

SPEAKERS

June 5 - Ken Storm, Holy Communion

June 12 - Bruce Sarkela

June 19 - Ken Storm, ** Service will be held @ Twin Lakes State Park in Toivola, MI - There will be no service at Tapiola and no broadcast of the service.

June 26 - Charles Korhonen, Confirmation Service, Potluck Meal to Follow

CHURCH SCHEDULE

Sunday Service, 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday Bible Study, 7:00 p.m.

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Spirit-Led

“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” - Proverbs 14:12

It is human nature to want to do well, especially in the eyes of God. However, our text warns against such thinking because it causes a person to trust that his own way is pleasing to God when it isn't. Moreover, such deceptive thinking can lead to eternal death. The way to avoid this end is to be taught by the Word and to be led by the Spirit; then our actions please God. Scripture teaches that no one is able to do right on his own, no matter how good it seems: *“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags”* (Isaiah 64:6).

Perhaps the best example of someone doing something that seemed right only to have it fall short happened in the Garden of Eden where Eve ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Before we judge her choice, it is important to realize that there was no evil in the world at that time: *“...God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good”* (Genesis 1:31). Hence, Eve had no concept of sin. Nevertheless, she sampled the forbidden fruit, not out of defiance, but, so that she could be like God *“... knowing good and evil”* (Genesis 3:4). And when Adam did the same *“... they knew that they were naked”* (Genesis 3:7). What began as something that seemed right ended as a deadly sin against the God they loved.

Similarly, in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew Jesus speaks of good works that pleased God and of those that didn't, even though it was the same set of works in both situations. In that chapter, Jesus describes the Day of Judgment when people from all nations of the world gather before Him and are separated into two groups; one of sheep and the other of goats. (Both groups represent people who wanted to go to heaven.) To the sheep Jesus says, *“...Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”* (Matthew 25:34) because they had done many good works during their life. Astonished, the sheep respond to the good works ascribed to them by saying, *“When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?”* (Matthew 25:38-39). They could not recall doing any of these things, yet Jesus assured them that they did and admits them into the celestial city.

Jesus then turns to the goats saying, *“Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels”* (Matthew 25:41). He said this because they had done none of the same works done by the sheep. They likewise were astonished at His words, but for a different reason, saying, *“...Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?”* (Matthew 25:44). Unlike the sheep, that unknowingly did things that pleased God, the goats wanted to know when they failed to do so. Obviously, the goats tried to do well but Jesus gives this warning to all who strive to please God by their own works: *“...when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward”* (Matthew 6:2). The goats then entered eternity where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

What was the difference between the goats who tried their best to do well and the sheep that did well in spite of themselves? It was the presence (or absence) of the indwelling Holy Spirit. As Paul wrote to the Galatians, *“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh”* (Galatians 5:16). Although the Holy Spirit is ever present in the world, the indwelling Holy Spirit only comes as a gift from God if we by His grace humble ourselves, repent and believe the gospel message of forgiveness of sins proclaimed to us by a servant of God: *“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost”* (Acts 2:38).

Thus, a Spirit-led person fulfills the commands of God (unknowingly): *“And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them”* (Ezekiel 36:27).

God's Peace,
Charles Korhonen