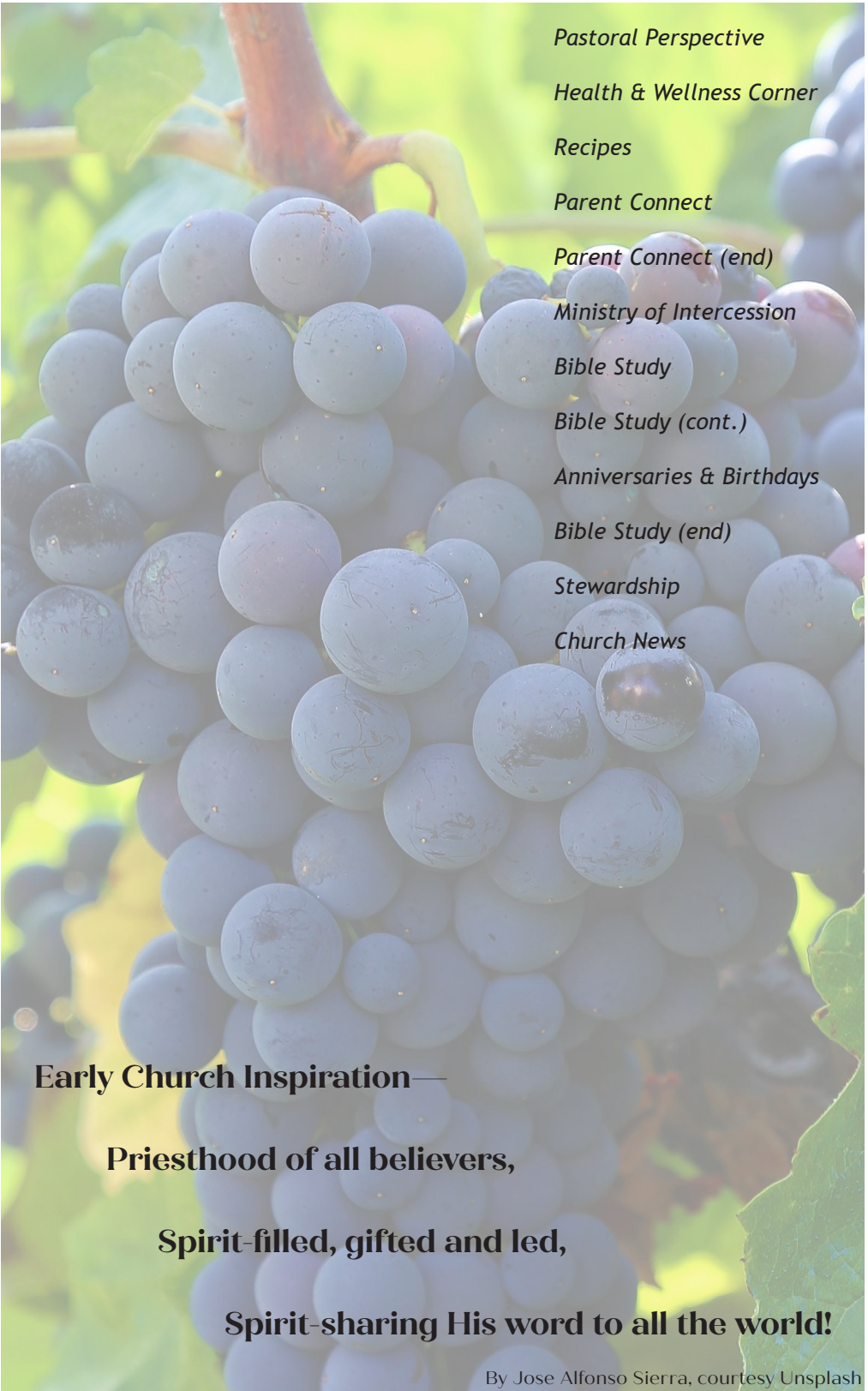


Wine & Bread

Our Life Source Connection—John 15:4-5

Table of Contents



<i>Pastoral Perspective</i>	1
<i>Health & Wellness Corner</i>	2
<i>Recipes</i>	3
<i>Parent Connect</i>	4
<i>Parent Connect (end)</i>	5
<i>Ministry of Intercession</i>	6
<i>Bible Study</i>	7
<i>Bible Study (cont.)</i>	8
<i>Anniversaries & Birthdays</i>	9
<i>Bible Study (end)</i>	9
<i>Stewardship</i>	10
<i>Church News</i>	10

Early Church Inspiration—

Priesthood of all believers,

Spirit-filled, gifted and led,

Spirit-sharing His word to all the world!

