



## Bethany Lutheran Church & Early Childhood Ministry

5051 McCarty Road (at Center Road)  
Saginaw, MI 48603

[www.bethanysaginaw.com](http://www.bethanysaginaw.com) | Office: 989.793.9579

## Viewpoints

*Observing events in our modern world from the viewpoint of our ascended Savior.*

### The Gift of Made-in-Heaven Confidence ~ December 22, 2017

*Christmas teaches that so-called "random accidents" must serve us.*

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If you've hiked the western states, you may have come across a blowdown. And even if it's a blistering hot day, it'll give you the shivers.

A blowdown is a powerful column of wind (a microburst) that blasts from the sky. It's so powerful and violent it literally blows down all the trees in that part of the forest. It doesn't matter how supple the younger trees, or how massive the old growth trees. Every tree within the strike point is toppled.

Happening upon the results of such violent power, and then imaging being caught in it, is what makes me momentarily shiver. *What are the odds of randomly being caught in a blowdown?*

In Psalm 31 David the Giant Slayer declares to the Lord: "Into your hands, Lord, I commit my spirit... My times are in your hands." David teaches us that all the events and circumstances of life are in the hands of our Merciful God.

And the ever-confident optimist, Paul, wrote: "God placed all things under Christ's feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church" (Ephesians 1:22). This means that Jesus stands victoriously over every aspect of our lives, and with loving control (the idea of being the "head") Jesus works out all of life's details for the eternal welfare of believers like you and me (the church).

Not by any random chance, nor by any fluke in nature can a blowdown crush me, but only by the loving decision of a merciful God operating in perfect wisdom will I be called home to heaven. And you can rest assured that this is how God works in your life, too.

It was not by random chance that a Caesar ordered a census that sent Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem. It was not a fluke in nature that Mary gave birth to Jesus in barn and laid him a feedbox. Nor is it an accident that you have come to know that the child laid in that manger came to cancel your debt of sin with God. Nor is it a fluke that you know the Christ was born to open heaven for you and all who believe in him. In other words, Christmas assures you that in spite of nature's flukes and this world's random accidents, Jesus lovingly rules your

life. Because Christ's birth teaches that so-called "random accidents" must serve our eternal good, one of the presents we get to unwrap this Christmas is the gift of confidence. Made-in-heaven confidence. †

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*Blessings to you and your loved ones, Pastor Mike Nitz*

