



Jim Tiefenthaler
Sr. Pastor

Learning
And
Growing
In
Christ.

Being
A
Family
Heb 10:23.

We are
the body
and we
have been
bought
with
a price.

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Grapevine

"I am the vine, you are the branches..." John 15:5

July Issue 2010

WE ARE GROWING!





Pastor Meredith

Encouraging

One

Another

In

Love

*Working
together*

“Trusting God”

Happy summer everyone. As the Beatles sang in 1969, “.....it’s been a long cold lonely winter.” I so much look forward to nice weather and outdoor events like family BBQ’s, boating, fishing, Graham Jam, VBS, and All Church Campout. The common theme to most everything we do in the summer is that we do it together with family and friends, the people that we love the most. Whether our goal is fellowship with one another or to reach out to our community with the good news of Jesus Christ, we get to do it together and it brings great joy to my heart as I know it does to yours.

Just like we have four seasons every year, I am reminded that we also have different seasons of this life that we live on earth. Although we would love to just have summer all the time (except for those that

don’t like the heat so much), we also have to go through the winters of life as well. Many in our congregation are going through difficult times right now, as we all do at one time or another. There are those who are mourning the loss of a loved one, those who are out of work and going through very difficult financial times, those who are going through difficulty in their marriage, or with other relationships, and those who are also going through the difficulty of physical illness.

Proverbs 3:5 says “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding”. What a great encouraging verse to remind us of the wonderful Father in heaven that we have and can put our full trust in. I want to say thank you to the many who I know have gone through and are now going through great adversity and hardship, but continue to put

your complete trust in our heavenly father. Your faithfulness is a great encouragement to all in our church family. I also encourage everyone to pray for one another and to come along side those who are going through difficulty and hurting to pick them up and help them through.

But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Heb 3:13

And just in case you were wondering..... the song is “Here comes the sun” from the Beatles Abby Road album that came out in 1969. I was 5 years old.

Together **E**veryone **A**ccomplishes **M**ore



Youth Pastor Jon

Obedience

2 Samuel 11:1 opens with a seemingly harmless statement that I am reflecting on this morning as I write. “In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war... But David remained in Jerusalem.”

We are now into summer and typically this is a time when some of you take a vacation and others have time off from work and school and still others continue on with your normal schedule, but have much longer days to work with. For many, it is a time to relax when the intensity of the year slows for a season.

As a boy, the biblical character David was mostly presented as a hero and I thought of him *only* that way. As I grew and read the Bible more and more I realized he was a normal man who God did extraordinary things through... and also a sinner in need of God.

The verse above indicates that normally David would have done things differently. He would have gone out into battle leading his men with a mix of determination and total reliance on God. He would have been focused and not let up until God had indicated victory or failure. For the Israelites, victory and failure in war was directly connected with obedience to God.

This time David remained behind when spring came. Perhaps he was worn out. The point is that Samuel was indicating that something was not right before any sin was committed.

Here is the connection with us. We remain focused by living in daily obedience. Often our lives may not seem so exciting and you may wish for “greener pastures”. The truth is whether you are a senior citizen or child you have been given responsibilities for each day. Some examples are school, work, parenting, obeying parents, keeping your home running, and relationships. God is the one who has given us these responsibilities and we get to live them out for the glory of God or Satan.

We also have opportunities to grow in our relationship with God. If we neglect meeting together with other Christians, reading the Bible, prayer, and other aspects of our growth in Christ we grow distant from God and open to “whatever passes before us”. “From the rooftop he saw a woman bathing...”

Obedience continued

Certainly God wants us to rest. Exodus 34:21 "Six days you shall labor, but on the seventh day you shall rest; even during the plowing season and harvest you must rest." From the beginning he set up a day to rest and worship Him called the Sabbath. That is why we choose a day (Sunday) to rest and worship him.

As you enjoy your summer may your relationship with God not grow idle even if you remain in your Jerusalem. May you delight in your work as well as your rest. May you live your intense moments as well as your relaxing ones for the Lord.

Make it a great summer!