By Jose Alfonso Sierra, courtesy Unsplash

Pastoral Perspective

Fear or Love?

by Pastor Mercado

October is finally here; and with it the seasonal changes that come with the autumn weather. This is also the time of the year where stores put out all the decorations of ghosts and goblins preparing for Halloween. As a child I remember the fear I had of the proverbial “monsters.” In fact, I remember going with a camp group to a place in New Jersey called “The Haunted Mansion.” It has all the typical monsters that we grew up seeing on TV. However, I remember that the moment I entered the mansion I started screaming and crying because I was so afraid of these men and women dressed as monsters. Today, of course, I know better, and I am no longer afraid.

How about you, do you have anything that you are afraid of? Fear is a powerful influence and motivator. Have you ever wondered, what motivates you to serve God? The Bible tells us that we ought to fear God. For example, The fear of the Lord leads to life, and he who has it will abide in satisfaction; He will not be visited with evil (Prov. 19:23). Speaking of God, Jesus said, and do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Matt. 10:28). Passages like these can lead people to think that we should be afraid of God and that this fear should lead us to get on His good side so that He doesn't obliterate us.

I am a dog person, so I really love my dog Bailey; you may have noticed this if you follow my Facebook page. However, occasionally Bailey misbehaves and gets into trouble. Trust me, she knows when she is in trouble. During these times if I were to call on her, she obeys and comes to me, but she does it with her tail between her legs and her body shaking. In these moments Bailey is afraid of me.

When I think about the relationship that God wants to have with me, I don't think He wants me to come to him with my body trembling in fear. When Bailey is not in trouble, she is so happy to see me and she jumps, wags her tail, and tries to kiss me. She is joyful because her motivation isn't fear but love. The apostle John emphasizes that our motivation to serve God

should be love. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us.

God wants you to serve Him because of LOVE. So, what motivates you, love, or fear?



Health & Wellness Corner

Turmeric (Curcuma Longa)

By Dr. Lynette Aluoch

Are you a turmeric fan? It's been a popular spice in Indian and Asian food for centuries, but it has become a global favorite over the past few years.

(Ref: healthline.com/nutrition/top-10-evidence-based-health-benefits-of-turmeric.
<http://www.whfoods.org/genpage.php?Tname=foot-spice&dbid=78>).

Turmeric gets its health benefits from its main active ingredient, curcumin, which is LOADED with antioxidants and is believed to have anti-inflammatory properties. (and it's even great for some pets, also!) It has notable source of manganese, iron, vitamin B6, copper, and fiber.

Researchers believe that chronic inflammation plays a significant role in all sorts of chronic diseases, from heart disease to cancer.

Plus, curcumin is believed to boost your brain function, ease arthritis pain, and even help with depression.

Turmeric adds a rich flavor to recipes and even has found its way into yummy turmeric lattes! Add it to your favorite chili, stew, and stir fry for an exotic flavor. Have you had any lately?

There are many ways to enjoy turmeric and reap the health benefits. This super-powered anti-inflammatory tonic contains a lot of the benefits of freshly made juices but without the mess. It's refreshing, sweet, and a little earthy-spicy. Below is a recipe you can try:

TASTY TURMERIC TONIC (makes 1 serving)

Ingredients:

- 1/2 small carrot, cut into chunks
- 1 Tbsp of flax seeds.
- 1 cup coconut water
- 1/2 tsp dried turmeric
- 1/2 Tbsp freshly grated ginger
- Juice from 1/2 of an orange
- 1/2 Tbsp maple syrup
- Dash of sriracha
- Dash of cinnamon

Directions

Place the carrot, flax seeds and water in a high speed blender and blend until the carrot and flax are fully incorporated.
Add the other ingredients and blend well.
Pour into a glass and enjoy!



By Kindel Media, courtesy Pexels

VEGETARIAN

Recipes

Selections by Charlotte Hardy. Send recipes to charlottehardy@comcast.net, or, text (615) 974-0191 by 3rd Sunday of each month. Thank you.

Pesto Spaghetti with

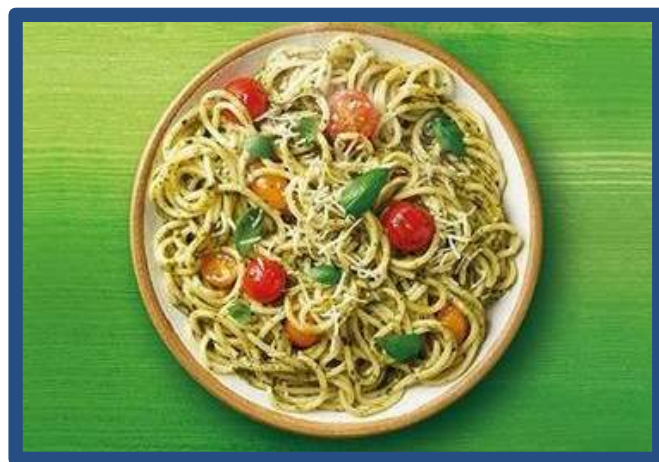
Cherry Tomato Medley (serves 8)

Ingredients

- 1 box (16 oz.) spaghetti
- 1 package of Knorr Pesto sauce mix
- ¾ cup water
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 Tbsp oil
- 1 container (16 oz.) mixed medley cherry tomatoes (halved)

Directions

- Cook spaghetti according to package directions.
- Whisk Knorr pesto sauce mix, water and olive oil in a small sauce pan.
- Bring to boil, stirring constantly.
- Reduce heat and simmer, stirring occasionally (about 5 minutes).
- Toss hot cooked spaghetti with hot Pesto Sauce and cherry tomatoes.
- Garnish, if desired, with basil leaves and shredded Parmesan cheese.



