

Make Church a Part of Your Life

WEEKLY SERMONETTE

"True Encouragement"

By Rick Rostek, Pastor, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Norton

Now everything is going to be much better! At least that's what many in America are saying now that the presidential election is over. Change is in the air! However, many in Kansas, and particularly Norton County, might not feel so upbeat and are perhaps in need of encouragement, given that John McCain received a clear majority of the votes in our state.

However, even those who supported President-Elect Barack Obama may need some encouragement because the problems in our country will not be easily solved. Moreover, no matter who is elected to high office, there is only so much that the government can do. And one thing is quite certain: the government cannot save us for eternity.

In the face of many uncertainties in the Thessalonian church, St. Paul sought to bring comfort and encouragement. The Thessalonians were concerned because Je-

sus had not yet returned. Paul encouraged them, not with news of worldly authorities, but with these words: "We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in

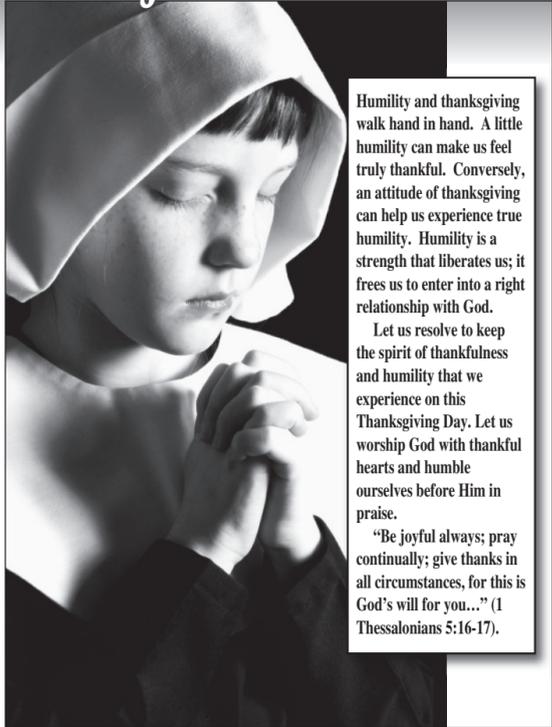
Him" (1 Thessalonians 4:14). This is our true encouragement.

Knowing that Jesus Christ, who died for sin and rose victorious from the dead, will return to receive His own into His kingdom gives us comfort

even in the face of leadership transitions, economic turmoil, and our own personal problems. It's good news to know that we can confess our sins to God and He will forgive us for the sake of Jesus Christ.

Will things really be better under President Obama? Only time will tell. But while we're in this world, we can and should pray for him and all elected officials. As St. Paul tells Timothy, "I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness" (1 Tim 2:1-2).

Regardless of whom you supported, however, know that true encouragement and hope is found in Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. Put your faith in Jesus, because in Him there is everlasting happiness and joy.



Give Thanks

Humility and thanksgiving walk hand in hand. A little humility can make us feel truly thankful. Conversely, an attitude of thanksgiving can help us experience true humility. Humility is a strength that liberates us; it frees us to enter into a right relationship with God.

Let us resolve to keep the spirit of thankfulness and humility that we experience on this Thanksgiving Day. Let us worship God with thankful hearts and humble ourselves before Him in praise.

"Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you..." (1 Thessalonians 5:16-17).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Psalms	Psalms	Psalms	Psalms	Psalms	Psalms	Psalms
100	113	115	68	65	66	67

Scriptures Selected by The American Bible Society
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