

Christ Lutheran Church

127 N. Spring St., Klamath Falls, OR 97601

(541) 884-1635 www.lutherankf.org

March 2022

We are entering the season of Lent in the Church Year. The Lenten season begins with Ash Wednesday (March 2) and lasts 40 days. It is a season of repentance, as we focus on Jesus Christ in His deep humiliation and suffering for our sins. The Lenten season concludes with Holy Week, in which we observe Jesus' death on the cross on Good Friday (April 15). Then at last, we celebrate His glorious resurrection on Easter (April 17).

During this season, we will meet for midweek Lenten services at 1:30 PM, starting Ash Wednesday. This year, our special focus will be on the seven words, or sayings, Jesus spoke from the cross as follows:



The First Word (Wednesday, March 2)

"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." (Luke 23:34)

What an amazing utterance from the mouth of our Lord, having just been nailed to the cross! As His enemies gloated over getting Him crucified and mocked His claims as the Savior, He prayed for their forgiveness! Jesus was dying for the sins of all, even His fiercest enemies, desiring that all might repent and be saved through faith in His forgiveness.

The Second Word (Wednesday, March 9)

"Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise." (Luke 23:43)

Two criminals had been hung on crosses to either side of Jesus. Unlike the innocent Son of God, they were getting what their crimes deserved. Here Jesus assures the one, who had repented of his sins and looked to Jesus as His Savior, that he had been forgiven and saved for eternal life. Even though his body would die and be buried that day, yet he would live on with Jesus in His heavenly Kingdom.

The Third Word (Wednesday, March 16)

"Woman, behold your son! ... Behold your mother!" (John 19:26-27)

In the midst of intense suffering, Jesus looked on Mary, His human mother, with unselfish concern for her welfare. In love, He committed her to the care of His disciple, John. What caring love Jesus has for us too, as His family of faith.

The Fourth Word (Wednesday, March 23)

"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46)

The Son of God cried these words in the midst of the worst suffering He endured. The physical pain of hanging from nails on a cross was unbearable, in itself. But how much more so the feeling of being forsaken by His Father, as He was being punished for our sins! As a deep darkness fell over the land that day, hiding the sun, so Jesus felt deepest darkness as the love of His Father was hidden from Him. For Jesus' sake, our heavenly Father will never forsake us.

The Fifth Word (Wednesday, March 30)

"I thirst!" (John 19:28)

Through all the hours of His trial, beatings, and crucifixion, Jesus was deprived of water. Imagine the thirst He endured, who came to give the water of life to our thirsty souls. Jesus invites all to drink freely of His salvation by faith: *"Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."* (John 4:14)

The Sixth Word (Wednesday, April 6)

"It is finished!" (John 19:30)

When Jesus had finished paying the full price for our sins, having given His life to win our forgiveness, He cried these words of victory. On the cross, God has taken our sins away as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:12), no longer to be counted against us. There is no work remaining that we must do to be saved. Our faith simply clings to the finished work of God's Son, by which we receive all that He has won for us as a gift.

The Seventh Word (Friday, April 15)

"Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." (Luke 23:46)

The Son of God had finished all that His Father sent Him into the world to accomplish for our salvation. Now, in His final utterance from the cross, Jesus committed His life into His Father's hands. But this would not be His last Word! For death cannot keep its hold on the eternal Son of God who came into our flesh! On Good Friday He was buried; but on Easter He would show Himself alive to His disciples, risen from the grave as the one who has conquered death for us!

Come and join us this Lenten season, as we bow at the foot of our Savior's cross in repentance, lifted up in the forgiveness and eternal life He has won for us.

In His saving name,
Pastor Smith

How Should Christians Understand “Identity”?

March 2022

“I identify as trans” or “male” or “gay” or “African American” or “white” or “Christian” or . . . This “identity” phenomenon is everywhere today and sometimes confusing. The Christian understanding of identity must be theological, not political or cultural. The biblical approach will keep us faithful to God and His Word and guides us so we approach life realistically and with compassion. The biblical worldview distinguishes three senses of “identity”:

1. God-established identities—*true, inviolable.*

I rightly identify myself as, and all human beings as, those *made in the image of God in the broad sense*. Human beings alone have an immortal soul. They grasp, unlike other creatures, transcendent truth, justice, purpose, life, beauty, and goodness. They are designated to rule over creation even though they may abuse that rule. This image-of-God status makes all people of equal, intrinsic, and sacred value. And this value applies to *everyone* regardless of sex, ethnicity, religion, lifestyle, nationality, heritage, economic status, intelligence, etc.