Cilantro Potatoes

Ingredients

- 5-6 Golden medium potatoes
- ½ bunch of fresh cilantro
- 4 cloves of garlic (mashed), or, 1 tsp. Garlic powder
- 1 ½ Tbsp olive oil
- 1 ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper

Directions

- Peel potatoes & cut into small cubes.
- Chop cilantro & mix with oil, garlic, salt & pepper.
- Preheat oven to 375degrees.
- Mix cilantro mixture with potatoes & spread onto parchment paper on a cookie sheet or shallow baking pan.
- Bake in the oven for 30-35 minutes.
- Then set oven on broil and place potatoes under it for about 5 minutes, or until golden brown. Keep an eye on them to prevent burning.
- Remove from oven and set aside to cool off a bit and then enjoy!

Ω

Parent Connect

Building Faith in God

Children's Ministry

BIBLE STORY:

KING DAVID SHOWS KINDNESS TO MEPHIBOSHETH 2 SAMUEL 9:1-13

BIBLE VERSE: ZECHARIAH 7:9

BIBLE TRUTH:

I WILL BE KIND TO OTHERS AS JESUS WAS KIND TO ME.

The story of King David and Mephibosheth (Jonathan's son) in 2 Samuel brings to life for kids the concepts of mercy, forgiveness, and unconditional love. David showed mercy when other kings would want to kill Mephibosheth because he was an heir to the prior king. It is also an important Old Testament illustration of the love of Christ for sinners. Paul said, "but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." In response to Christ's sacrificial love for us, we ought to take his example of loving kindness and practice it in our lives, to model and teach kindness to our children.

We all assume our children know what being kind means, however, it is important to define it for them and discuss it just as you would any other value that's important to you. So what is the definition of kindness? According to the dictionary definition, kindness is:

1. A kind act;
2. A tendency to be kind and forgiving;
3. The quality of being warm-hearted and considerate and humane and sympathetic.

In simple terms being kind is listening, feeling, and understanding others' needs and trying to help meet those needs.

So how do we teach the lesson of kindness to our children?

Model Kindness

"Kindness isn't taught, it's learned. In order to be kind, you have to experience it at home." said Mary Gordon, founder and president of Roots of Empathy, a K-8 classroom program designed to instill emotional and social competence, and to reduce aggression.

The first step is by being a role model for kindness. Children understand kindness through everyday interactions with their parents, Gordon said. Empathy

begets empathy, in her view. Ask yourself, "How do my children see me being kind?" Do you interact with the grocery checker as they ring up your groceries or are you talking on your phone and barely acknowledging the checker? Are you a courteous driver or are you seething behind the wheel? Do you do favors for others in need? Do you go up to people who are new and introduce yourself? These are all little acts of kindness that can have a big impact—you have the power to make someone's day or ruin it.

In addition to your kind actions, give the children kind language. Learning empathy and language go hand-in-hand. Julie Masterson, professor of communication science and disorders at Missouri State University and author of "Beyond Baby Talk," defines kindness as the ability to take another person's perspective and then tailor your words and actions accordingly.

Sometimes our toddlers will say things that are appropriate but hurt the feelings of others. To model kindness, it's crucial to respond by validating a toddler's feelings, giving them another perspective to consider and encouraging them to use kind words. For older kids, ask explicit questions about unkind behavior or language: how do you think that makes another person feel? What is it like to be in their shoes?

Acknowledge kind acts

You can feel uplifted when you receive other's kind acts, and your children are keen observers. Point out other's acts of kindness and how it made you feel. Express your gratitude to your children when they bring you a cup of tea or give you a shoulder rub after you have a rough day. Your acknowledgment will encourage them to practice more acts of kindness. Help them recognize their feelings of happiness and sense of achievement when they are kind to others. The fulfillment they taste will motivate them to be kind next time to stay happy. Consider rewarding their big acts of kindness, such as when your child set up a lemonade stand to raise money for disaster relief.

The Bible says in Proverbs 11:17 "A man who is kind benefits himself". On the contrary, "A cruel man hurts himself". We feel regretful when we are harsh to others. As parents, we all lose our cool sometimes and yell to our kids or give out harsh punishment. Acknowledge when perhaps you weren't so kind to your children and discuss with them what you would do differently and why.

