A Wasted Talent

This message was preached 12 April 2015 from the historic pulpit of the Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel as “A Wasted Talent” … based on St. Matthew 25:14-30. This sermon, along with over 500+ other titles, is available on DVDs.

If you say to someone outside of the faith community, this is the parable of the talents … what might they think you are talking about?

- Perhaps a story about great athletes?
- Maybe a lesson about a great musician?
- Or, some might say, the accounting of a great businessman?

The fact is, the word ‘talent’ is derived from the word that in ancient Israel was ‘a unit of measure.’ Its value depended on whether it was copper, silver, gold or whatever. Today we use the word talent to describe someone with a great aptitude or gift.

A talent can be and should be considered a gift from God. God gives us many unique abilities that are to be improved and invested in the building of God’s kingdom through ministry and service to our fellow human beings.

Now our beloved Declaration of Independence says — that “all men are created equal.” What does that mean? Certainly, we all are equal in terms of our body temperature 98.6 … our blood is red … we all have a brain. Yet, no two people have the same fingerprints … not even twins. And we all have different abilities.

Now listen again to verse fifteen: “To one he gave five talents, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey.” Did you hear that – EACH ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY. Who knows better than the person that created you what your abilities or your talents are? No one knows better than God. The Lord gives each according to his or her ability. Does that mean that if you are not able, then God has not blessed you? Absolutely not!

Case in point: I can’t play the piano. I’ve tried, but I just don’t sound good. There are many people in here that play so wonderfully … they brighten the day. Playing the piano just isn’t within my ability.

Listen again to the last part of the verse – THEN HE WENT ON HIS JOURNEY. The Lord gives us gifts according to our ability and then God leaves us alone. Note: God does not abandon us. The Lord is always there to guide us and put us back on the path … if we ask. God is wonderful enough to entrust us with our own lives. We have total control of our lives. We must invest our abilities and enjoy the reward of living productive lives.

But the parable doesn’t end there; look at verse 19. We find that the master returns. My friends, don’t miss this point: the Master (Jesus, our Lord) is coming back. The triune God who has created us in His own image; who came in the flesh of Jesus Christ to save us; who empowers us by the Holy Spirit with talents; will come again to settle accounts with us.

Let me ask you this: As that day of accountability draws ever closer, which of the three in this parable do you wish to be like? Do you want to be the person that buried his ability? For my friend, God has entrusted you with abilities. The Lord God has said it in His Word … and His Word is truth … God doesn’t lie.

You might very reasonably ask – “Well how do I know what God wants me to do?” Let me give you the short answer – “Pray.” Yes, pray about it. Wait for the Lord’s reply. And when you get it, do not fight it. It may not be what you want to hear, but it will be what God knows you are capable of doing.

(Continued … on page three)
President’s Corner

The coming of spring is the anticipation of rejuvenation. When the landscape comes alive and is renewed. In the Christian church it is the Lenten season. A time starting on Ash Wednesday and ending on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter. This season is a period of sacrifice, reflection and fasting. A time to intensify our relationship with God. To do away with those things that clutter one’s life; that impede our relationship with God. This is also a time for us to reflect on the sufferings of Jesus in light of our personal sin and unrighteousness. Then, finally, Easter arrives. A most joyous time for Christians celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ. A day of praise, honor and glorification.

Hebrews 12:1-3: “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking onto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.”

Tony Stocker
Foundation President
(952) 831-6160
E-Mail: blstock@earthlink.net

On the Sundays of April we will have a “recruiting station” in the Fellowship Hall … where you can sign-up for a host of volunteer positions. Your participation is critical to our success! An extensive list of volunteer positions will be provided for you to indicate those places you wish to render service … one of the expectations of membership in the Foundation.

Persons will be on hand to answer your questions regarding the various opportunities to uphold the Chapel Foundation … with your service.

