



Evangelical Etchings

November 2021

This I Know

By Pastor Randy Anderson



I have mentioned many times over the years that the most significant theologian, though not necessarily the most accurate, of the 20th century was the Swiss theologian, Karl Barth. His Church Dogmatics is spread over 14 volumes and contains more than 8,000 pages of material – these volumes are a monumental theological accomplishment. In his own way, Barth urged the professional Christian theologians to return to the Bible as the focus of theological study – something considered radical in the early 20th century when he recommended it and heralded it. He was a genius – he was unbelievably well read and widely read. My 20th century theological hero, Carl F. H. Henry, though not a fan of Karl Barth, did note that he held Barth's intellect in such high esteem that he felt a little intimidated to interview him, as he did at one point, for Christianity Today Magazine. And so, the press was a bit taken back and surprised when asking Barth on a trip Barth made to the United States, 'what is the greatest theological discovery you have ever made?' to which Barth responded,

*'Jesus loves me this I know,
For the Bible tells me so.'*

It was said half tongue in cheek, and yet at the same time, it was said quite sincerely. After all, Barth held Jesus to be 'God the Son,' and so to say, 'Jesus loves me this I know' is for him the same thing as to say 'God loves me this I know.'

And so, it is completely appropriate to be stopped in your tracks, as I am each time I am coming back through Psalm 56 and the second half of verse 9 where we read,

'This I know that God is for me.' (Psalm 56:9b)

This I know. That is, here is something that I am sure of. Here is something I know for certain – here is a statement I am persuaded is true: *'God is for me.'*

'This I know that God is for me.' (Psalm 56:9b)

We are coming into 'Thanksgiving Season.' There is much to be thankful for. For the follower of Jesus – for the disciple of Jesus – thanksgiving should be a notable aspect of our daily lives. And yet, that having been said, we ought to be especially thankful for our most notable gifts – for our most profound gifts, and surely one of those would be the ability to truly say,

'This I know that God is for me.' (Psalm 56:9b)

We remind ourselves Sunday by Sunday that 'we are becoming disciples.' Becoming a disciple means 10,000 things – it entails becoming more like Jesus in 10,000 different ways. But surely among them is this, to become a disciple is to become a person who knows and knows for sure *that God is for us.* This is a life

Continued on page 6

Inside This Issue:

Pastor Randy's Column	1
Library Updates	2
AWANA Update	3
Women's Ministry Update	4
Pastor Dan's Column	5
Operation Christmas Child	6
Upcoming Events	8

Library Updates

By The Library Committee

The 2021 Reading Challenge has come to a close. Twenty-five participants from pre-school through high school completed their packets and qualified for prizes. We were happy to see a number of new faces involved in the Reading Challenge this summer. Thanks to the parents for their encouragement and support.

We continue to add new children's books to the library on a regular basis. Those books can be found in a special display in the children's area of the library.

A librarian is available to assist you on Sunday mornings. The library is self service at all other times and available for use during regular office hours.



"Evangelical Etchings" is a quarterly newsletter of First Evangelical Free Church in Sioux Falls, SD. It is mailed to regular attenders and others upon request by contacting the office by email at office@knowinggods.org or by phone at 605-338-2077.

I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

Psalm 121:1-2

Miss a Sermon? Wish to Hear One Again?

Please visit: <https://www.knowinggods.org/resources/sermon-audio/> to listen to sermons by the FEFC Pastoral Staff! You can search by keyword, date, speaker, scripture, series, or topic.

AWANA Updates

By Craig & Chris Herman



The new Awana club year is up and running!! We feel so blessed to have 24 new helpers this year, either adults who helped in the past who are returning, new leaders to the club or middle/high school "leaders in training." Thank you to all of you! Club would not run without you! Once again club is bursting at the seams. We have around 190 clubbers registered with several on a waiting list in case a spot opens up. We really do not like to have children on a "waiting list" but in order to run club effectively and not overwhelm leaders we really try to keep a certain leader/clubber ratio. Please pray for the leaders each week as they minister to these children who are coming from all over Sioux Falls and beyond!

Clubbers will be participating in "Count your Blessings" Night on Oct. 20th where Sparks and T&T children will be given a special notebook to keep track of ways they see God's blessing in their lives and then learn to "give thanks" in all things to our Lord and Savior. November 10th and 17th we will be doing "Sharing is Caring Night". Clubbers are asked to bring in non-perishable food items which will then be donated to the Union Gospel Mission as a way of teaching them to think about those in our community who need a little extra help providing for their families. This is our way as a club to put into practice the teaching of Jesus along with learning and memorizing His words. Awana store dates are Dec 8th and Dec 15th. Once again, if you have good used or new items that you think would make a great gift item for clubbers and would like to donate them to the Awana store, please let us know and we can arrange a time for you to drop them off.

All for His glory,
 Craig & Chris Herman
 AWANA Ministry Leaders

"So then let us pursue what
 makes for peace and
 for mutual upbuilding."