Engage children in small acts of kindness. Have your children participate in small acts of kindness from an early age. Simply picking up another child's pencil

Parent Connect (end)

off the floor and handing it to them with a smile is an act of kindness. Saving coins in a jar or penny bank and donating them when it's full is kindness. The importance of being kind is not "a one-time a year around the holidays" occasion but an everyday act.

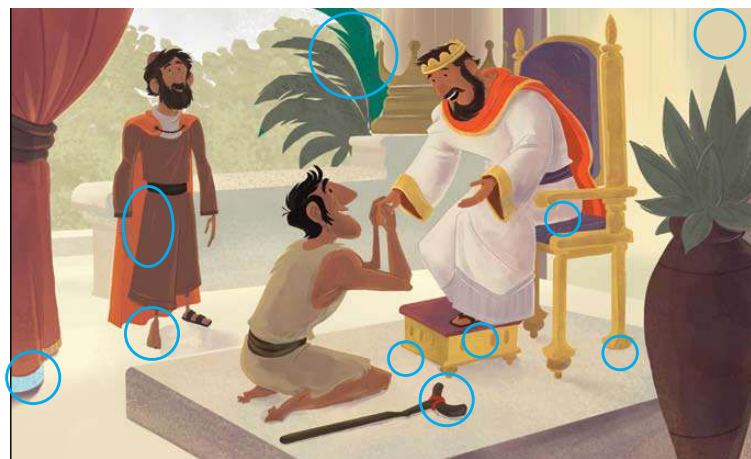
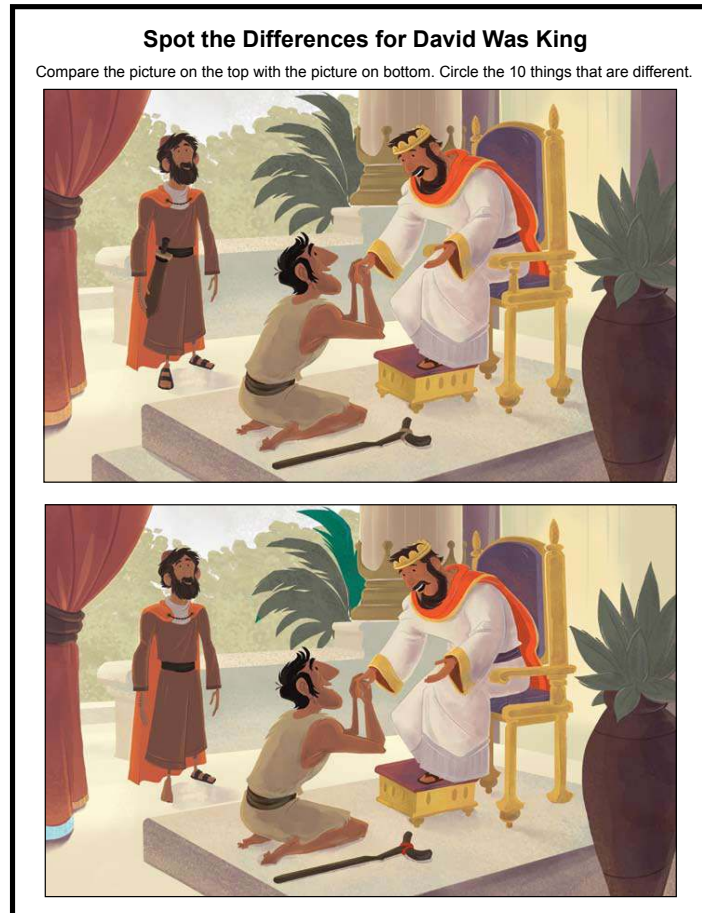
Just as we are not always our best selves, your child will not always rise to the occasion and do a kind act. However, learning what kindness is and how to be kind will serve them well for a lifetime. The following poem demonstrates the importance of a simple smile. It is the small things that make all the difference. While we are all wearing masks outside, try a friendly wave instead!

No one is born to know kindness. To be kind all the time is already difficult, let alone we must instill kindness in our children. But we have a heavenly model on earth, Jesus, to guide us the way. He sent the Holy Spirit to be our helper. We can be sure that when we call upon Him, He will come to our aid. Keep it up, parents!



Acknowledgment:

Adapted from "Teaching Our Children to be Kind," Center for Children and Youth, a division of Jewish Family and Children's Services of San Francisco. Ref. <https://ccy.jfcs.org/teaching-children-kind/>.



Copyright © 2015 SundaySchoolZone.com.

All Rights Reserved. Free to duplicate for church or home use. Visit <http://SundaySchoolZone.com>

Ministry of Intercession

Excerpts from, *With Christ in the School of Prayer*

By Andrew Murray

"And it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, that when He ceased, one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray.'" Luke 11:1.