— Your Executive Committee

Board of Directors

2017
(2018 Board & Officers elected at 11 February Annual Meeting after the publication of this issue)

Executive Officers
Tony Stocker, President
Steve Zorn, Vice President
Sharon Emde, Secretary
Brad Nelson, Treasurer

Members at Large
Patricia Boyd-Peerson
Iain Hodge
Pat Hoy
Cindy Pugh
Matt Stokes

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Tim Bray
Tom Newman
Greg Sheldon

Immediate Past President
Iain Hodge

Standing Committee Chairs:
Worship: Tony Stocker
Finance: Brad Nelson
Fellowship: Carol Nygaard
Membership: Iain Hodge
Publicity: Steve Zorn
Personnel: Pat Hoy
Safety: Patricia Boyd-Peerson

The Board welcomes input from members. If you have an idea or suggestion, please feel welcome to contact the appropriate Board person.

Scheduled Board Meetings in 2018:

Saturdays … @ Foundation Office
24 March (9:00 a.m.)
2 June (9:00 a.m.)
8 September (9:00 a.m.)
17 November (9:00 a.m.)

Sunday … @ the Chapel Sanctuary
16 December (1:00 p.m.)

If you would like a copy of the 2017 Annual Report, please secure one in the Fellowship Hall or call the Foundation Office at (952) 888-1525 and leave your name/mailing address that we may send you a copy of this impressive report.
Let me also tell you this: It is not easy. There are times when I just want to say “God I know You want me to do this, but this is not easy.” But then God says, “I never said it would be easy. It wasn’t easy for my Son.”

It’s our nature to look for the easy way. Water flows to the path of least resistance because it has no other choice. It is a natural occurrence. And in like manner, we humans flow to the path of least resistance – because it is easy. But the difference is: We have a choice. And our natural tendency is to choose the easy way out. That certainly was the case of this third man in the parable with the lone talent … who chose the easy way out. He buried the coin and waited for his master to return.

Now this story seems to focus on the one man – the man that did not use his talent, but buried it. But let’s not overlook why the man with the five talents and the man with the two talents invested it. Why did they? Simply put – they had faith.

You see: If we have faith in God, the Lord will not let us fail. Oh, we may have failures along the way, but ultimately if we believe in the indwelling Spirit’s presence to help us, we will not fail.

Now this parable raises for us yet another question, namely – Why would someone bury his or her talent?

It may be true that there are far more people with one talent then there are with two or five talents. It may further be true that the world (and even the church) tends only to notice, applaud, and richly reward those blessed with extraordinary gifts – they tend to ignore those whose talents are not so plentiful. Consequently, one talent people fall prey to a special danger: The lessened value of the significance of the gift that they have; they are overshadowed by the two or five talent people; they find it easier to bury their talent than risk humiliation by trying to use it; they turn their ultimate resentment into bitterness toward God.

The unfaithful servant in the parable says that he was afraid of the master. And the master replies by saying he is lazy and wicked. Question: How can we get wickedness from something not done? The wickedness lies not in the evil done, but by the good left undone.

Every person brings a talent to the table … and when combined with other’s talents, it makes for a great and wonderful investment.

Take this beloved Chapel … for example. This is the result of many single talents. The architect draws up plans for this magnificent structure back in 1927; a mason lays the stones; a carpenter fashions the furnishings; a plumber installs the water pipes; an electrician runs the wiring; an organist plays music; a pastor proclaims the Word of God; a custodian cleans up … and we could go on and on.

Without the architect there is no need for a pastor; without the janitor the place gets messy; without the electrician, we would be left in the dark. Each person contributes his or her own talent to create a portal to the kingdom of God. The fact is that it takes many, many individuals to make a church function; a community thrive; a kingdom grow. Everyone is a steward for Christ. Each one, no matter how insignificant they may think their talent is, is so important to God.

What’s my point, you ask? God gave us all abilities and talents when we were born, even before we were born. And God wants us to invest our talents so that others will come to know the Lord as their Savior. God does not want us to have wasted talents. The Lord wants us to use it to the best of our ability. We will all someday face the Lord God and give an account of what we did in our lives. Let’s not tell the Master that we wasted the gifts given to us. Remember no matter how insignificant or how un-important your talent may seem, it is supremely important to God.

Regardless of the amount or the type of talent that God has given us, God wants us to be faithful in our service. “For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away.” (Matthew 25:29) There is a known understanding regarding Matthew 25:29 – “use it or lose it.” We either use what God gave us or we lose the opportunity because of our “fear” and lack of faith.
As Christian disciples, we have been entrusted with both our God-given talents (abilities) and the good news of the Gospel so that we might be faithful and fruitful in investing what God has entrusted to us. If we want to succeed, then we must invest what God has entrusted to us.

