

WEEKLY DEVOTION – Tuesday, August 29, 2023
Pastor Bruce Kischnick, Grace Lutheran Church, New Albany, IN

“Rub Some Bacon on It!”

READING: Matthew 22:8-14 – Then he said to his servants, “The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.” So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. “Friend,” he asked, “how did you get in here without wedding clothes?” The man was speechless. Then the king told the attendants, “Tie his hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” For many are invited, but few are chosen.

If you want to have a good laugh, ask your Alexa or Google to play the song, “Rub Some Bacon on It”. It’s a nonsense song that starts out with a 9-1-1 call. The caller says he has accidentally nailed his finger to a birdhouse he was building. The 9-1-1 attendant asks if he has some bacon in the house. The caller says that yes in fact he had some left over from dinner the night before. The 9-1-1 attendant tells him to rub some bacon on his wound. “That’s it?” asks the caller. “Just do it,” says the man. From there the caller begins to present all manner of scenarios to the 9-1-1 guy, and he responds EVERY time, “Rub some bacon on it!” There are questions about meeting one’s clone, his cat exploding, being attacked by a narwhale, the Apocalypse happening, and numerous others, and every time the response is the same, “Rub some bacon on it!”

Of course it’s all nonsense. I think it’s a parody aimed at any of the many panaceas you can find on the Internet. It reminds me of the movie, “My Big Fat Greek Wedding” when the bride’s father believes Windex will heal any injury. On the Internet there are “knowing” claims made for vinegar, for malt extracts, for Vitamins B-3, B-12, C, D, E, X, Y, and Z! And many other home, holistic, and herbal remedies of dubious value. One must be very careful to study and vet any of these things before ingesting them. Many of them have no more value to them than rubbing some bacon on it!

In the spiritual realm there is much the same. There are 100’s of religions, denominations, cults, and “Christian Science” congregations out there, and each one offers enlightenment and some sort of salvation. Last Saturday one of our local church neighbors put a door-hanger on my front door with one simple question, “Do You Need a Miracle?” and then a QR code that I could have uploaded that would have told me all about the miracles that regularly happen at their church. If you start searching around the Internet, you will find hours of claims, counter-claims, interpretations, explanations, sermons, Bible studies, and treatises about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Krishna, Buddha, Allah, Mormonism, and every manner of mish-mash and misleading nonsense. You might just as well rub some bacon on it, for all the good it will do you! The Bible is God’s word, period. It is not some mysterious, unknowable, unsearchable screed that cannot be fathomed or believed. It is a book that tells us about our Creator, about the fall into sin, God’s gracious promise and the people to whom he gave his word, his promise, and his law. Then it follows the fulfillment of his promises through human history right up to the birth of a baby in Bethlehem that carried the full presence and authority of God in the flesh. That One lived, taught, suffered, and died for the sins of all mankind. Though he was really dead, he really rose to life, returned to his Father, and promises us eternal life in his name when he returns on the Last Day. It’s not rocket science, nor is it bacon. It is God’s word and there is life in it for all who believe that Jesus was and is the fulfillment of God’s plan and promises to a sinful humanity that would die forever without God’s gracious gifts.

Still there are those who try to stand on their own merits. That's what our text refers to. The King in his gracious kindness dresses every guest in fine wedding clothes, but there is one guy who believes his own marvelous suit will be most presentable. When the King sees him, he realizes at once that this guest is not worthy, for he has passed up the King's grace, refusing the white wedding garb offered him, and instead flashes his own tastes as though these are good enough. The King has him bound and forcefully removed from the wedding banquet. He is thrown into the darkness of condemnation.

No one can fix their own sin-broken condition. No one can stand before God arrayed in their own stained righteousness. No one can turn to anything but the righteousness of Christ Jesus obtained by faith in him. Look elsewhere, anywhere, and you might as well rub some bacon on yourself because all of it will be futile. We trust in the One Scripture tells us is the Son of God and our Savior. Nothing nor no one else will do. Amen.

PRAYER:

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**1) LOOKING AHEAD: September 13 – Cave Hill Cemetery Tour
September 24 – Elders BBQ**