I rightly identify as, and all human beings as, either *male or female*. Furthermore, I identify two people as *married* only when that marriage consists of both male and female.

I rightly identify as, and all human beings as, those who *lost the image of God in the narrow sense* (true holiness and righteousness). Since the fall, *all* are equally and desperately sinful, regardless of sex, ethnicity, religion, lifestyle. . . .

I rightly identify as, and all human beings as, those who have been *objectively justified*. Jesus Christ purchased forgiveness and righteousness for everyone and therefore this identity applies to *all*, regardless of sex, ethnicity, religion, lifestyle. . . . Objective justification claims that every person is precious and of inestimable value to God, reinforcing the evangelism mandate.

I rightly identify as, and only some as, those who have been *subjectively justified* before God, namely, those who have been baptized and live in repentance and faith in Christ. The image of God in the narrow sense has been renewed in believers and they begin to display that image of God by producing the fruits of repentance. This identity is a reality *only for true Christians*, uniting them in one body regardless of sex, ethnicity, economic status. . . .

2. God-allowed identities.

I *may* identify myself and others on the basis of skin color, ethnicity, lifestyle, nationality, heritage, economic status, intelligence, age, vocation, etc., as long as these are based in some objective reality. But in and of themselves, they do not make one more (or less) sacred or intrinsically valuable than another.

However, when one or more of these God-allowed identities are believed to be *intrinsically valuable* or are thought to be *equal to or more important* than one of the true identities, then they take on a status never intended. This leads to denying or diminishing in others the image of God in the broad sense. This exalting of God-allowed identities and suppression of true identities results in disrespect, lovelessness, cruelty, and injustice. This is the essence of racism and many prejudices.

3. God-forbidden identities—*offensive to Him and to human nature as He created it.*

I *must not* identify myself with that which is contrary to the God-established identities or objective reality. To do so means to live in a lie.

Nor am I allowed to *affirm* the self-chosen identities in others that are contrary to the God-established ones or objective reality. To do so would encourage others to live in a lie, the very opposite of Christian love.

The **Woke Movement (Critical Theory)** dangerously and deceptively elevates God-allowed and God-forbidden identities above God-established identities.

So, love *for God* compels me to say “no” to forbidden identities and to rejoice and find security in His true identities. Love *for my neighbor* compels me to recognize my neighbor’s sacred value (equal to mine), his fallenness (equal to mine), and his redemption in Christ (equal to mine), with the hope he will receive Christ. It is not love to affirm false identities; rather—when called upon—I must speak *the truth in love*.

Rev. David Thompson is pastor of St. Timothy Lutheran Church, Lombard, Illinois, and author of *What in the World Is Going On? Identifying Hollow and Deceptive Worldviews*.

Learn More:
www.els.org/apologetics

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <p>“Father, forgive them” (Luke 23:34)</p>		1	2  Midweek Lent 1 Service – 1:30 PM	3 <i>Happy Birthday Charles Brumble</i> Adult Instruction 1:00 pm	4 Adult Instruction 2:00 pm	5
6 <i>Lent 1</i> Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship with Communion 9:30 AM Sunday School & Bible Class 10:45 AM	7	8	9  Midweek Lent 2 Service – 1:30 PM	10 Adult Instruction 1:00 pm	11 <i>Happy Birthday Grace Smith</i> Adult Instruction 2:00 pm	12 <i>Happy Birthday Aydin Smith</i>
13 <i>Lent 2 Daylight Savings Begins</i> Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School & Bible Class 10:45 AM	14	15	16  Midweek Lent 3 Service – 1:30 PM	17 <i>St. Patrick's Day</i> Adult Instruction 1:00 pm	18 Adult Instruction 2:00 pm	19
20 <i>Lent 3 Spring Begins</i> Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship with Communion 9:30 AM Sunday School & Bible Class 10:45 AM	21	22	23  Midweek Lent 4 Service – 1:30 PM	24 <i>Happy Birthday Jackie Bednar</i> Adult Instruction 1:00 pm	25 The Annunciation of Our Lord Adult Instruction 2:00 pm	26
27 <i>Lent 4</i> Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School & Bible Class 10:45 AM	28	29	30  Midweek Lent 5 Service – 1:30 PM	31 <i>Happy Birthday Hannah Krause</i> Adult Instruction 1:00 pm	 <p>“It is finished!” (John 19:30)</p>	

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