May we pray.

Sovereign God, to whom belongs all we have and all we are; we pray for insight and will to use all that You have entrusted to us. May we be worthy of others’ trust, generous to those who are in need, and full of encouragement for our sisters and brothers in the faith. Inspire us to such selfless service … that we may hear Your commendation – “Well done, My good and faithful servant!” Amen.

Serving God and Country,  
Rev. Dr. Kenneth L. Beale, Jr.  
Senior Chaplain  
(612) 747-1059  
E-mail: KenBeale56A@msn.com

**General Plate Offering Envelopes**

If you are among those who are blessed by this ministry ‘beyond the walls’ of the Chapel (i.e., Livestream, bi-monthly newsletter, CDs/DVDs), and would like some pre-addressed envelopes to mail-in your plate offerings, please call our Foundation office at 952/888-1525 and leave your name/mailing address that we may send them to you. Thank you.

**Special Patriotic/Veterans Events . . .**

- **Sun, 27 May 18 — Memorial Day Remembrance** — honoring the memory of those armed forces service members who gave the ultimate sacrifice.
- **Sun, 1 July 18 — Independence Day** — celebrating the 242nd birthday of our nation … culminating in an ice cream social.
- **Sun, 9 Sept 18 — 9/11 Remembrance** — remembering the terrorist attack of 2001.
- **Sun, 16 Sept 18 — POW/MIA Remembrance** — remembering those who are prisoners of war and those missing in action.
- **Sun, 11 Nov 18 — Veterans Day Remembrance** — recognizing U.S. veterans of all branches of the armed forces.
- **Sun, 2 Dec 18 — Pearl Harbor Remembrance** — recognizing survivors … with the tolling of the ship bell for those who have passed away since last year.

Mark your calendar with these dates … and join us at 11:00 a.m.

**In the Event of Bad Weather**

If on a Sunday morning it is significantly snowing … or tremendously cold … or the winds are resulting in drifting conditions, please call our Foundation office at 952/888-1525 for an announcement of worship cancellation. In this way we will attempt to inform you of Chapel closings.

**Social Media**

If you are under the weather or out of town, you can still attend worship services at this site [http://new.livestream.com/accounts/3709164](http://new.livestream.com/accounts/3709164). A link to this address can be found on the Chapel website [www.fortsnellingmcf.org](http://www.fortsnellingmcf.org) where you can download a pdf of the weekly worship bulletin and scripture insert. Just click on that link and you will be able to watch live or revisit previous services from the archive. Offerings can be achieved by clicking on the more link at the top of the page bringing you to a link Donate to Chapel Foundation.

Remember: We love to have you in-person at our services, but in the event that is not possible please join us via Livestream.

You may also ‘Like’ the Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation on Facebook to view news of upcoming events.

If you have an e-mail address and are not currently receiving the mid-week ‘Chapel Chatter’ … providing you with what you need to know about the coming Sunday at the Chapel, please send an e-mail to the Chapel Foundation [info@fortsnellingmcf.org] and request to be added to this Constant Contact distro list.  

— Steve Zorn  
Publicity Committee Chair
Holy Week at the Chapel

Place an Easter Plant in the Chancel

A special tradition at the Chapel is to adorn the altar area with beautiful plants on Easter Sunday. This tradition is made even more precious by the dedications which are made for each of the plants. It’s a beautiful way to honor or remember your loved ones at this sacred and holy time of year.

You can select lilies and tulips (pink, purple, and yellow)
The cost is $13.00 each.

Palm Sunday – Distribution of Palms

25 March is Palm/Passion Sunday. At 11:00 a.m. each worshiper will receive palms to commemorate Christ’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Chaplain Ken will present a timely sermon entitled, “The Red Carpet Treatment” … based on St. Mark 11:1-11. The special music will be Heidi Satterberg and Paul Krech.

Good Friday — Holy Communion

On Friday 30 March, we will have our Good Friday worship service at 2:00 p.m. Chaplain Ken will bring a message entitled, “Who Do You Relate to at the Cross?” … based on St. Luke 9:23. The special music will be Steve & Eva Zorn. At this worship service the invitation to commune at the Lord’s Table is open to all who believe in the Lord Jesus for their salvation.

