



An initiative of WISCONSIN FAMILY COUNCIL

Tuesday June 2, 2020

Lead with the Gospel

Dear Pastor,

As I write this, I am looking at a blue sky, green grass, and a peaceful neighborhood. But I am keenly aware that major cities across our country—beginning in Minneapolis but now including Madison and Milwaukee—are experiencing a horrific response to the unjustified death of a precious man at the hands of those who were supposed to serve and protect.

I pray for peace—shalom—and reconciliation. I pray for healing and comfort. I pray for pastors and churches in our major cities, that God will protect them, and use them to point to Jesus, the King, the only One who can bring genuine shalom. We are still dealing with COVID-19, and yet here is another crisis tearing at the fabric of society.



Government cannot solve the problem. It usually doesn't even ask the right questions, let alone acknowledge the right answers. How bizarre is it that the nightly news showed us launching two men into space followed by news of major cities burning, metaphorically and literally? We are a broken people.

My son put it this way to his church on Sunday: "Now we have been faced with videos of injustice followed by rioting and chaos in cities across the country. This is us. This is humanity. Unstoppable waves of wickedness. We grieve what we see. We should grieve. The Christian should not be aloof, unaffected."

The unjustified death of any man or woman, the riotous arson and looting—they are all symptoms of the problem, the heart problem, the sin problem. Depravity is on display, and we rightly recoil at the ugliness. People need the Lord.

More than ever we as God's people should lead the way as peacemakers. "Blessed are the peacemakers" (Mat. 5:9). It begins in our families. It must also be seen in our churches by how we treat anyone—everyone—who is different from us ethnically, culturally or socially. We can respect and even celebrate cultural and ethnic differences without compromising the gospel. And the clear gospel, the good news of redemption and reconciliation, is the only reality that can bring peace to troubled hearts and a troubled world.

Racism* is one of the most pernicious compromisers of the gospel that Satan has ever devised. Our God is a God of diversity. Just look at His creation! As believers we absolutely **MUST** get it in our heads and hearts that every one of our fellow human beings is an image-bearer who deserves to be treated with dignity and respect because of that fundamental fact.

Here are two helpful articles on this issue: One is by Pastor Jason Wredberg, "[Please Lord, Teach Us To Love](#)", and the other is by Phillip Holmes, "[We Need To Be Uncomfortable.](#)" They are brief but well-written. I encourage you to read them both.

I believe God uses natural disasters and man-made calamity to remind us of the answers He has graciously given in His Word. We must lead with the gospel, but we must follow up with the implications of that gospel for the issues that confront us.

In Christ,

Dave Lingle
WFC Church Ambassador

PS: We are hosting a one-hour webinar with Dr James Garlow on Tuesday, June 9th, from noon to 1. You can register [HERE](#) (registration is required). As a pastor, Dr. Garlow addressed a number of today's tough issues. I encourage you to get his book, [Well Versed: Biblical Answers to Today's Tough Issues](#), and read it. The chapter in his book dealing with racism is outstanding. Dr. Garlow will help us think through how to tackle some of the tough issues of our day without being tackled by them, and how we can challenge the culture yet keep the door open for the gospel message. As a pastor, Dr. Garlow

had to wrestle with differences in his own congregation; so he will share some practical recommendations for addressing the issues of the day without dividing your church.

*I believe there is only one race, the human race (Gen. 1:26-27, Acts 17:26), and that God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34-35). Every human being has value because (s)he is an image bearer. For this reason, every human life should be treated with dignity and respect from conception to natural death. The imago Dei was defaced, but not erased by the fall. Redemption and reconciliation, including “racial” reconciliation are possible exclusively through and because of the Cross-work of Jesus. Reconciliation with others, however, will elude us without first being reconciled to God (Cf. II Cor. 5:20-21). I love what God says to us through Paul in Galatians 3:28: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” This kind of unity is made possible by the blood of Jesus. Praise His name!