

St. Andrews Presbyterian Church

traditional land of the Three Fires Confederacy: the Odawa, Potawatami and Ojibwe.

Box 93, Dresden, Ontario NOP 1M0

519-683-2442 standrewspcdresden@gmail.com Rev. Andy Cornell

Worship This Week March 12, 2023

WELCOME & Prayer –

PRAISE SONGS – 10,000 Reasons, make me a servant

YOUNG & YOUNG AT HEART –

SONG – My God is so big

RECEIVE OFFERING

ANNOUNCEMENTS – Bible study

GOD IS MY WITNESS –

PRAYER –

SCRIPTURE – Colossians 3:22-25, 4:1 (The Message translation)

Servants, do what you're told by your earthly masters. And don't just do the minimum that will get you by. Do your best. Work from the heart for your real Master, for God, confident that you'll get paid in full when you come into your inheritance. Keep in mind always that the ultimate Master you're serving is Christ. The sullen servant who does shoddy work will be held responsible. Being a follower of Jesus doesn't cover up bad work. And masters, treat your servants considerately. Be fair with them. Don't forget for a minute that you, too, serve a Master—God in heaven.

MESSAGE – **We continue** with God's commands for how we are to treat one another. Two weeks ago, it was the design for the marriage relationship, last week the family and this week, the workplace.

Keep in mind the original audience. Paul wrote these words on behalf of God to new believers. They were in the process of learning not only the fundamentals of their new lives in Christ and how to live in peace with God, but also how to live with one another. It's all part of the two great commandments, to love God and love one another.

I realize that most of us here in person are not new to the faith. You've heard it all before. And you might think, 'I don't need to hear this again. I know how to treat

my spouse, my children or grandchildren and other family members, and I know how to be a good employee or manager.’ No one needs to be offended by these words of advice over the past three Sundays. It’s not like you’re somehow falling short and it’s up to the pastor to set you straight.

No matter how mature we are in our faith, it’s always useful to be reminded of the basics. It’s why we need a compass. We think we’re talking in a straight line, but it’s very easy to get off track. There are all sorts of things that get our attention. The compass is a great illustration. Normally, we have roads that were made by someone else. Turn left here, turn right there and you will arrive. But what if there were no roads and we were pioneers in a new world? Life today is sort of like that. Our culture resists the narrow path so people create their own destinations and ways to get there. Too often, they get lost.

So we need external tools to keep us on track. We need signs and reminders. Like a map or GPS, we need the Bible to teach. And then to remind us, because there are so many distractions we may forget where we’re going.

It’s not unlike job or vocational skills. Most people who belong to a professional organization or college are required to regularly recertify. It’s not always popular or welcome – likely because there can be some amount of unnecessary content. But the principle behind it can’t be disputed in my mind. I did a Google search of the phrase “why do we need annual recertification of skills?” and common themes popped up from a variety of disciplines.

From a teacher’s licensing body: “it’s nearly impossible to avoid some amount of drift.” That was a common word. It implies that you are moving somewhere slowly as though you do not know where, to go from one state to another without realizing it or to do something or to happen in a way that is not planned. Driving is a good illustration. Even if your tires are correctly inflated and your alignment is good, you’re still going to drift slightly so you need to be constantly correcting.

There’s the phrase, “you’re drifting through life.” In other words, you’re gradually moving away from where you should be and you might not even be aware.

From a ski patrol association: “changes in the CSP Manual, new procedures and practices, new or infrequently used equipment; promote sharing of practices between patrollers of different patrols and years of experience.” In the world of Biblical family and workplace dynamics, our “manual” hasn’t changed: Christ is the same, yesterday, today and always. But the world around us has changed. It’s a vastly different place and changing faster all the time. Against the whirlwinds of change, we need to ensure that our standards don’t change.

There’s also the “sharing of practices.” This is why discussion of Bible and Christian living is so important in a small-group setting. It’s amazing what we can learn from one another in our constant quest to find and maintain Godly lifestyles. We are better together. And benefiting from others who have different perspectives “and years of experience.”

Canfitpro – fit instructors: “credibility.” If I’m a client, I’ll feel more confident in my instructor if I know they’re keeping up with the latest and learning best practices. They have more cred. In the eyes of the critics, who are looking at ways to attack the church, anything we can do to show that we are serious about our faith – that we’re not Sunday Christians, will serve the Kingdom.

You get the idea.

So what’s Paul saying here specifically about workers and bosses. First, we can note that there are four verses devoted to this sphere of living, whereas marriage and family only had two each. Twice as many words might mean there’s twice the need to be taught and stay on track.

“Servants, do what you’re told by your earthly masters.” This is a problem, otherwise these words wouldn’t be here. I know first hand what it’s like to be a department manager with employees who don’t follow the workplan, who think they know better and generally don’t want to work as a team player. I’m not a dictatorial kind of person, I regularly consulted and collaborated to come up with a system that works for everyone. But there’s always someone who refuses to go along. The true Christ follower knows that we live in a hierarchy. God at the top and we are below. This need for order is practical for the simple reason that

human nature cannot be trusted. We will make a mess of things if left to our own ways. That's why we need God-designed order and to submit to The Holy Spirit in the day-to-day execution. We are reminded elsewhere in scripture to obey governing authorities. Jesus said, "give to Caesar what is Caesar's."

Closely following that is this. "And don't just do the minimum that will get you by. Do your best." Don't just punch a clock and do the minimum. Why? Because ultimately we are working for God. If we take a lazy attitude at work, then we will probably apply that same thinking to everything in life, including our service for God. Christian employees will likely be watched more closely by their coworkers and managers simply because the enemy is looking for every opportunity to cast the church as filled with hypocrites.