Pastor Jon





Focus Family

The Richards

What a pleasure it is to introduce you to this focus family, Mark and Julee Richards. Mark and Julee went to high school together in Stonewood, West Virginia. They got married 21 years ago. They have one daughter, Cierra, who is 13 years old. Both Mark and Julee have fond memories of spending time with family during their childhoods. Mark also remembers fishing on the creek next to his home as a child. Fishing is still his favorite thing to do. They both grew up knowing the Lord and learning about God through their family members. Although Mark knew the Lord, he didn't have a relationship with Him until a true friend helped him to understand the true need for a personal connection with his savior. Julee's Papa Fred (her mother's father) showed her the example of a man who devoted his life to the Lord Jesus and she made a personal decision in college to accept Jesus as her savior. After college Julee selfishly turned her back on the Lord because she thought she knew a better way. After keeping Jesus at arm's length, she is very thankful for grace, everlasting love, and maturity for opening her eyes to the one truth. She knows that she needs Jesus in every part of her life. She says that Jesus is "no longer patiently knocking at the door, but in to stay forever." What a great legacy and testimony they are passing on to their child.

It was Cierra who brought them to GEBC. They started by bringing her to AWANAS more than eight years ago. They both enjoy the clear, truth-filled teaching from Pastor Jim and the fellowship of other believers at GEBC. They are involved in lots of ministries at the church including AWANAS, ushers, communion, Graham Jam, security, missions, harvest party, VBS, women's tea, and the blood drive. Mark's favorite bible character is Daniel. His favorite book is Romans and his favorite verse is Romans 8:38-39. Julee's favorite bible character is Esther for her courage to face the King and help save her people. Her favorite book of the bible is Proverbs because it is "a go to for just about every question or situation." However, when she finds herself overreacting to a problem or situation she thinks of her favorite verse which is Philippians 4:6-7.

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Here is some great information to help you get to know Mark and Julee.

| Mark | | Julee |
|---|---|--|
| Clarksburg, Stonewood, and Fairmount, West Virginia | <u>Raised?</u> | Stonewood, West Virginia |
| One younger sister | <u>Siblings?</u> | One older sister and one younger sister |
| Fishing, work, 4x4 | <u>Hobbies?</u> | Hawaiian quilting |
| Speaks Thai; ran the Great Aloha Run many times | <u>Interesting facts?</u> | Southern Baptist Convention sent her to Kauai, Hawaii for hurricane relief in 1992 |
| Fishing | <u>Things to do?</u> | Cook – she uses her family as guinea pigs for her new creations! |
| Fishing in Cabo | <u>Best vacation?</u> | Anywhere tropical – blue water, ocean breeze, and warm sand |
| Fishing; fellowship with friends from different churches | <u>What to do on days off?</u> | Spending time with Cierra |
| Went on a cohort mission to Laos and Vietnam | <u>Something nobody knows?</u> | Danced the hula in Hawaii as a member of Ka Pa Hula Hawaii dance troop. |
| Vanilla | <u>Favorite ice cream?</u> | Mochi ice cream balls |
| Mexican or Thai | <u>Favorite food?</u> | Japanese |
| Monster’s Inc. or Walking Tall (movies) | <u>Favorite movie and/or book?</u> | Joy Luck Club (movie) For One More Day by Mitch Albom (book) |
| Carpenter, mason, truck driver, pool & spa mason, Maui Divers, maintenance superintendent, Army, fiber optic operator, Hertz transport driver | <u>Jobs?</u> | Men’s sportswear designer, espresso, Fred Meyer |
| Bridgeport, Flemington, and Nutterfort, WV; Gore Teck, WV; US Army Ft. Dix, NJ; Ft. Rucker; AL; and Schofield Barracks, HI | <u>School?</u> | Nutterfort, WV (high school); and Art Institute of Colorado, Denver, CO |

I hope you have enjoyed reading about Mark and Julee Richards. I’m sure that Mark would love to tell you some fishing stories and you could probably get some great recipes from Julee. Make sure that you say “hello” next time you see them!

By Trish Richardson

Getting to know one another

Family Commitments - Does it affect church ministries?

