

PASTOR'S CORNER

Last month Terry Hostetler wrote about a Sunday school class discussion. Terry said, it is not our responsibility to determine who is worthy to be a member of the church but our concern should be how do we welcome people into the church. In this regard I would like to look at one of Jesus parables.

The kingdom of God is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. The king sent his servants to those who had been invited to tell them the banquet was ready and they should come. We must remember, this is a royal wedding. The invitation was not to neighbors and friends. The invitation was made to especially selected people. The bride may have been another king's daughter. The average person was not considered worthy to eat at the king's table. The people invited were not interested. They had other things to do. Not only were they too busy, they were openly hostile. They mistreated the servants and even killed some of them. The king responded by sending his army and burning their city. The first part of the parable is a story the people could identify as true to life experience, the king is insulted and responds with a war on the people and burning the city. The people were familiar with kings like this. Up to this point of the story we cannot see how this king is like the kingdom of God. Jesus now does what he did so well. Jesus told the story in a way that the people said, that is exactly how it is, then the story shifts in a way that jolts you with surprise and you see clearly what Jesus is saying. Traditionally only a certain class were considered worthy to eat at the king's table. Now the king says, this class is not worthy, go the streets and invite anyone you see. The king's servants went and invited the masses, the good and the bad we are told. I would interpret the term good and bad as saying no one had to qualify, bad is not the same as evil but perhaps more the rif-raf of society. Such an act was never imagined. Such a king was never dreamed of, but how wonderful it would be to have such a king. We who live in a society where even the poor eat ice cream can hardly imagine the impact of such a story. Only the kings and the upper class ate special food. To be invited to the king's wedding banquet and eat such food was a dream. Jesus was such a person and said God was like that. What should this mean to the church? Kings and people of power do not understand what is right and what is evil. When the king is insulted, he believes it is right to burn the city of these people, even though this targets innocent people. Our founding fathers wrote in our constitution that all men are created equal and are endowed by the Creator the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. This is a profound truth but if you know the rest of the story, we realize these great men did not understand that great truth. We must do as the

Colombian church is doing, the call to follow truth is made first to believers. This parable is a call to believers to invite and welcome people and not to judge their worthiness to eat at your table.

Moses Mast

Our guest article this month is from Jacob "Jake" Hostetler, Terry & Donna Hostetler's son. Jake can usually put things in a different perspective for me and always has something to make me think.

Wandering, Water balloons and WWJD? by Jacob Hostetler

For me, it all started back in March. I was sitting at my desk in my office when this overwhelming feeling stirred inside me. I felt estranged from the life I was living. I knew I had strayed from the path I

wanted to follow. I was lost, only knowing that this was not where I wanted to be. I glanced around and a poster caught my eye. It said - And so man asked God "Give me all things that I may enjoy life." And God said "I gave you life so that you may enjoy all things." and the first thought in my head was ... CAMP. So I made some calls, had some laughs and got back on my path. The next three months went by in an anxious fury. That Sunday morning I left work at 11 a.m. with my car packed, 5 bucks in my pocket and a mountain of faith, ready for a week of sharing, good food, campfires and water fights. Hey, it's camp we're talking about, remember? But, I had no idea.

I finally made it to Hydro with no brakes and a fashionably late entrance - both unexpected. It started off with a bang. I missed the pizza but met the parents. The kids came in droves. When night fell, we had one of the largest junior camps many of us had ever seen. Our topic was "Kids in Conflict- Solving things the Jesus way". Tigger (my keychain) and I did our best to break the ice and warm up the first timers that still felt a little homesick and things started to fall in place.

By the third morning, the staff was exhausted. We all knew God wouldn't put more on us than we could bear and what He taught us that day was far greater than we could ever have imagined.

Some of the campers from the boys dorm had planned a top-secret water balloon war against the girls dorm that was supposed to take place during the capture the flag tournament. The guys spent all morning running to the bathroom every chance they got, filling balloons to fuel their ammo supply. Their plans were thwarted when they discovered a defector had relocated their ammo to the girls dorm. The tables had turned and the water bombs were now in the girls hands. Of course the top-secret H2O extravaganza had back-fired and, in the aftermath, there were a lot of angry kids with feelings of betrayal and lost trust. This "turn the other cheek" opportunity

might have worked if planned a wee bit better. Instead, it almost ended junior camp early on a bad note.

We all gathered in the Tabernacle and spoke about what happened as tears of sorrow and then joy fell from our eyes. We reconciled and forgave one another and laughed. More importantly, we solved our conflict the Jesus way. It would be nice if all anyone ever argued about was water balloons. That day proved to be an emotionally draining and spiritually fulfilling blessing. To me, the worst and the best day of camp because our Wonderful Counselor was teaching a lesson. We shared, resolved our conflict, became stronger and didn't want it to end.

The final day arrived, we exchanged numbers and said our good-byes. We left with smiles on our faces and a place in our hearts that will remind us that we can solve our problems through the ways of our Father.

I thank you all for the chance to be part of it all- campers, staff, directors, and all the people behind the scenes. And I thank our Father- now I know my destination and the path I shall follow to get there. Love to all and I'll see you next year!

July Revisited

Well, what can I say? HOT, HOT, HOT !!!! I will nag for just a second- Stay inside in the air

conditioning and drink lots of water! Okay, enough said.

John Wise spoke on July 22. A bit different style than some have heard, but a welcome message all the same. Thank you John. Karin Evans brought the sermon July 29, on the Lord's Prayer and what it means to us. I know my brain is getting a workout.

Hurray, we're on the "net"! Our web-masters Cheryl Crichley and Damon Tabor are working diligently to make us accessible at the touch of a button(okay, for the computer challenged-like me- twelve buttons). Cheryl sends this in for everyone's info:

Hello to all! The Joy Mennonite Website is now just beginning to take shape at <http://joy.ok.us.mennonite.net> I only had two photos that show the church (and only the inside) so these are on

the home page (they rotate) at present, but will be replaced by a better one, and moved to a photo album in another section. Moses has a pastor's greeting posted, and work has begun on the "About Us" section. This is where I will need history and so on. I plan to bring forms to church to fill out for the directory information. There will be a place for you to put in a recipe (or more than one!) and to search for them by category. The Resources" section is where we will put local and other links. There are some interesting things there already that come with the package. I am ready to gather information, photos, and suggestions from everyone, and more specific documents, etc. from some of you.

This is the template version of the website, and once we are up and running we can experiment with our own graphics, designs, and so on. I hope you enjoy...Cheryl Crichley You can contact Cheryl for more info at ctcrichley@mennonite.net

Final Thoughts Deborah O'Neal

One small step for some, one giant step for Joy Mennonite Church. I mean the internet, of course. There are lots of people I know, who get all their mail, newspapers, books, and

magazines on-line. This may seem a little odd to some, but is a viable alternative for quite a few people. After lots of discussion and planning, Joy Mennonite has an offer for all. Those of our subscribers, who wish to do so, can get the Joy Mennonite Newsletter via e-mail or from the web-site. Those who wish to receive a copy through the regular postal service, may continue to do so. Sometimes it is difficult in our busy lives to sit down and read all that we would like. We want to be as convenient as possible for all our readers. Please write us a note, give us a call, even "climb" the web, and let us know what you think and how you prefer to receive the newsletter. YOUR OPINIONS COUNT!

JOY MENNONITE CHURCH
504 NE 16TH OKC OK 73104
Sunday Services 10:00am Sunday School 11:30 am
All are welcome, please join us as you are able

Requested
Address Service

Nonprofit Org.
U. S. Postage
Paid
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