Easter Service

On Sunday 1 April, our worship service will be held at 11:00 a.m.

The special music will be the Richfield Symphonic Brass. Chaplain Ken will bring a message entitled, “When Jesus Calls Your Name” … based on St. John 20:1-18.

Jesus said, “I was hungry and you gave Me food …” (St. Matthew 25:35)

Please secure any of these items and deposit them on Sun, 11 Mar 2018 at the front curb of the Fort Snelling Veterans Memorial Chapel:

Canned/Jar Food Items: tuna, canned fish/meats, chili, beef stew, canned pasta products, Enfamil formula, fruits, juices, tomato sauces/paste, spaghetti sauces, peanut butter, jelly, cooking oil

Boxed/Packaged Items: cereals (hot & cold), powered milk, tuna/hamburger helper, macaroni, rice, pasta products, crackers, instant potatoes, pancake mix

Hygiene Items: toilet tissue, tooth paste/brushes, bar soap, paper towels, feminine products, facial tissues, shampoo, deodorant, shavers, shaving cream

Baby Items: disposable diapers (all sizes), formula (especially Enfamil with iron), baby wipes, baby powder, jar baby foods

Food shelves have access to discounted food that you don’t. Cash donations feed more families. You can make your checks payable to “F.S.M.C.F.” In turn, the Foundation will forward your contribution.

* Minnesota FoodShare is an interfaith collaboration, fighting hunger through community action.

Plants making up the Easter Garden will be noted in the bulletin in memory of … in honor of … or to the glory of God. Orders must be received by Sunday, 18 March. Donors may take their plant after the worship service. The plants that remain will be delivered to the MN Veterans Home for their enjoyment.

Bev Johnson will be taking orders beginning 4 March in the Fellowship Hall.
An Atheist's View on Life

I will live my life according to these beliefs
God does not exist
It is just foolish to think
That there is a God with a cosmic plan
That an all-powerful God brings redemption & healing to the pain & suffering in the world
Is a comforting thought, however,
It
Is only wishful thinking
People can do as they please without eternal consequences
The idea that
I am deserving of Hell
Because of sin
Is a lie meant to make me a slave to those in power
“The more you have, the happier you will be”
Our existence has no grand meaning or purpose
In a world with no God
There is freedom to be who I want to be
But with God
Everything is fine
It is ridiculous to think
I am lost and in need of saving

A Christian’s View on Life
(read this bottom to top)

But seek first the kingdom of God
and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.
Matthew 16:33
Getting to Know You ...

There is a petite lady with a big smile who is seen buzzing around the sanctuary on Sunday mornings greeting people. She has made Fort Snelling Chapel her church home for the past 12 years and has been active in a variety of capacities including volunteering with the Crafty Ladies and Caring Hearts. The lady in question is none other than Rae Kellgren but wait there is more to this story ...

Rae was born on a small dairy farm in the northern Minnesota town of Shevlin - located near Bemidji, Chippewa National Forest and Lake Itasca State Park. She was the oldest of three daughters born to Wes and Gen Ellis and followed later by Jeanne and Mary. Rae claims that her father always wanted a son and named her Rae (a variation of Ray) since he was expecting a boy. Life on the farm involved lots of hard work and Rae was expected to “step up and work like a man” right along side her father in the fields and the barn. She was on the short side but wiry and tough and soon gained the respect of her father to the point where he gave her total responsibility for the care of their plow team of Belgian horses.

Rae recalled one particular incident when she was working in the field with the plow team and the horses ran over a bee’s nest on the ground. Naturally, the horses were bitten by the bees and took off at full-speed headed for the trees on the edge of their property. Rae had to use every bit of her physical strength and some “choice words” to avoid a major spill and get the horses back under control. She managed to “save the day” and returned home to the barn with the team when she ran into her father who complained that he heard some “not so nice words out there on the field.” Without missing a beat Rae responded, “if you expect me to work like a man then expect me to talk like a man.” Well, her father had no response to this ultimatum, so it appeared Rae had made her point.

All three daughters attended a “four room” school house and graduated from Bagley High School. They also attended the Lutheran church in the country where Rae and her younger sisters were baptized and confirmed. Rae had many memories from childhood, but one memory stood out and that was “playing hide and seek” with her cousins at the farm on warm summer evenings.