The disciples had been with Christ, and seen Him pray. They had learnt to understand something of the connection between His wondrous life in public, and His secret life of prayer. They had learnt to believe in Him as a Master in the art of prayer—none could pray like Him. And so they came to Him with the request, 'Lord, teach us to pray.' And in after years they would have told us that there were few things more wonderful or blessed that He taught them than His lessons on prayer.

And now still it comes to pass, as He is praying in a certain place, that disciples who see Him thus engaged feel the need of repeating the same request, 'Lord, teach us to pray.' As we grow in the Christian life, the thought and the faith of the Beloved Master in His never-failing intercession becomes ever more precious, and the hope of being Like Christ in His intercession gains an attractiveness before unknown. And as we see Him pray, and remember that there is none who can pray like Him, and none who can teach like Him, we feel the petition of the disciples, 'Lord, teach us to pray,' is just what we need. And as we think how all He is and has, how He Himself is our very own, how He is Himself our life, we feel assured that we have but to ask, and He will be delighted to take us up into closer fellowship with Himself, and teach us to pray even as He prays.

Come, my brothers! Shall we not go to the Blessed Master and ask Him to enroll our names too anew in that school which He always keeps open for those who long to continue their studies in the Divine art of prayer and intercession? Yes, let us this very day say to the Master, as they did of old, 'Lord, teach us to pray.' As we meditate, we shall find each word of the petition we bring to be full of meaning.

'Lord, teach us to pray.' Yes, to pray. This is what we need to be taught. Though in its beginnings prayer is so simple that the feeblest child can pray, yet it is at the same time the highest and holiest work to which man can rise. It is fellowship with the Unseen and Most Holy One. The powers of the eternal world have been placed at its disposal. It is the very essence of true religion, the channel of all blessings, the secret of power and life. Not only for ourselves, but for others, for the Church, for the world, it is to prayer that God

has given the right to take hold of Him and His strength. It is on prayer that the promises wait for their fulfillment, the kingdom for its coming, the glory of God for its full revelation. And for this blessed work, how slothful and unfit we are. It is only the Spirit of God can enable us to do it aright. How speedily we are deceived into a resting in the form, while the power is wanting. Our early training, the teaching of the Church, the influence of habit, the stirring of the emotions—how easily these lead to prayer which has no spiritual power, and avails but little. True prayer, that takes hold of God's strength, that availeth much, to which the gates of heaven are really opened wide—who would not cry, Oh for some one to teach me thus to pray?

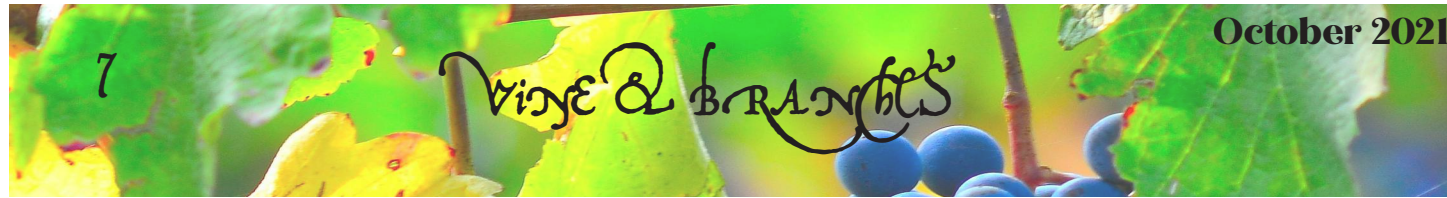
Jesus has opened a school, in which He trains His redeemed ones, who specially desire it, to have power in prayer. Shall we not enter it with the petition, Lord! it is just this we need to be taught! O teach us to pray.

'Lord, teach us to pray.' Yes, us, Lord. We have read in Thy Word with what power Thy believing people of old used to pray, and what mighty wonders were done in answer to their prayers. And if this took place under the Old Covenant, in the time of preparation, how much more wilt Thou not now, in these days of fulfillment, give Thy people this sure sign of Thy presence in their midst. We have heard the promises given to Thine apostles of the power of prayer in Thy name, and have seen how gloriously they experienced their truth: we know for certain, they can become true to us too. We hear continually even in these days what glorious tokens of Thy power Thou dost still give to those who trust Thee fully. Lord! these all are men of like passions with ourselves; teach us to pray so too. The promises are for us, the powers and gifts of the heavenly world are for us. O teach us to pray so that we may receive abundantly. To us too Thou hast entrusted Thy work, on our prayer too the coming of Thy kingdom depends, in our prayer too Thou canst glorify Thy name; 'Lord teach us to pray.' Yes, us, Lord; we offer ourselves as learners; we would indeed be taught of Thee. 'Lord, teach us to pray.'

