

10 November 2010

The Kelly Report

Dear Friends,

greetings from the Land of Luther. I trust this letter finds you all striving in God's strength to keep the royal law: "Love your neighbor as yourself". I am currently preaching through James and God has been showing me how far I fall short of this royal law on a daily basis. My thoughts have been fixed upon the following verses for several weeks now:

⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. ⁹ But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. ¹¹ For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹² So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. ¹³ For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. **James 2:8-13**

I have heard verse 10 quoted all my life, but the full meaning of this quote is connected to the royal law. Every sin against your neighbor is a breaking of the royal law. Through James God confronts us today with our failure to grasp the wickedness of certain sins such as showing favoritism, judging others, speaking ill of others and failing to help others in practical ways. All of these are sins that we rarely take serious. But James places them right up there with murder and adultery, by demonstrating that all sin against a neighbor is a failure to love them, the way you love yourself.

Verse 12 confronts us with our debt to God and reminds us of our responsibility to live lives consistent with the grace and mercy we have received. We are thus to live as those who will be judged by the law of liberty (i.e. as those who will not be judged thanks to God's grace and mercy). This means that our speech and conduct must be full of the mercy we have received.

In verse 13 James reminds us of the ultimate fact, that those who consistently fail to practice mercy will not be saved. They will receive judgment without mercy.

In James 2:14-26 he is explaining what he meant in 2:13. He does not want to be understood as teaching a works salvation: "through the practicing of mercy we earn our way into heaven." This is why he is seeking to demonstrate the relationship of faith and works. I have included these thoughts in my report that you might know how God is currently speaking to me and to our church here. Since I have started preaching through James, I keep catching myself dealing harshly with others. God is softening my heart and making my conscience sensitive. Please pray for me and our church as I continue this series on James that we will truly be hearers **and** doers of God's will.

Family:

Many of you have already heard that our oldest daughter Solea has denied the faith in Christ Jesus. Her words to the church body were: "I know that there is evil in the world and also in my own heart. I just do not believe that the Bible gives us the solution for it." You can all

imagine how heartbreaking this has been for us all. BUT, we are rejoicing in God's goodness. Solea is no longer kidding herself and others that she is a child of God. We see God reaching out to her and God continues to grant wonderful conversations with Solea. Please continue to pray that God would be gracious to her and draw her to himself in brokenness of heart and purity of faith. She has taken a year off of her studies in Braunschweig so that she can add a different minor to her B.A. During this break she is living in London with Linda's sister Ella and her husband Nick. They are wonderful and devout Christians. May God use them to reach out to Solea.

Shane has finished his nine months of required military service and is hoping to get a high enough score on his upcoming ACT test to study at the University here in Braunschweig. It has been a real source of joy seeing Shane stand up for his faith during his time in the military and also in the life of our young adults group at church. Please pray that Shane would continue to walk close with the Lord Jesus Christ. Pray also that God would give him wisdom concerning his choice of studies.

Samantha and Seth are both doing great. They are such a joy to Linda and me. Linda leads a devotional time with them every morning before school and I sometimes sit in on it. It is a joy to hear their prayers for Solea and for unsaved friends (and enemies) at school.

Seth has been bitten by the "soccer bug" and can't think of anything else. Linda was bitten a long time ago with the "sewing bug" and I think the sickness is getting worse ☺. She is busy making a whole bunch of different things for the upcoming Christmas market in our village.

Church:



Our church attendance is steady at around 100 people including children. But this last Sunday there were 120 people in attendance. We have around 20 children still in diapers and more on the way ☺. Every Sunday we see the need to move into our new building, but

God continues to teach us patience as we slowly complete the inside of the building.



Concerning the progress of the building, we have finished all the outside work on the building and grounds. Grass is planted and has even germinated in some places. The parking lot is finished and what a joy it is to finally be able to park on a clean and dry area. The electrical work should be

wrapped up this week. The gas meter was installed and the heating system is up and running. This past Sunday we had a church potluck in the new auditorium after our worship service in our home. All 30 parking spots were taken. I had to park somewhere else. This potluck lunch gave many people who have not had the chance to see the progress of the building the chance to walk around inside and rejoice in God's grace towards us.

When will we be able to move into the new building?

This is a difficult question to answer. We have sufficient funds to finish all the ceilings and to paint the walls. But we are missing the funds for the following:

- Floor coverings: 13,000 Euros
- Inside doors: 13,000 Euros (some of these have to be fire and smoke resistant).
- Lighting: 16,000 Euros
- Bathroom fixtures: 5,000 Euros
- Railings for the balcony: ?

We are missing roughly 50,000 Euros to be able to finish the building. (This does not include the kitchen or furniture). But we are rejoicing greatly in God's providing us with the funds to get as far as we have debt free. Praise the Lord!! We are also rejoicing in the unity within our body, that God has graciously brought about in our hearts during the entire project. The flesh was active, but God helped us all to swallow our pride and work together well. Please pray with us that God would provide the funds for the floor coverings soon, because we now have people with the time to do the work.

A local newspaper wanted to do a story on our building project and asked me for an interview. The article was once again quite positive, but there was one major typo. Instead of typing "Pastor Kelly's favorite room is for conferences" she typed "Pastor Kelly's favorite woman is for conferences. For those of you who speak German: "Pastor Kellys Lieblingsfrau (instead

of Lieblingsraum) ist fuer Seminare gedacht.” I think I will give her a call and tell her that she owes me a good article sometime in the future ☺.

God continues to open doors for ministry in other churches. Two weeks ago I was in Innsbruck Austria speaking to 41 students from Innsbruck and Salzburg. The retreat started on Friday evening and ended Sunday at noon. I had the joy of preaching 5 times and seeing God’s word impact their minds and hearts. We went for walks and they had many questions concerning how I study Scripture and they have taken up the challenge to study the Bible book for book, doing an inspectional reading a particular book of the Bible and completing an “x-ray” of it. Please pray for lasting fruit in their lives.

Two Sundays ago was Reformation Sunday here in Germany and I had the joy of preaching in a very small church in the former East Germany. Paul’s admonishment to Timothy to guard the beautiful deposit of sound instruction in 2Timothy was the thrust of the message. Their prayers after the sermon were for more courage to speak the whole counsel of God and not just those things that itching ears want to hear. Praise the Lord. We stayed for over an hour and had great conversations with some of those attending. I was sent last week a news paper clipping where I was surprised to see every major point in my message printed, complete with points made and several major quotes.

Friends, everywhere I go in Europe expository preaching is met with great joy. There is such a hunger in the hearts of God’s true saints because the Scriptures are so seldom preached. Please continue to pray for our students at the EBTC (European Bible Training Center) in Berlin and Zurich. I have 10 men that I am currently training in expository preaching in Berlin. Pray that God would make these men into bold and wise preachers of God’s truth.

We love and miss you all. God’s richest blessings upon you all.

Tim

P.S. If you want to see lots of pictures then just get on facebook with Linda.

If this prayer letter was forwarded to you, you can answer it at: timkellyelect@t-online.de