After high school graduation, Rae relocated to St Paul in search of employment and moved into an apartment with a friend from her home town. Well, there was another apartment located over the garage that sat on the back of the property and Rae was curious to find out about the new tenant since the previous tenants had been evicted. The young women did not have to wait long as early one morning a Studebaker drove up and out of the car stepped a “tall, handsome man with black hair.” The man walked across the yard towards the entrance of the apartment at which point Rae turned to her roommate and said, “I’m going to marry that man some day!” So, despite the scoffing from her roommate, Rae came to learn that the new tenant was Edwin Jerome Kellgren - or “Jerry” as he was known to his friends. Jerry was an accountant and co-owner of Ban-Kel Company - a group that specialized in programming of amortization schedules. Well, it wasn’t long before Rae ran into Jerry while out for a walk with her cat. He commented on her cat which opened up a conversation between the two young people. It was only natural that Jerry would ask Rae out for a date and so the two began what Rae thought was a casual dating relationship.

Fast forward several months to a Friday afternoon when Rae decided to head up north to Bagley with some high school chums for the weekend. It wasn’t long before Jerry learned about the trip and asked Rae if she was traveling with “male or female friends?” She replied, “male friends” which did not go over well with Jerry. He obviously had strong feelings for Rae by this time as he told her, “no, you are not going up north with a bunch of young men!” Rae was adamant that she was going up north with her friends whether Jerry “liked it or not!” There was a bit of a “harrumph” from Jerry, but she left (Continued … on page eight)
for Bagley with her buddies shortly thereafter. Upon arrival in Bagley, Rae thought it best to visit her parents so was driving with her dad to the farm when they pulled into the driveway and noticed a Studebaker identical to the one driven by Jerry! Not a man to leave anything to chance, Jerry had driven the long distance up north to ensure that Rae was not smitten by anyone else that weekend! Rae laughed and added, “it was at that point that we became a committed couple,” which led to a decision to marry later in the spring. However, it was not smooth sailing to the marriage despite the best of intentions. Rae and Jerry decided to elope and get married by a justice of the peace out of state - driving first to South Dakota only to discover that the license would be delayed due to a required waiting period prior to marriage. The second attempt involved a drive to Wisconsin where they ran into a similar situation - namely another waiting period prior to issuance of the marriage license. However, the third time was the charm as they headed south to Iowa where there were no additional delays. The blessed event took place on 6/25/65 and that last minute trip to Iowa blossomed into a 47 year marriage that resulted in two children, six grandchildren, one great-grandchild and another great-grandchild on the way!

About 12 years ago, Jerry was reading the paper when he spied an advertisement for Fort Snelling Chapel and suggested to Rae that they attend a service. The couple were members of a local church but not satisfied with their church experience so decided to give the Chapel a visit. It was during the first visit that a friendly man by the name of Ralph Menning (Chapel member and veteran) introduced himself to the couple and encouraged them to return the following Sunday. The couple found the people at the Chapel to be friendly and Jerry especially enjoyed the emphasis on the veterans, as he was a Navy veteran himself serving four years from 1953-57. The Kellgrens decided to join the Chapel and have attended faithfully since that time. Jerry served as treasurer on the FSMCF Board of Directors while Rae volunteered with Crafty Ladies and Caring Hearts.

Sadly, Jerry developed an aggressive form of stomach cancer in 2012 and began treatment at the VA hospital in Minneapolis. The prognosis was not positive though Rae was able to keep Jerry comfortable at home for the duration of the illness. He passed away peacefully at home on 9/18/12 with his family at his side. The memorial service was held at Fort Snelling Chapel on 9/23/12 with Chaplain Beale officiating. The couple celebrated 47 years of marriage at the time of Jerry’s death - whom Rae referred to as “the love of my life.” She added that it was her “faith in Jesus Christ” and the “certainty of seeing Jerry again in heaven” that enabled her to move forward following his death. Rae has experienced her own health issues including a recurrence of breast cancer in late 2016. The surgeon completed a biopsy and noted that it was “positive for cancer” so surgery was scheduled followed by a regimen of chemotherapy and radiation. Rae maintained her positive spirit throughout the ordeal but noted that it was the get-well cards from Chapel members that provided the comfort and encouragement to move forward. The mail delivery became a daily highlight in her recovery as Rae looked forward to opening cards from well-wishers at the Chapel. She smiled and added, “each card was worth a million bucks!”