Endnotes

¹Andrew Murray, *With Christ in the School of Prayer*, chapter 1, "First Lesson," paragraphs 1-6.





Bible Study

Community in Christ

by Richard Dickens

The church cannot grow without experiencing community in Christ. The experience of community in Christ is what church growth is truly. Church growth is not about numbers of people, nor the size of buildings, institutions, nor an increase in dollars in a bank. Those things may increase because of church growth but they are not church growth.

Just because a congregation grows from 100 members to 300 members in a year does not mean the congregation has experienced church growth. The converse is also true. If a congregation goes from 300 to 100 in a year only means it is decreased in its member size. That same congregation may have experienced tremendous church growth if its experience of community in Christ has grown.

Read John 6, especially verses 34-69. Those who followed Jesus grew throughout His ministry. It reaches a crescendo here in John 6. In verse 66, we read “many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore.” (NASB, 1995). He even tests the disciples and asks if they too want to walk away. Numbers are no sign of church growth. It may mean that tares have been planted along with the wheat. It is very dangerous to judge the strength of a church by numbers of people attending. It is equally dangerous to go about judging people as tares or wheat.

I am not playing at semantics, nor downplaying the importance of outreach. I am defining church growth as Paul did in Ephesians 4:11-20. Consider first verses 11-13

Eph. 4:11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,

Eph. 4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

Eph. 4:13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. (NASB, 1995).

We first observe that these gifts of the Spirit are given to help members of the community of Christ to serve to build up the body of Christ. The word “build” is almost always used in the OT Greek bible of houses, towns and altars, though it is used occasionally in a figurative manner.¹

In the NT it is used similarly but used more frequently with a figurative or spiritual interpretation in mind, especially as it relates to the church. (Study these passages: Mt. 16:18; 26:61; Jn. 2:19-22; Acts 9:31; 15:16; 20:32.²

It's Paul's passages that concern us most, given we are studying especially Ephesians 4. Please study the following citation, looking up the references as you

contemplate what building up the community in Christ implies.

The most important passages for the understanding of the concept occur in Paul's letters, where, as noted above, almost all the occurrences of the noun *οικοδομη* are to be found. This noun means “building” only in 1 Cor 3:9 and 2 Cor 5:1 (here with reference to the future body); otherwise it denotes the process of building and has the same force as the verb. For instance, it describes the apostolic activity (2 Cor 10:8; 12:19; 13:10) against the background of OT models (cf. Jer 1:10; 24:6). In 1 Cor 3:8-17 (where we find both *οικοδομη* and several instances of *εποικοδομειω*) Paul combines two images, that of planting and that of building, in order to illustrate the process of constructing the “temple of God” (the Christian community) in one great allegory.

In addition to describing the activity of the apostle, *οικοδομη* is used to denote “the goal of knowledge, yet also the inner growth of the community and the content and purpose of its liturgical life and its meetings” (TDNT 5:141). Therefore, there is one rule that applies to every activity within the church: it must serve to build up the community (1 Cor 14:12, 17 [vb.], 26; Rom 14:19; 15:2; 1 Thess 5:11 [vb.]; Eph 4:29). Thus the gifts of grace and offices are judged according to what they contribute to this goal (1 Cor 14:3-5; Eph 4:12). Paul scolds the Corinthians: “Knowledge puffs up while love builds up” (1 Cor 8:1; it may be that the enthusiasts in Corinth had a slogan, “Knowledge builds up,” which Paul is here correcting). It is striking that the positive use of the word always refers to the community. Paul uses sharp words (cf. 14:19) to criticize those who speak in a tongue on their own to edify themselves instead of to serve others (14:4).

While 1 Cor 3 mixes the images of planting and building, a further image appears in Eph 4:11-16: the body of Christ growing like an organism and building itself up in love (see. . . also *εποικοδομειω*, which implies growth in Col 2:7; Jude 20). But the notion of growth is applied also to the image of God's people as a structure, “built [*εποικοδομηθεντες*] on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. . . In him the whole building [*οικοδομη*] is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together [*συνοικοδομεισθε*] to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit” (Eph 2:20-22; cf. also Ps 118:22-23 [117:22-23], quoted in Matt 21:42; Mark 12:10-11; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:7; 1 Pet 2:7). To be built into this growing edifice, on which God himself is building, means to be put in as a “living stone” (1 Pet 2:5). All these passages are concerned with the unity and holiness of the temple of God, the Christian community.³

The point is that community is experienced where the body thrives and grows. It is where new disciples would come to grow. It is the attractive power of love that draws and compels them to stay, to become part of the body. The body, primarily, is where the spiritual gifts are employed. Without a healthy community in Christ, evangelistic success will fall on a soil that will not yield growth in Christ. The Spirit may have to guide newborns in Christ to a different church that nurtures them as described in Eph. 4.