Romans 14:19

First E Free: Social Media

 [Facebook.com/knowningodsf](https://www.facebook.com/knowningodsf)

 [Instagram.com/fefc_youthministry](https://www.instagram.com/fefc_youthministry)

 https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_3eb2t6TelxxO-oIIWNYPw



Women's Ministry News

By Mary Lynne Johnson

Fall Updates

Fall has been filled with all of our regular Women's Ministries events. We had a Fill the Freezer evening in September to stock up for our freezer meal ministry. Thank you to all who planned for it and helped cook! As always, if you or someone you know would benefit from receiving a meal, let the office know. Bible studies are also underway with a total of 65 women attending a variety of studies. The Thursday morning groups are going through *God of Deliverance: A Study of Exodus 1-18* by Jen Wilkin. There is also a new outreach group meeting with moms from Compassion Childcare and Westside Christian on Thursday mornings going through the book of Matthew. On Tuesday evenings, the women are studying *Son of God Vol 2: A study of the book of Mark* by Keri Folmar. At the Women's Fall Conference in late October, our very own Cathy Hofer taught on Ephesians 3:14-21 and the topic of "Immeasurably More – The Power of a Praying Life."

Testimony of His Goodness on November 18th

Looking ahead, mark your calendars for Thursday, November 18th, for our pre-Thanksgiving event. Come at 6:30 pm for appetizers, cider and fellowship. At 7:00 pm, we will gather in the sanctuary to hear of God's goodness from the testimonies of your sisters, as well as time in worship with Eric and Jenni Kooima. We have much to thank and praise God for! Your daughters aged 12 to 18 are more than welcome to attend as well. We will take your registration in the lobby the two Sundays prior. The cost is \$5. We can't wait to worship with you!

Questions or comments? Please email Women's Ministries at marylynne@knowinggods.org or call the office at 605-338-2077.



Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Ephesians 4:32



Partnering with Parents in Youth Ministry

By Dan Montgomery



One of the five core values of the Youth Ministry at this church is “partnering with parents.” This means that one of my main responsibilities as Youth Pastor is to come alongside the primary disciplers of teenagers – their parents.

As parents, we often feel underequipped and overwhelmed to nurture our children in the faith. This is especially true as they become teenagers. As our children assert more independence, we wonder if outsourcing discipleship to the pastors is better. Addressing the faith of teenagers is like handling plutonium – something best left to specially equipped experts. “In ordinary times, maybe my child could grow into a healthy faith underneath my amateur tutelage,” so we think. “But these are not normal times.” So, like British school children being sent away to the countryside during the bombing of London, we send our children away for discipleship. While this anxiety is understandable, this mindset is misguided.

Scripture presents parents as the primary nurturers of faith in their children. Recent studies of our contemporary situation reinforce that truth, showing that still today parents are the main spiritual influence on their children. It is not Sunday School teachers or youth pastors who leave the biggest and longest lasting impact (no matter how dapper and debonair some of us may be!). It is parents.

Throughout Scripture, in the Old Covenant as well as in the New Covenant, parents are seen to be the ones with the primary responsibility to pass along the faith to the next generation.

In Deuteronomy 6 Moses is preparing the Israelites to cross into the land the Lord has given them. In his instructions he emphasizes the importance of parents immersing their kids in the truth of who God is and what he has done to save them: “You shall teach [God’s instructions] diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise” (Deut. 6:7). The entire nation had the responsibility of passing along the faith to the next generation, but it was not Moses, Aaron, the Priests, or

a coming prophet who primarily passed it along. It was parents. The training ground was not the tabernacle or some other holy place. It was the home. The most important rhythm was not the sabbath or some other festival, it was the regular daily pattern of life.

Even when God’s people turned towards idolatry, the home remained the primary place of spiritual formation. King Amon, according to 2 Kings 21, “did not walk in the way of YHWH.” As 2 Kings explains, Amon’s dishonor towards God came about as he honored his (idolatrous) father and mother. “He walked in all the way in which his father walked and served the idols that his father served and worshiped them” (2 Kings 21:21). Amon learned idolatry at home.

Do not think of this as just an Old Covenant thing. Sometimes we misunderstand the Old Covenant as nothing more than external traditions and commands. That feels like something parents can be passing on. But, so the thinking goes, because the New Covenant is a covenant written on the heart (true!), parents cannot nurture faith like they used to. That’s a false distinction between the Old and the New.

In the New Covenant parents are still called to take up the responsibility of nurturing their children in the faith. Of course we cannot force lifelong faith into our children. There is no formula for guaranteeing that our children and grandchildren continue in the faith (especially in our day and age, when such a high value is placed on individual expression). I know that many of you reading this have been extremely faithful parents and your life is a model to us younger parents, yet you weep over the lack of faith in your children. The current state of your children is not a referendum on your faithfulness as a parent. Although that is the case, we still must say that God’s normal way of passing along the faith from generation to generation is through parents in the home. Children who stay with the faith of their parents, far from having a boring testimony, are incredible trophies of God’s glorious grace and a reason for deep joy in many others.

Continued on Page 7

...Continued from P. 1: Pastor Randy's Column

transforming realization that is meant to be the realization of every disciple – every follower of Jesus.

