

Another Word July 6, 2021

To our family and friends of First Christian Church

WOW!! The Fourth of July fireworks display was fantastic! And the grand finale was....well grand! Though I don't have an exact count, I estimate that we had well over 200 individuals and families on our lawn to watch the show. I would like to thank everyone who supplied the water, popsicles, and snacks, and those who were here to help, that made this a friendly and fun experience.

The cards collected this past Sunday have been delivered to Kingston. I thank you for your continued support of this outreach and ministry.

The scriptures for July 11 are: Psalm 48, Mark 6: 1-13, "Hometown Advantage?" Shelley Carpenter is our Elder.

Please remember the family of Becky Snook Shank, and the family of George Paulsen in your prayers. Their absence among us will be greatly felt. But may we feel joy through our faith and belief that they are now in the loving arms of our Lord, Jesus.

May we be in prayer.

O most Holy and gracious God. Your love for us has no limits, and your guidance is always straight and true. We give thanks that we can come to you with our praises, fears, and even our anger. You understand us better than we understand ourselves. Please guide us through our lives that we may always act in accordance to your word. We raise up to you our friends and family that are in need of Your loving touch. May they

feel Your peace and strength. Please bless our first responders and the tireless work they do. You are our God and all praise and glory goes to You, and to You alone. We raise this prayer in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, Amen.

Eleven years ago a friend (whom I will call "Dale Campbell") and I, took a trip to Yellowstone, Wyoming. It was quite a trip. We saw many wonderful things and had a number of memorable adventures.

We saw waterfalls, geysers, hot mineral springs, mountains, and plenty of wildlife.

Speaking of wildlife, we saw so much wildlife that it became secondary to us, even common place. It was almost like either being in a zoo, or like sitting in your backyard watching your neighbor's pet buffalo walk by. Therein lies the danger. It's the danger of the familiar, and the things in life that tempt us. It's the danger of things we think we can pursue and reach for. But ultimately, many of these are the things that can harm us.

One afternoon as we were driving down a rather deserted highway, I saw a grizzly bear lumbering along, just off the edge of the road. I yelled at Dale to pull over, and to pull over fast! The one thing we hadn't done yet was to get a picture of a bear. We had seen everything from buffalos to moose, but no bears. Before the car had even stopped, I was out and running back along the edge of the road with camera in hand, ready to snap a picture of the huge bear. Hey, no problem here right? I'm in a protected National Park so I'm safe. I'm familiar with

what bears look like (I had a teddy bear once), and I need to get that picture; so I pursued him to get what I desired.

Luckily, he had turned left and walked into the woods just before I got close enough to become his dinner. It didn't even occur to me until I got back to the car just how much danger I had put myself in.

Is that not how we act when we are enticed and tempted by things in our lives we may want? We jump out of our car headlong into something that could possibly lead us to ruin. And there are many things that can lead us astray; including pride, desire, status, wealth, or even a stupid picture of a bear.

Paul tells Timothy in his first letter to him, to be careful "not to fall into temptation and a trap into foolish and harmful desires, that will plunge you into ruin and destruction." 1Timothy 6:9. Wise words! I should have read them before jumping out of the car.

We need to heed these words and apply them to all the circumstances of our lives that can place us in danger. But Paul didn't stop there. He went on to tell Timothy, and us, how to resist danger. In verse 11 he writes, "We must pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness." If we pursue these traits, instead of pursuing "the lumbering bears" of our lives, they will grow within us, strengthen us, and keep us safe and secure, as we live our lives for God.

In His Peace,

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