By John MacArthur

Soccer, dance lessons, school activities— involvement options for families today seem to have no end. But how do all those “family” commitments affect local church ministry? Is it possible to put too much emphasis on the family?

Next time you visit your Christian bookstore, notice how many books are available on the family. What you’ll see is graphic evidence of the explosion of evangelicals’ interest in the family. You could say we’re obsessed with the family.

You might think people would be tired of hearing about the family, but that’s not the case. People regularly tell me they wish we would offer more material on the family. My series of messages on *The Fulfilled Family* is consistently one of the most popular topics on our radio broadcast.

With all the material available to help families, why are so many Christian families in trouble?

May I suggest that our preoccupation may be part of the problem? We have become so engrossed in the family itself that we are losing our perspective on why the family is important to God and where it really fits in His kingdom plan.

I don’t mean this as criticism of any of the valuable ministries that exist to help the family. Many of them fill a much-needed role, articulating biblical principles for family life. I thank God for them.

But not all teaching that claims to be pro-family is genuinely biblical. In fact, some of the popular ideas that have attached themselves to Christian pro-family movements are clearly a threat to the true purpose God designed for families.

It’s amazing how many Christians believe, for example, that the family is always a priority over ministry. I know parents who have bailed out of any form of Christian service, thinking extracurricular church activity is an automatic threat to the sanctity of the home. They have become so absorbed in family activities that they don’t have time to exercise their spiritual

gifts. Several people have told me they don’t attend Sunday evening church services because they set that night aside for “family time.”

Those are revealing attitudes. Have we lost our sense of the family’s real mission? Could it be that our infatuation with the family has actually fostered a kind of self-indulgent diffidence toward our spiritual responsibilities?

The family is high on God’s list of priorities. The sheer volume of biblical teaching about family relationships demonstrates that. God wants children to honor their parents ([Ex. 20:12](#)), husbands to love their wives ([Col. 3:19](#)), wives to submit to their husbands ([Eph. 5:22](#)), and parents to train their children properly ([Prov. 22:6](#)). But Scripture never suggests that we should elevate the temporal family at the expense of God’s family. We dare not turn our backs on the kingdom for the sake of our families ([Luke 9:61-62](#)).

Christian families are not an end in themselves. They exist to further the work of the kingdom. They do this by being a testimony to the unredeemed and by showing hospitality and service to all, especially those who are of the household of faith (cf. [Gal. 6:10](#)).

Too many today see the family as a shelter exclusively for family members, a retreat from the world. They wall themselves in, even from the church. They concentrate on temporal, self-focused, self-gratifying concerns.

Study, for example, the trends in “Christian” family therapy. Today’s counselors seem to major on the externals—having date nights, affirming one another’s dignity, participating in a sport or a hobby together, or better sexual techniques. They make children the center of the family, stressing the importance of

stability and privacy, well-organized and exciting family activities, and on and on.

There’s nothing wrong with most of those things—in their proper place. But we have emphasized them to the point of overkill, producing an almost narcissistic perspective. We assume that a mutual obsession with family members’ needs will hold the unit together.

All those things are external props; they will not rescue a falling family. They may even deflect a successful family to the path of failure.

Real help comes when we see that the family exists for a purpose outside itself. Our families are healthy only to the degree that they understand their primary function in this world is not to be fulfilled within themselves. True family solidarity is a by-product of together exalting Christ, obeying His word, and being spiritually vigorous.

Put another way, people who understand that their family’s chief aim is to testify of Christ and His life-changing power have no option to get divorced, commit adultery, abuse one another, or otherwise self-destruct. Do you want to keep your children from rebelling? Begin by teaching them from the earliest age that the family’s most important calling is to exalt the name of Christ in the community by living in obedience to Him.

It is right that we strengthen our families. But let’s not attempt to do it with gimmicks or self-centered efforts. Let’s live not only for each other, but for the Lord. In living for Him, we will end up fulfilling one another. May God give our families a supernatural sense of their purpose, and may we be a testimony for Him in the midst of a hostile world and a needy church.