

Another Word February 20, 2024

To Our family and friends of First Christian Church

I hope you are enjoying our Lenten Devotional booklet. I have heard from some of you how the daily readings have already caused you to stop and contemplate the deeper meanings of the author's words. Can I say, "the Tree of Life being The Cross"?! Such a true and profound statement. I hope you will find even more thought provoking and mind-expanding statements that will draw you even closer to Jesus as we travel through the season of Lent toward the celebration of the resurrection of Christ.

Our "Baby Bottle" campaign for the Ashland Pregnancy and Care Center is off and running. Loose change and folding money are welcome. The bottles will be due back on Easter Morning. If you weren't able to secure a bottle just let me know. There are more available. If you would like to just make a donation, please write a check to the church with "Baby Bottle" on the memo line. Every penny goes to helping expectant mothers and their newborns. Thanks for considering helping this local ministry.

The next Jazz concert will be Monday, March 4th at 7 pm in the sanctuary. Hope to see you there.

Our scriptures for the next 3 weeks:

Feb 25- Psalm 22:23-31. Elder Dale Campbell. Mark 8:31-38 Jesus predicts His death!

March 3- Psalm 19, Elder Lana Bell. John 2:13-22 Jesus clears the Temple.

March 10- Psalm 107:1-3,17-22 Elder Shelley Carpenter. John 3:14-21
The world loves darkness, but Jesus is the Light.

As we prepare for prayer, please remember the family of Dick Gordon, Lennie, Shannon, and Lyle Easterday.

Holy and loving God. We thank You for this wonderful world You so richly created. And we are in awe of Your love and dedication that You shower upon us. You provide for all our needs and continue to bless us every day of our lives. We hold up to You our friends and families, and all who are in need of healing. (Silent prayers) We ask for protection on all who have pledged their lives for the unselfish service and protection of others. Thank You for Your word, and the guidance it gives as we experience the challenges and uncertainties of life. All this we raise to You, in the name of Jesus, Your Son, and the light of life, Amen.

Speaking of reading devotionals... there are a few that I read daily to help me on my life's journey. A recent one that I read really took me back. First to my childhood and then back to the present, helping me to understand more clearly how God works. I hope my thoughts on this message will help you as it did me.

As a child I was taught to "mind my elders." In other words, grown-ups were wise, and they knew all about life, its twists and turns, and always knew what needed to be done in any situation. I had a pretty safe childhood and always respected "my elders." In fact, I couldn't wait until the day came when I would become a wise grown up and would then be able to "know what to do, and how to act, in all of life's situations."

Well, that big day came many years ago. But do you know what I discovered? That even being a "grown-up," I still don't have all the answers. And there are still many times that I just don't know what to

do. (Were my parent's lives actually like this? Yep!!) I discovered that whether there are problems with health, finances, anger, family disputes, you name it, there are times that I just want to close my eyes and cry out, "Lord help me. I just don't know what to do." Am I the only one who has felt this way? I'll let you answer that one yourselves.

If we look in the book of 2 Corinthians, we will see that even the Apostle Paul had the same feelings of helplessness. If you recall, he spoke of a "thorn" in his life that caused him much frustration and pain. He even prayed many times that God would remove this thorn. However, it was through this thorn, which many think was a physical ailment, that he experienced the love of God. This "thorn," allowed Paul to endure and overcome his difficulties. He learned that his personal weaknesses and helplessness didn't mean defeat. He wrote, that when he surrendered and placed his trust in God, the weaknesses that he had, became the very tools that allowed him to work through life's circumstances. 2 Cor.12: 9-10. (my paraphrase)

Let's face it, as we grow, we do become wiser, but no one will ever have all the answers. So, like Paul, we need to realize that we are all to some degree, powerless. And the true power is in Christ; "For when I am weak, then I am strong." Verse 10.

What I am learning is, that "growing up" means that our weakness is what allows us to trust the power that comes from God, when we are in need of His loving and unending help.

In His Peace,

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