Demetrius v. 12

- Well spoken of by _____
- A good testimony from the _____
- John speaks well of him

Helmar Lutheran Church

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Helmar exists to be a:

*Soul-Winning, Disciple-Making,
Burden-Bearing Church*

Pastor— Steven Lombardo

217-621-2949 Email scbardo64@gmail.com

Pastor—Alex Woodworth

630-414-6460 Email pr.alex.woodworth@gmail.com

Children’s Ministry Director- Kristen Mathre

815-762-5320 Email helmarkids@gmail.com

Music Director-Treva Mathre

Email treva.mathre@aol.com 815-600-4469

Secretary—Stacy Christian 630-251-6733

Email helmarlutheran@gmail.com

The Helmarpalooza committee is still looking to raise about \$18 thousand dollars to cover expenses. A generous matching gift has been offered up to \$20 thousand. Please prayerfully consider how the Lord might be leading you to contribute in this area.