"Work from the heart for your real Master, for God, confident that you'll get paid in full when you come into your inheritance." We are storing up treasure in heaven. Even if you have a terrible employer, still do your best. Rise above it. Don't get caught up in the lazy practices of your colleagues. And if you're ridiculed and called a go-gooder (or worse) ignore them. Find a different workplace if need be. But while you're there, don't let the enemy corrupt your work ethic.

"Keep in mind always that the ultimate Master you're serving is Christ." That's a powerful statement. On the one hand, it's easy to serve a good employer. They're good to you so you repay their fair compensation and treatment. Not so easy if your boss is less than desirable. No matter how poorly we are treated, we are called to rise above it and still do good work. It's similar to turning the other cheek and doing good for those who do you harm. Love our enemies.

Having a lousy attitude or doing substandard work isn't harming the employer as much as it's hurting the Kingdom of God. "The sullen servant who does shoddy work will be held responsible. Being a follower of Jesus doesn't cover up bad work." Keep in mind that the ultimate Master you're serving is Christ. The lazy worker who does substandard work will be held responsible by God.

The command to the boss is just as powerful. "And masters, treat your servants considerately. Be fair with them. Don't forget for a minute that you, too, serve a

Master—God in heaven.” The advice here is for everyone, believer or not. But while it’s important for all bosses to be fair, it’s vital for the Christian. Believers are called to treat their employees like family. Manage the enterprise and its people in the same way God operates. God is watching. And so are your non-believing employees – and by extension their friends and family. Sadly, I’ve known employers in the community who make a big show of their so-called faith while taking advantage of their workers and doing underhanded things. They will do one thing for show and another in private. It’s not like no one sees this. Great damage has been done to the church’s reputation.

In the end, we have this unchanging truth – our ultimate boss resides in Heaven. He’s always watching. And not just in our workplaces but also in our marriages and families. You’ve heard the term, “Be God pleasers, not people pleasers.” That’s what it comes down to. We’re here to follow the rules of the workplace and the laws of the land. And God is pleased when we do that. But there are limits. What we can’t do is something that violates God’s will. If we are actively submitted to God in every area of our lives, then we will know when to go with the flow and when to say “I can’t go there” and when to call it quits. The key word: submission.

HYMN – 358 There is a redeemer

BENEDICTION –

PRAYER -- requests can be sent to the pastor, either for sharing or in confidence. If a need is not listed here it’s because the family has opted for privacy.

NEW PRAYER

CONTINUE TO PRAY

Health and healing –

1. Jennie Atherton, Becky Desjardine, Bill Eves, Margaret Follows, Ron Mason, Bette Northcott, Tom O’Neill, Cherie Pegg, Sandra Pegg, Mary Whitson, Sandra Whitson
2. Waiting for surgery: Dan Shaw
3. Anyone seeking or undergoing treatment for addictions
4. Anyone wrestling with anxiety and depression
5. Karen Northcott – thanks for good biopsy results but continue to pray.

There are many whose names are not listed here – God know who they are and what they need.

Seniors and shut ins – Alan (Curly) Clark and Norma Latimer at Riverview Gardens, Jim Lusk and Ross Fuchs at Oaks Wallaceburg, Joyce MacTavish at The Waterford Home in Barrie, Bill Lozon at Copper Terrace, Aubrey Butler at home.

Session – Mark Labadie (clerk and representative elder), Cindy Brewer, Sheila Eves, Andrew Neely, Mark Richards and Julie Shaw.

Board of managers – Wendy Weston (chair), Paul Vandenberg (treasurer), Will Brewer, Ross Fuchs, Linda Malott, Jenn Mason, Von Parking, Mark Richards, Jodie Rich, Dan Shaw and Mike Wicks.

WHAT'S UP:

Presbytery visitation -- The questionnaire is attached. Fill it out and return it to the secure box on the Rutherford Hall serving table. A three-person presbytery team will be at the church Saturday March 11 to meet separately with session at 10, the board at 10:45, anyone from the congregation who wants to talk with them at 11:30. It's designed to be a routine checkup every three years. If there are any concerns please share them. Presbytery's primary job is to care for its congregations.

Bible study – Two more opportunities to gather during this series on the Person and Work of The Holy Spirit. Co-led by Pastor Andy and Pastor Rob Elka from Evangel Pentecostal Tabernacle. Every Thursday at 2:30 p.m. until March 23.

Pop can fundraiser – Bring your pop cans to church! Leave them in the bin behind Rutherford Hall. They're worth money!

DATES

March 11 – Presbytery visitation, 10-noon at church.

March 15 -- Lenten Lunch noon at North Dresden Baptist Church

March 19 – Annual Congregation Meeting in the Rutherford Hall following worship.

March 22 -- Lenten Lunch noon at North Dresden Baptist Church

March 25 – Renewal Fellowship annual meeting in Welland or livestream. Register via Eventbrite or see Pastor Andy

GIVING:

E-transfer to pcvan1313@gmail.com. Bring envelope on Sunday or if you have a key, leave it in the treasurer's mailbox. Mail it to the church, PO Box 93 Dresden. NOP 1M0. Put it in the mailbox at the home of treasurer Paul Vandenberg. 1313 North Street, Dresden.

Telephone number 519-683-6194

GIFT CARDS – You pay face value for the gift cards and the church buys them at a discount through Chatham Christian Schools. **Next deadline March 26.**