Rae continues to work part-time for the Snelling Company (provider of residential and commercial heating and cooling services) and in her free time enjoys gardening and caring for her “rescue dog.” She also enjoys reading her Bible and finds one verse, in particular, to be especially encouraging:

“For great is His love toward us and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.” - Psalm 117:2

This verse reminds us of God’s everlasting love for His people and that He carefully watches over the lives of His faithful followers. Those who take refuge in the Lord are assured that He provides help and strength to each of us on daily basis. Rae can testify to the Lord’s faithfulness in her life and the life of her husband Jerry. Thank you, Rae, for your service and participation at Fort Snelling Chapel.

— Submitted by Eva Zorn
A Word From the Classroom

“I will fear no evil for Thou art with me.”
(Psalm 23:4)

We are all afraid sometimes; adults and kids, alike. What does the Bible have to say about fear? Is it wrong to be afraid? Were any of the Bible heroes afraid? What about David when he fought Goliath? Certainly, that must have been scary! How about Jesus when he walked the road to Golgotha. Surely it was frightening for our Lord to walk toward His own agony and death.

In March, as we lead up to Easter season, we will learn a little about fear. Kids suffer a lot from fear. You know, a boogey man under the bed, a test coming up in school, a trip to the doctor ... probably for a shot! Where does fear come from? Is it okay to be afraid or is it a sin? How can we get over being afraid? Fear is something we all must handle throughout our lives.

Toward the end of March, we will take a break from talking about fear and focus on Easter, the events leading up to it, Good Friday, and the outcome. This will take us to mid-April when we will discuss how Christ, Himself, handled the anguish of Good Friday. And why did He do this?

In May we will focus on re-birth. Look around at the grass pushing through the sod, the flowers coming alive again, the birds returning. All of these and more, remind us of the love of God and how He takes care of us. Therefore, in May, we will study how God takes care of us ... always has and always will!

See you in church.

— Leslie Henschel
Children’s Ministry Coordinator

Intergeneration Christian Education Class

Winter/Spring CE Class

Though our classes have begun, there remains a range of topics including videos on: creation, evolution, geology, the worldwide flood, dinosaurs, Darwin, Intelligent design, astronomy, dating rocks and fossils, 6-day creation vs. long ages, sanctity of life, living cells & DNA-the code of life, genetics & genetic entropy, ape men, nature & anatomy.

The aim is to help equip the attendees to be able to share the Genesis account of “beginnings” and to be able to relate how the Biblical account is confirmed by true science.

Question: Why in the world would someone listen to a presentation of the Gospel when they are taught by schools, universities, TV, PBS, libraries, even some churches that the Genesis accounts of creation, the worldwide flood, the origin of man and woman are nothing but stories or myths? True science confirms God’s Word – “word for word” and “cover to cover.”

These series of videos will address these topics through 20 May 2018. Remember: The class begins promptly at 9:30 a.m. in the Chapel Fellowship Hall. The coffee will be ready!

— John Kruse, Facilitator

Crafty Ladies Pack for Troops...

As of January 2018, 106 boxes have been shipped to our troops in harms way, along with (3) boxes containing a total of 103 hand knit scarves.
I found this article in one of my favorite “just before bedtime” books with ten-minute, late-night, easily absorbable articles ... kind of a “Reader’s Digest” of Creation concepts. For this article, the subject of Self-Esteem caught my eye. After reading the two pages on this subject ... I now realize why it was bothering me — it seems to me that in the evolutionary world view, self-esteem is a bit of a nebulous concept. In fact, in my opinion, “evolutionary self-esteem” is a “whopper” of an oxymoron! Read on …

Evolutionary View of Self-Esteem

1 You are the descendant of a tiny cell of primordial protoplasm that washed upon an ocean beach three and a half billion years ago. You are the product of time, chance and natural forces. Your closest living relatives swing from trees and eat crackers at the zoo. You exist on a tiny planet in a minuscule solar system in an obscure galaxy in a remote corner of a vast, cold and meaningless universe. You are flying through space with no purpose, no direction, no control, and no destiny. Your final outcome: destruction. All there is of you is your body. Once you die you will cease to exist. In summary: you came from nothing, you are going nowhere, and you will end up beneath 6 feet of dirt, where all you will become is food for bacteria and worms. Now don’t you feel special?

