

September 14, 2020

The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.



Hello Friends at Atwater Baptist!

I love our Lord Jesus Christ and am so glad to be with you. Some of you may remember me; younger (and better looking). Paul Lundberg and I were friends. You may not remember. I was a long-term Pastor at North Sacramento FBC and before that at Church of the Valley in San Ramon. There have been a few other churches, mostly in California. John Doty and I were ski buddies while going to Fuller Seminary together. I have been involved with Billy Graham and Campus Crusade.

My wife Cathy helped to hold the interests of my life in check. In addition to my life in church I am a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and third generation almond farmer for Blue Diamond which I have done concurrently while pastoring. I have also worked for Scandinavian Airlines and Mayflower moving. All this sums up to say I am probably nuts. (ha-ha).

My wife died on August 4, 2019. I am still grief stricken. She was my rock and always brought me to the presence of the Lord with her music. She has left me two precious children who each live in Richmond and shepherd their father around. My prayer is that in our time together we will have a growing presence of our Lord Jesus and feel, sense, and know His goodness and direction.

Once we receive Jesus as our Savior and are at rest in His presence, a *healthy fear* of Him gives us the power to *live a fearless life*. While my wife Cathy

was alive, she had a cat named Kiya, a smallish rescue cat. She was small and fairly timid around other animals. If she crossed paths with another animal, she would dart away. However, if one of her owners picked her up and held her, she would suddenly gain courage and hiss and spit. Though this seems like a silly example, I hope it serves as a simple illustration of a profound spiritual point. While we are certainly more complex than little Kiya, the truth is that the Lord keeps us safe in His strong arms and will never let us go. Because He is awesome and mighty, we can embrace each day with the knowledge that He holds us fast and live in the assurance that nothing can snatch us from His hand.

No matter how dark the shadows or how loud the voices of our opposition, His presence gives us the security we need to push through and do the next thing. We can be fearless in our faith and confident in our convictions because we trust in the One whose arms never grow weak.

Regardless of how near our enemies come, He will hold us close to His heart until the day we enter His presence and inherit eternal safety.

*Rev. Robert Tharlsen,*

Interim Pastor, Atwater Baptist Church

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways submit to Him and He will make your paths straight.” Proverbs 3:5, 6

