

The University Heights Messenger

April 10, 2011

Regaining What's Been Lost

This past Monday morning and afternoon found me scrambling to get all of my tax information prepared so Jackie's father, Wayne, could help me get everything filed that night. After two trips to the church building and a general dismantling of the house trying to find everything that I thought I would need (you see, keeping everything organized and in once place during the year just makes it way too easy and I prefer a challenge!), I finally plopped myself down in my chair and took a deep breath.

Alexander came running through the living room with a little toy airplane and a huge grin on his face. All he wanted to do was give his daddy a big hug. As he walked away my mind drifted to the account of Mark 10:13-16. "And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.' And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them."

Our Lord clearly felt a special affinity toward children. You can almost picture His face glowing as He held them and played with them. That His disciples would send them away was abhorrent to our Lord.

As I watched Alexander tearing through the living room playing with whatever he could get his hands on, I couldn't help but think of some of the qualities of children that we tend to lose as we age. Sadly, many of these characteristics are essential to a strong spiritual life. No doubt this is why Jesus said that one must receive the kingdom as a little child.

More than anything else the simple, unpolluted trust of a child toward his father tugs at my heart. For Alexander, the most important thing is that his father be nearby. If his father is close

than he will face whatever comes his way. Certainly he finds some situations painful and uncomfortable, but if he can see his father than he knows everything will eventually be just fine.

This was manifested to me just a few days ago when I had to take Alexander to get some blood work done to see if his allergies have lessened. He screamed at the top of his lungs when that needle touched his arm yet he never once looked away from my eyes and he squeezed my hand for all he was worth. While he was certainly in pain and wished he could have been anywhere besides that chair, and while he clearly did not understand why he was having to experience it, he refused to turn away from his father and held my hand more firmly than ever before.

Is there not a lesson here for we adults who often find our inclination is to look every which way but upward to find comfort? David knew just where to turn to find his strength and comfort. In Psalm 18:1-3 he says, "I love you, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies." As a young child toward his father, David placed all of his faith and trust in his Father in heaven. Such trust and faith must be regained in us if we find that we have lost it.

I have been able to witness in Alexander and Jacob an innocence this world will do everything in its power to destroy as the years turn. There is no guile in either of them, no bitterness or hate, no inclination to disparage one another or cause lasting injury through words sharper than knives. There is no dishonesty in them or a desire for status above the other. In fact, aside from the occasional meltdown that accompanies all one and three year olds, they are absolutely content and just happy to be loved and cherished by their parents.

At what point does that stop being enough for us? At what point does bitterness and a desire to be viewed as more important than another brother

first enter into our minds? When did we first determine that we should disparage a brother or sister? When did we first conclude that we should be dishonest, or that we should say something to someone designed to do nothing more than hurt them? In Ephesians 4:29-32 Paul says, "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you." Whenever we open our mouths let us do what we often tell our children to do--think before you speak!

Truly, sometimes a child really should lead them. There was a reason Jesus loved children and there was a reason He told us to receive the kingdom as a child. So let us examine ourselves carefully to make sure that there isn't something we've lost that desperately needs to be regained.

AL

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Jeff Howerton hopes to be back to work and with us very soon.

Let us remember the men laboring for the Lord in other parts of the world whom we financially assist.

Let us also remember our brethren throughout the world who are currently suffering due to natural disasters or fighting in their homelands.

Our members: **Jim Edwards, Glenn Davis, Glenn Kimberlin.**

Others: **Edith Tirey, Tom Curtis, Linda Hill, Robin Miller, Vina Krassow, Tom Curtis, Shelly Stewart, Courtney and Aubree Reeves, Tabettha Lynn, Tom Curtis, John Bennett, Dennis Brennan, Robert and Sarah Brundige, Donald Dawson, Jean Gartland, Wes Kidd, Gail Stein, Shannon Gilbert**

UPCOMING EVENTS:

The men's meeting will be this afternoon at 3:30.

Our spring meeting with Mark McCrary is April 17-22. Let's all make our plans to attend that meeting and begin inviting folks today!

Remember the streaming Bible study each Tuesday at 7. Tell your friends!

BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

Sun: Num 5-6, Ps 65, John 5

Mon: Num 7, Ps 66, John 6

Tue: Num 8-9, Ps 67, John 7

Wed: Num 10-11, Ps 68:1-18, John 8

Thu: Num 12-13, Ps 68:19-36, John 9

Fri: Num 14, Ps 69:1-18, John 10

Sat: Num 15, Ps 69:19-36, John 11

SERMON TOPICS:

Sunday AM. Frank Patton preaching

Sunday PM. Which time is it?
(Ecclesiastes 3:1, 3)