

Another Word May 21, 2024

To our family and friends of First Christian Church

I would like to offer a big thanks to all who came out last Saturday to pull weeds, trim bushes and make the property sparkle!

This Sunday is Memorial Day Sunday! Donita and I will be in Cincinnati at our granddaughter's dance recital. However, we have a special service planned and hope you will be able to come out to worship.

Upcoming scriptures are:

May 26th-Psalm 29 and a tribute to our fallen heroes.

June 2- Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18. Mark 2:13-17. "The good, the bad and the ugly." We will also be bringing God's word to our friends at Belmont Towers.

June 9- Psalm 138. Mark 3: 20-35. "Doing God's will is a must!"

June 16- Psalm 20. Mark 4: 26-34. Even mighty oaks start out small."

And of course, June 16 is also Father's Day.

Please remember Shannon, Anthony Burton, and Lyle Easterday in your prayers.

O merciful Father, Holy is Your name. You are the great creator, and we bow before You in gratitude for all that Your hands have made. May we never take for granted the gifts of life and freedom. This week we remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice so that we may be free and safe. We ask that You comfort the many families and friends of these brave heroes. Use us to reach out to our brothers and sisters who are in need, and bring peace to all who are hurting and oppressed. Please bless and guide those who unselfishly stand in the way of

danger. May we with the Holy Spirit, see the good in others; have the courage to forgive, and to spread Your love to a hurting and wayward world. We wait for Jesus' return. But until then, may You find us faithful. In His perfect name we pray, Amen.

Gold fish. I think we all have at some time during our lives, either tried to win one at the county fair, or purchased one at the local "Dime" store. (Yes, I know, I'm dating myself.) Then, when you got home you put the little fish in a small bowl or tank and watched it swim around. Soon, the little fish gets acclimated to its surroundings and swims around somewhat freely. That is until the bowl needs cleaned. The amazing thing you may have never noticed is that if you put "goldie" in a smaller container, it will swim as if it is still in the larger bowl and will continually bump into the sides until it gets back into its familiar bowl. Its life has been restricted to its known surroundings.

Growing up on the east end of town, we would often go down Cleveland Avenue to the old Sohio gas station and hang out at the pop machine that was placed in the parking area. Next door to the station was a nice house with a large stone fountain. It was about ten feet in diameter, and was filled with water, rocks, and fish.

One day the owner of the house came out and we asked her about the fairly large gold colored fish that were swimming so freely in the pond. To our surprise, she said they were gold fish! We said, "They can't be gold fish, we know what gold fish look like. They are tiny. Your fish are like whales!"

She explained to us that the size of a gold fish is limited by the container it lives in. A small bowl restrains the fish and it will only grow

to the extent that it has freedom to move. The larger the space, the more freedom it has, and the more it can grow. Hmmmm!

Jesus said, "Know the truth and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32) Over the years I have come to see that we tend to put ourselves in our own individual bowls, limiting ourselves because of perceived social, economic, and even physical status. The world can even try to tell us who we are or what we are allowed and not allowed to do or to be.

However, if we take Jesus' words to heart and strip away the many false restrictions of the world, the truth of what God wants from us begins to appear. And as we learn, we begin to grow. Not in physical stature, but grow to enjoy the true freedoms that God provides.

This is when Jesus' words in Matthew 6 really begins to make sense. He first said, "Don't worry about your life, about what you will wear, or what you will eat and drink: or about your body. Is not life more important than food, drink, and the body more important than clothing?" (Matthew 6:25) He goes on to say, "Seek first His (God's) Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. (Matthew 6:33.)

You see, worry and quite often the world and its rules try to keep us in our small bowl of life. But when we seek God first, the truth about life will begin to reveal itself, and we will see, and then live, in God's wonderful truth, and that truth will indeed, set you free.

In His Peace,

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