Verse 13 focuses on the goal of the community. What are the key words that impress you as you read it?

I'm impressed with “unity of the faith.” The Spirit is not seeking to create a divided Christ, which is further defined in verse 14—

Eph. 4:14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine,



Bible Study (cont.)

by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;

There is real stability stated here. A litmus test to the genuineness of the pastors and teachers, the members with these gifts, that are being exercised within the community. The Christ being recreated in the community is not double-minded. I might add that it is implied that this is to be a basic characteristic of the whole church.

That does not mean there wouldn't be different experiences of growth and maturity but it is a growing experience and not static. Study the contrary community experience as described in Corinth (1 Cor. 3:1ff.).

As you read 1 Cor. 3:1-23, note why some in Corinth are not growing. There is the danger of remaining in an infant (1 Cor. 3:1-3) or in a child (Eph. 4:14) state in your Christian experience, even as a church. Perhaps Paul is speaking the truth in love as he describes the contrast of the heathen life-style in the letter to what the Spirit lifestyle needs to be and can be in Ephesus.

Eph. 4:15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ,

For Paul, Christian truth is always an expression of Christ. Jesus said He was “the way, the truth, the life.” (Jn. 14:6). Truth and love are inseparable because Christian truth is moral. You need to live love in the Spirit to know truth about Christ. Truth spoken in love is spoken in balance with respect and kindness and at the proper time, if possible.

Now look at Eph. 4: 16-20. What are the characteristics Paul lists that would hinder their growth?

Eph. 4:16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Eph. 4:17 ¶ So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind,

Eph. 4:18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

Eph. 4:19 and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

Eph. 4:20 But you did not learn Christ in this way, (NASB, 1995).

Let's focus on what he specifically says will help us grow.

Verse 13 says we can expect nothing less than the “fullness of Christ.” The Spirit is not intent on a half-hearted or incomplete work. That is why the Spirit works to bring about our total cooperation. Nothing less than absolute surrender to this work will suffice.

He also says that all the “parts” or persons with their

gifts are necessary for proper development of the entire body(v. 16, “each individual part...”). Every part or person is necessary. True community cannot exist without a proper appreciation for each other.

Most societies look up at those they regard as important and down on those they regard as disposable and wonder why the blessing of God or man doesn't come.

Christian community is supposed to be radically different. The early church struggled to reflect the Spirit's will. That first generation was a model of what Christ intended for future generations. Each generation was to improve on the previous generation's attempts to reflect Christ's love in community life.

Thus far, no generation has succeeded in achieving Christ's hope. So how are we, especially since Covid has limited our contact with each other, to hope to reach and surpass the unity of Christian love of the first century church? We meet for a few hours once or twice a week. The activities in themselves are, typically, not conducive to developing deep bonds of friendship, much less the spiritual intimacy described in the NT.

Let me begin to answer that question by introducing you to a view into community by a psychiatrist, Dr. M. Scott Peck. Dr. Peck wrote a number of popular books, a few of which you might recognize: *The Road Less Traveled*, *Further Along the Road Less Traveled*, and *A World Waiting to be Born*. But there is one that is not as well known, titled, *The Different Drum*. It outlines a path to community-making that Dr. Peck pioneered that worked for him and the Foundation he and others established. I would encourage you to study the entire book in the light of Scripture. Perhaps they have some wisdom for us.

I would like to focus on one chapter in the book, chapter 5, titled, “Stages of Community-Making.”

Peck describes 4 stages in the development to a community experience. They are **pseudocommunity**, **chaos**, **emptiness**, and, finally, **community**.⁴

Pseudocommunity is described as what we all experience when we meet in most socially correct gatherings. We are polite and friendly, perhaps with a touch of reserve, especially if we don't really care for the people with which we are interacting. They may get on our nerves, talk too much, or not enough, dress, look different, but we smile and ignore the things we dislike. Conflict avoidance is a dominant theme of our interaction.

I will be summing up these stages in the light of a church environment. Peck uses the broader sections

Anniversaries & Birthdays

Anniversaries

Craig & June Tucker 10/08
 James & Jennifer Collier 10/15
 Kwabena & Adwoa Amponsah 10/17

Birthdays

Carlos E. Tzunun-Garcia 10/8 Azaiah Johnson 10/25
 Judy Tucker 10/12 Lynn Rivera 10/26
 Charlotte Hardy 10/13 Chance Nduwifura 10/28
 Carol Bibee 10/15 Gifty Ababio 10/30
 Jade Sampson 10/18 Lynette Aluoch 10/31
 Nia Hatcher 10/21 Uche Sampson 10/31
 Lynda Briggs 10/23
 Lydia Yohannes 10/24

By Mel Poole, courtesy Unsplash

Bible Study (end)

of society. Church gatherings are typically filled with this element of pseudocommunity. This is not to say that there isn't a genuineness to some of the interaction, but give people enough time and and interaction discussing controversial topics and you will test the limits of the bonds of acceptance, friendship and love. Typically, though, most people will remain silent if someone says something offensive or foolish.