Christian View of Self-Esteem

You are the extraordinary creation of a good and all-powerful God. You are the climax of His creation — created in His image — with the capacity for creativity, feelings and worship. You are not just an animal. You are individually distinctive among all other people. God has masterminded the exact combination of DNA and chromosomes that constitute your genetic code, making you as unique as one snowflake from another. God has given you special gifts and abilities to serve Him in a unique way. In spite of indifference, rebellion, or disobedience, your Creator intensely desires your companionship. He gave the life of His one and only Son, Jesus, so that you might spend eternity with Him. However, you must accept that gift. As a Christian, you are clothed with the righteousness of Christ and given the privilege of eternal life in God’s presence. Your heavenly father is sovereign and will allow nothing to cross your path that is not father-filtered. He cares for you so much that He is totally available to you at all times, and He listens to every word you say. He cares deeply about your hurts and has a plan for your life. He has given you the inspired Word of God as a road map for living. Your destiny is to live forever in a magnificent kingdom and enjoy the wonders of both His presence and His creation. Now how does that make you feel?
Preparing for the Cold & Flu Season

This article was the first I wrote for The Snelling Spirit. I know we all need reminders, so I thought I would repost it for 2018. My reason for doing so is that we have a very ubiquitous flu virus this year. The flu virus varies every year and it is hoped that the vaccine produced each year will have a 50 to 60% effective rate. This year the match was only 10 to 20%, and there are already flu outbreaks in 36 states. Especially susceptible to the flu virus are people with a compromised immune system: children under five, pregnant, and older adults. Respiratory infections, influenza and pneumonia are leading causes of death in people over age sixty-five.

The “common cold,” acute viral rhinitis, is actually caused by more than a hundred different agents. That's why we get colds over and over again, and it's also why immunity against some of these bugs can be short-lived. About half the time, the cause of a common cold cannot be identified. We do not get a cold from the weather, or being in a cold draft. It takes a bacterium, a germ, virus or pathogen to make us ill. Also there is no such thing as a 24 hour bug; more often than not the 24 hour bug is a food-borne illness. (More on this next time). Vitamin C can bolster your body's immunity. Vitamin C is water soluble, so it's hard to take too much. I take 2,000 mg per day, vitamin C also helps to restore cartilage, helps with eye health, stroke prevention, cancer prevention and strengthening tendons. Don't take more than 500 mg without talking to your doctor. I was once prescribed to take 10,000 mg per day (at 2,000 mg at 2 hour intervals with aspirin) which restored my knee cartilage and made surgery unnecessary.

The mode of transmission for a cold is presumed to be by direct contact or by inhalation of airborne droplets, or indirectly (and more importantly) by hands and coming in contact with anything contaminated by nasal discharge or saliva from an infected person. Shake hands or use the telephone right after that cashier just wiped her/his nose, then touch your eyes, mouth, nose or sore and you’ve got it. This is why some people prefer a fist bump instead of a handshake. There is nothing sacred about a handshake it was originally used as a peaceful demonstration that you weren’t holding a dagger. I always thought the dagger might be in the other hand. Depending on the specific germ, the incubation period is between 12 hours and 5 days, usually 48 hours.

The common cold is “contagious” between 24 hours before onset of symptoms until 5 days after onset. Like everything else this varies depending on the organism, but that’s a pretty safe estimate. This period of communicability was determined by taking nasal washings of experimentally infected volunteers.

How do we prevent contracting and transmitting colds? Stay home from gatherings, work, church (Livestream) if you’re sick. I’ll write you a note for your boss. Wash your hands frequently, of course. Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze, but DO NOT USE YOUR HAND for the above reasons. Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow instead. There is also a vaccine specifically against flu. The flu bug varies each year, so it’s a yearly vaccination. That won’t prevent you from catching colds, though. Try to stay out of jail, off the light rail, and away from any other place you’ll be stuck in close quarters with a crowd of people who cough, sneeze, and constantly wipe their noses.

— Tom Newman

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— Tim Bray, Bill Coyne, Johnnie Johnson
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