

**WEEKLY DEVOTION – Tuesday, March 2, 2021**  
**Pastor Bruce Kischnick, Grace Lutheran Church, New Albany, IN**

**“We Get Used to It”**

**READING: Romans 1:18-23, 25 – The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator – who is forever praised. Amen.**

Do you remember that first 50-degree day back in October? What did you do? I know what you did because I did it, too. You stepped outside to get the paper or to get into your car, you stopped, shivered, and said, “I need a coat! It’s cold outside!” Last Wednesday was our first day back into the 50’s since last fall. I went out with just a light coat in the morning, and when I came out of church about noon to make an appointment, I shook off that coat and threw it into the back seat. Later, I came out of a shut-in’s home, and when I got into the car and began to drive, I put down two windows and drove the rest of the afternoon with those windows open. It was HOT in the car! What makes the difference? We got USED TO IT! After the previous two weeks of sub-freezing temperatures when it was REALLY COLD, 50-degrees felt downright balmy! We got used to it.

St. Paul in our reading today says that’s what happened to the bulk of humanity when they traded the true God and Creator of all things for false gods and idols, philosophies and legends. Already at the time of Noah, most human beings had become pagans. When Abraham comes to Canaan, all the tribes there were practicing pagan religions and idolatry. When Moses brought Israel to the Promised Land, all the peoples living there were polytheists, animists, idolators, and without knowledge of the True God, the Living God, their Creator. How come?

They got used to it. Generations back, sin had led leaders, kings, priests, and prophets to seek power and prestige for themselves, so they tweaked the truth they had been handed down. They added, subtracted, embellished, and omitted the truth about the God of the Universe so that they could extract wealth, hold power over the simple, make themselves important, and generally steal glory and honor from the True God and use it for themselves. And the simple, the unlearned, the powerless just got used to it. Finally, all semblance of the truth was lost, and paganism became the religion of the world.

Have you ever noticed while reading in the Old Testament that once in a while a prophet or priest appears who serves or at least knows the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Melchizedek is one such man. Abraham meets him returning from the rescue of Lot. Melchizedek is introduced as a priest of God, but not related to Abraham. Before they part, Abraham gives to him a tithe (a tenth) of all the loot he has taken from the Five Kings. Men such as these are remnants of tribes and families who continued to worship their Creator in spite of the paganism about them. They hadn't got used to it.

In our day people have slowly but surely crept back into pagan thinking. They acknowledge a form of God without his substance. They talk about "The Big Guy Upstairs" or the "Spirit in the Sky" or the "Life Force", but they don't trust the Scriptures. They do not acknowledge Jesus as Lord and Savior. They don't see a church as something good. And, they like bumper stickers that say, "C O E X I S T", implying that all religions are essentially the same. They GOT USED TO IT!

Not so God's people! We have the Truth, know the Truth, trust the Truth, and acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We know our Creator and worship him only. We see nature as created by God, subservient to him, and we as its stewards. And we know that by his Truth, we will live with him eternally, and it will ALWAYS fill us with wonder! I don't believe we'll ever just get used to it. Thanks be to God! Amen

**PRAYER:**

**ANNOUNCEMENT(S):**

- 1) **SUGARBUSH MAPLE SYRUP FESTIVAL** - We'll be serving food out in Salem again this weekend. It's not too late to sign up to help. We'll provide transportation to and from. Give Karen a call at the office and she can sign you up. If you're already signed up to help and want a ride, the bus leaves both mornings at 7:15, the van at 11:30 for the afternoon gang.
- 2) **DRIVE-THROUGH FISH FRY** – The preschool will offer another drive-through experience on Friday, March 12. You can pre-order your fish and set the time for pick-up by going to [glcna.org](http://glcna.org).
- 3) **WEDNESDAY LENTEN SERVICES**: Our series is entitled, "The Road to Perdition". We will walk beside Jesus as he experiences the various events that lead to the Judgement Hall and the Cross on Good Friday. We'll watch Jesus cleanse the Temple, listen as he bests the Pharisees and Teachers of the Law when they try to trick him, see Mary anoint his feet, and we'll be humbled as Jesus washes the Disciples' feet. Join us on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM.