

September 2018

First Baptist Church

"To Know Him and Make Him Known"

Pastor's Paragraph

Wolves in Shepherd's Clothes

Perhaps you have heard about the grand jury investigation in Pennsylvania. Their report covered six out of the eight Catholic Dioceses in the state of Pennsylvania, spanning the past 70 years. What they found is absolutely horrifying. It is pure, unadulterated evil. Approximately 300 priests abused more than 1,000 victims (a majority of the victims were boys). And, these numbers are probably just the surface. Most likely, many more victims never came forward for various understandable reasons. The graphic details of the abuse are enough to make the strongest stomach convulse with nausea. One priest raped a young girl in the hospital after she had a tonsillectomy. Another priest told his victim that he was doing this to "show you how much God loves you." Unfortunately, most of the incidents occurred many years ago, and the statute of limitations has already expired. Most of the priests will never have to answer in court for what they have done. The victims will never receive justice from the judicial system. And, many of the offending priests have not been punished by their superiors in the Diocese. That is part of the problem. The crimes are disgusting, and the cover-up is just as sickening. Some priests were quietly moved to a new parish with no concern for the past victims or for future potential victims. In one case, a priest impregnated a young girl, encouraged her to get an abortion, and his superiors allowed him to stay! In another case, a District Attorney ignored crimes by priests because he wanted the political support of the diocese. And, he got it! Sometimes the cover-up went all the way to the Vatican.

Usually I would say that we can't jump to conclusions. We can't condemn an entire system because there are a few bad actors. That is certainly true. Even those who are preaching the gospel and have the right theology sometimes fall into sin and commit terrible crimes. But, this seems to be different. It is systemic, and it is rotten to the core. It is deep and wide. It is indicative of a flawed system that must inevitably fail. Allow me to suggest a few reasons why the system itself is faulty.

1. The liturgical worship of the Catholic church emphasizes the outward sacraments instead of a changed heart. My guess would be that the priests in this report were not true believers. They said the right things during mass, and they faithfully followed church procedure, but they never personally repented of their sin and turned to Christ for forgiveness. First and foremost, they need the gospel. Perhaps the church should re-focus on the need for a personal, life-changing relationship with Jesus.
2. The hierarchy of the church is designed to protect itself, instead of preach the truth. God did not ordain a wealthy and powerful hierarchy. He gave shepherds to His church. The man-made hierarchy is designed to be corrupt and to hide its own corruption.
3. The doctrine of a celibate clergy is a bad idea. God has given some individuals the gift of singleness and celibacy. But, not everyone is fit for such a lifestyle (Matthew 19:12). And, it certainly should not be a requirement for church leadership. When it is required, it forces people who do not have the gift of celibacy into a vow that is very difficult to keep, and is likely to lead to sin.
4. The church's acceptance of homosexuality adds fuel to the fire. Acquiescing to our worldly culture, the church has allowed openly gay men to be priests. The church no longer champions the morality of the Bible. It refuses to call homosexuality sin, even though God has declared it to be sin in His Word. About 80% of the victims in Pennsylvania were male. If the church was serious about dealing with sin, it could avoid many of these disturbing crimes.

I'm sure there are faithful priests who love God and are horrified by these crimes. I'm sure that traces of the gospel can still be found within the catholic church, even though it may have been neglected. However, as long as these systemic problems continue, there will always be corruption from the top down. Perhaps it is time to change the system from the inside out! ~Pastor

September 2018



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Trustees' Mtg 8 AM
2 Communion SS Contest	3 	4 Deacons' Mtg 7 PM	5 AWANA Registration 6:30-8 PM	6	7 WCBC  Men's Retreat Fri-Sat	8
9 SS Contest	10	11	12 AWANA 6:30-8:00 PM	13	14 	15 AppleJack Weekend
16 SS Contest	17	18	19 AWANA 6:30-8:00 PM	20	21	22
 WCBC Fall Volunteer Work Camp — Monday through Saturday						
23 SS Contest	24	25	26 AWANA 6:30-8:00 PM	27 	28 NARBC Fall Conference in Omaha	29 
30 Bill Brittain From BCH						



AWANA Registration Open House is Wednesday, September 5th, from 6:30-8:00 p.m.! Parents, come sign up your clubber(s), and grab some cookies! AWANA is for ages 3 through 6th grade. The first official club night is Wednesday, September 12th, from 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Express Conference!

All AWANA Volunteers are invited to attend the AWANA Express Conference in Omaha on Thursday, September 27th. Watch the bulletin for further details!



Fall SS Contest

It's that time of year when we are challenged by our NARB sister churches to a Sunday School contest! For the month of September, we will enjoy some fun and games at the beginning of our S.S. hour. Invite your friends, invite your neighbors, family, etc!

July Finances

Balance Forward 7/1/2018

Deacon's Fund	\$551.04
Designated Fund	\$1,624.74
General Fund	\$26,823.64
Checking Account	\$28,999.42

July Income	\$17,855.98
July Expenses	\$13,995.56
Net Increase	\$3,860.42

Balance 7/31/2018

Deacon's Fund	\$551.04
Designated Fund	\$2,187.68
General Fund	\$30,121.12
Checking Account	\$32,859.84

α-TEAM

Alpha-Team Youth Group meets every Sunday, at 6:00 p.m., in the Fellowship Center. Youth group is for grades 7-12th!