'This I know that God is for me.' (Psalm 56:9b)

As the apostle Paul once expressed this and applied this broadly to our lives,

³¹ *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?* (Rom. 8:31 ESV)

'This I know that God is for me.' (Psalm 56:9b)

If we know that God is for us, how thankful should we be? We look out on the political landscape, and we might be tempted to be discouraged. We look out on the circumstantial landscape and depending on what is going on at the time, we might be very tempted to be discouraged. There is much we don't know. What is God doing in our present political situation? What is God doing in our present circumstantial situation? We likely don't know. We often find it hard to believe that it could be anything good – though He has promised it is certain to be just that – good. But how profoundly thankful we ought to be if, no matter what else is going on, we have the confidence that David expressed here in the middle of Psalm 56 – the confidence to say without hesitation.

'This I know that God is for me.' (Psalm 56:9b)

That is something to be profoundly thankful for.

Pastor Randy



Operation Christmas Child

By Lucie Oygard

1. **Pack a shoebox.** Boxes and instructions are provided at the display by the front door.

2. **Sponsor a shoebox.** By putting a \$9.00 check (per box shipping cost) payable to *Samaritan's Purse* in the container provided on the display table. You may also visit the Samaritan's Purse website for instructions about sponsoring a virtual shoe box.

3. **Pray.** When the boxes are delivered, Samaritan's Purse coordinates with local congregations and pastors to provide Bible lessons along with the shoebox gifts. Graduates of these classes receive Bibles in their own language. Saturday, November 21st is the deadline to return filled shoeboxes here to FEFC so we can meet collection deadlines.



...Continued from P. 5 Partnering with Parents in Youth Ministry

By Dan Montgomery

For example, Paul praises God and celebrates the heritage of faith in Timothy's family. Timothy's faith, says Paul, "dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well" (2 Tim 1:5). Paul also warns us fathers to "not provoke your children to anger." Instead, we are to take seriously our calling to "bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Eph 6:4). It is not, ultimately, the elders or deacons or apostles who bring up the children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. It is parents. Paul especially directs fathers to take up this task.

One might think that Paul is unrealistic. How many fathers will actually do this? How many are truly qualified? Shouldn't it be the trained church leaders who instruct the young ones? Maybe someone more bookish? And if this is going to happen at home, maybe it should be the mothers (they are more nurturing, aren't they?). But Paul places the burden on the fathers.

There is an idea going around that parents have less influence on their kids' spiritual formation than in years past. Although many spiritual ideas contrary to biblical truth are gaining influence, parents are still the number one influence on the long-term spiritual life of their kids. That's the claim of Christian Smith, a sociologist at Notre Dame. Although the conclusions of modern sociology can never override the truth of the Bible, we should be willing to listen as it helps us understand the truth of Scripture. Smith's career has been focused on the spiritual lives of American teenagers. His most re-

cent book shares his findings on the main sources of spiritual formation in American youth. He comes to a strong conclusion: "The single, most powerful causal influence on the religious lives of American teenagers and young adults is the religious lives of their parents. Not their peers, not the media, not their youth group leaders or clergy, not their religious schoolteachers." (*Handing Down the Faith*, p2-3). He goes on to say, "Myriad studies show that, beyond a doubt, the parents of American youth play *the* leading role in shaping the character of their religious and spiritual lives, even well after they leave home and often for the rest of their lives."

These findings are enlightening but, given what Scripture says, they are not surprising.

This is why we, as a youth ministry, are committed to partnering with parents. We want to equip, encourage, and extend what happens in the home. One small example of how this plays out in practice is the choice to study the Letter of James in Senior High Youth Group this fall. This matches what is happening in the fellowship hall during the Sunday School hour. High Schoolers will be going through a similar passage on Sunday nights that their parents, if they are in that class, go through in the morning. Hopefully this helps parents talk of God's instruction in James with their High Schooler "when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise." Parents, will you take up this calling? Will you let me know how I can better come alongside you? All of us, will you pray with me for the homes in this congregation? Pray for parents to be empowered to lead their children with humility and faithfulness.



Need to Update Your Information?

Have you or a member of your home moved recently?
Do you have a new cell phone or e-mail address?
Please call the church at 605-338-2077 or e-mail:
office@knowinggods.org to help us keep in contact
with you!

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Upcoming Events at FEFC

November 2021

- 11 Veteran's Day
- 14 Second Sunday Potluck
- 14 Evening of Baptism
- 18 Women's Ministries: Thanksgiving Event
- 21 Communion Sunday
- 21 Soup & Pie Supper | Annual Budget Meeting: at FEFC
- 25 Church office Closed for Thanksgiving
- 26 Church office Closed for Thanksgiving

December 2021

- 12 Second Sunday Potluck
- 12 Children's Christmas Program: at FEFC
- 24 Christmas Eve: Church Office Closed
- 24 Christmas Eve Service: 5pm at FEFC
- 25 Christmas Day: Church Office Closed
- 26 Communion Sunday
- 31 New Year's Eve: Church Office Closed

January 2022

- 1 New Year's Day: Church Office Closed
- 9 Second Sunday Potluck