Conflict avoidance gives way, eventually, to the second stage, which is **chaos**. This results more often in committee and business meetings where people have to discuss difficult issues and problem solve with less than ideal solutions. Our opinions clash and we have to speak up.

Some people will avoid conflict at all costs and even capitulate or really don't care and just want to go home. This stage reveals what kind of a "community" we really have.

For those who do speak up, there is this period where they try and convert others to their way of thinking, their solution and the reasons why others should vote for their solution.

It's not that true communities don't have this kind of passion and disagreement. They do. It's how they handle it and the spirit they bring to the process that makes the difference.

If a committee has to make a decision and they are forced to interact long enough and there are strong opposing

sentiments, they will reach a time of impasse where a solution seems impossible. Finding a consensus means compromise.

The third stage is **emptiness**. Peck says there are only 2 ways out of chaos: organization or emptiness. His contention is that "organization is never community."

- Emptiness is where we empty ourselves of
- Expectations and Preconceptions
 - Prejudices
 - Ideology, Theology and Solutions
 - The Need to Heal, Convert, Fix, or Solve
 - The Need to Control

The group must empty itself of, or "die" to these efforts. Sometimes the group will seek to escape back to pseudocommunity to avoid the emptying process.

If, however, the group succeeds in emptying itself, then it will reach the fourth stage, **community**.

I haven't gone into the depth of explanation Peck gives, on purpose. It's better for you to read the whole book with the Spirit guiding you. I leave you with a question, "Is your goal when you come to church, to committee involvement and ministry, to come with a spirit emptied by the Holy Spirit, open to His leading?"

Christ emptied Himself becoming obedient unto death that He might give us the Holy Spirit to give us the power to become empty of self and sin with the result that we might be remade into His image, that we might become a true community in Christ experiencing true church growth.

Endnotes:

¹Article on οικοδομεω, *NIDNTTE*, p. 462.
²ibid, p. 463-464.
³ibid, p. 464.
⁴See chapter five, *The Different Drum*, by M. Scott Peck, M.D. A Touchstone Book, published by Simon & Schuster, N. Y. 1987.

Ω

Stewardship

by Brian & Raylene Wilcox

What Or Who Is a Steward—?

"One who manages affairs of an estate on behalf of his employer."

Foundational Principles

- God is the Creator (Gen. 1:1)
- He is First (Matt. 6:33, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God...")

We are Stewards of the Gospel

This Gospel of the kingdom is to go into all the world – my home, my street, community, workplace.

Taking Care of the Body and Mind—we are to maintain a healthy diet; exercise seeking balance between work, recreation, family, etc.

Regular Financial Giving is part of stewardship

Remember, it is the act of giving – not simply the amount that really counts.

**Report for August 2021
 Recommended Giving Percentage 3-5%**

Income	\$8,540.16	Income to Date	\$88,873.39
Outgo	9,383.10	Outgo to Date	70,582.09
Balance	\$842.94	Balance to Date	\$18,291.30

What Constitutes a Faithful Tithe?

The principle that has been followed since the beginning of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is that a faithful tithe is a full tithe returned to God in recognition that we and all creation belong to Him.

"All tithes from the land, whether the seed from the ground or the fruit from the tree, are the Lord's; they are holy to the Lord" (Lev. 27:30, NRSV). The tithe is as holy as the Sabbath is holy. Because all tithe belongs to God, human beings have only one responsibility, that is to return the full tithe to God, the Owner/Creator of the universe. Ellen White wrote, "This is a matter of simple honesty" (*Education*, p. 139).

A faithful tithe on personal income means returning the tithe as first fruits of personal income. The tithe is "to be given from the first fruits of all the increase" (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 71; Prov. 3:9).

It is not to the church one returns tithe; it is to God. It is not to the minister that one brings offerings. It is to God. Nothing changes that personal relationship. Nothing should be allowed to change it. Always, under all circumstances, our personal obligation to God remains unaltered. The obligation to return to the Lord tithes and offerings is as constant and unalterable as the shining of the sun.

Ω

Church News

Upcoming Events:

International Sabbath 11/20

Grief 101 (date unknown)

ALIVE Hospice will be offering a Grief 101 class in our church in the near future. It will be a basic class helping attendees become aware of the resources available in our community. This is at no cost to our church. Date and time will be forthcoming.

Lifeline Screening 10/13

More details to come (Oct. 13 is a Wednesday).

Family Retreat 10/15-17

At Cedars of Lebanon and led by Pastor & Lucy Mercado. More details on rates and particulars to follow.

Madison Academy 11/6

The academy will have our worship service on November 6.

Ω

VINE & BRANCHES

